



Government
of Canada

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du Canada

Canada

Western Canada Growth Strategy

GROW WEST



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The world is changing. In an era of intense global competition, western Canadians must build on past achievements, address challenges head on, and seize new economic opportunities. The **Western Canada Growth Strategy** is a call to action to position the West for success over the next ten years. Answering this call will ensure that our unique economy continues to grow and flourish.

WESTERN CANADA GROWTH STRATEGY

OUR STRENGTHS

Western Canada's four provinces span more than 2.7 million square kilometres. The West is a major pillar of the Canadian economy. It accounts for close to 40 per cent of Canada's economy. The West is rich in natural resources, with world-leading reserves of oil, potash, and uranium. Western Canada has over 107,000 farming operations that cover more than 135 million acres, representing 85 per cent of Canadian farmland.

The western provinces are home to a third of the national population, more than half of all Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and over 40 per cent of its recent immigrants. People come to the West for new opportunities. We have the highest employment rates and the four fastest growing provincial populations in the country, according to the last census. We also have five of the top 15 research universities in Canada. Western Canadians are entrepreneurial and innovative. The region has more than 400,000 small- and medium-sized businesses that account for 92 per cent of private sector employment.

Canada's west coast faces Asia. Its ports handle products going to and coming from fast growing Pacific markets. In 2018, western merchandise exports to Asia totalled nearly \$40 billion, accounting for 63 per cent of Canada's exports to the region. The Port of Vancouver is Canada's busiest port and the third largest in North America, handling over \$200 billion worth of cargo per year.

Western Canada's economic potential extends well beyond its natural resources and geographic advantages. Our region has substantial strengths in leading edge sectors, such as clean technology, digital industries, health, and advanced manufacturing. Two of Canada's industry-led superclusters are located here in western Canada—the Digital Technology Supercluster in British Columbia and the prairie-based Protein Industries Supercluster.



THE FUTURE WESTERNERS WANT

Last year, western Canadians were part of a conversation about strengthening our economy and shared their ideas, concerns, and solutions. Feedback was captured in the *What We Heard Report*. While many are anxious amidst the current uncertainty, western Canadians' vision for the future is exciting.

Over the next ten years, western Canadians want a vibrant and inclusive economy, where:

- knowledge-based industries such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, precision health, and composite materials are creating new jobs and reducing our vulnerability to low commodity prices;
- resource and agricultural sectors continue to grow, are cleaner, and capture more value;
- entrepreneurs have the resources and motivation to grow, including Indigenous and women-led businesses;
- transportation bottlenecks are unlocked and our companies are able to access global markets and attract investment;
- our workforce is highly skilled, with greater participation by Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and immigrants;
- communities are connected to the innovation economy, regardless of size or location; and,
- First Nations, Inuit, and Métis fully participate and share in Canada's economic success as a critical part of advancing reconciliation and self-determination.



A CALL TO ACTION

No one can achieve these goals alone. Now is the time when western Canadians must work together to tackle challenges and explore creative ideas for growth. We need to better connect with one another, as well as grow partnerships across Canada and the world. We need to be accountable, recognize where we fall short, and celebrate success. Our actions must continue to evolve as new challenges and opportunities arise.

The **Western Canada Growth Strategy** is a call to action. This is not a strategy-in-a-box or a generic blueprint for federal action. This is an invitation to strengthen new partnerships focused on western opportunities. We will explore ambitious ideas, not simple quick fixes. We all need to be a part of building the future that western Canadians want.

WHILE THE STRATEGY INCLUDES KEY FEDERAL ACTIONS, PARTNERSHIPS ARE NEEDED TO MOVE SOLUTIONS FORWARD AND ENSURE A VIBRANT FUTURE FOR THE WEST.



PILLARS FOR GROWTH

Based on our engagement with westerners and Government of Canada partners, the **Western Canada Growth Strategy** has four interrelated pillars for growth:

PILLARS	PRIORITIES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
 DIVERSIFICATION <i>Build a broader economy</i> Government of Canada Leads Western Economic Diversification Canada Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Natural Resources Canada Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	A. GROW EMERGING SECTORS 1. Strengthen innovation ecosystems 2. Support high-growth western firms 3. Build inclusive technology sectors 4. Accelerate innovation adoption 5. Modernize regulations B. TRANSFORM RESOURCE SECTORS 6. Invest in cleaner resource development 7. Embrace technologies that increase productivity 8. Capture more value for our products 9. Grow regional economic partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDP growth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDP share of emerging industries <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business R&D expenditures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercialization of technologies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Company collaborations with post-secondary partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High-growth firms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clean technology adoption
 TRADE <i>Seize global opportunities</i> Government of Canada Leads Global Affairs Canada Transport Canada	C. IMPROVE EXPORT ACCESS 10. Get western energy to new markets 11. Reduce bottlenecks 12. Modernize trade infrastructure and plan for the future D. GROW MARKETS 13. Leverage trade agreements 14. Enhance export services 15. Improve our knowledge of global markets 16. Strengthen regional export markets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Export of goods and services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diverse export markets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy and non-energy exports <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SMEs exporting
 SKILLS <i>Talent for the new economy</i> Government of Canada Leads Employment and Social Development Canada Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada	E. STRENGTHEN EDUCATION AND UPSKILLING 17. Develop essential skills that keep pace with change 18. Connect academic skills with practical experience 19. Strengthen career pathways 20. Attract global talent 21. Include and empower western Canadians	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment growth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Share of professional jobs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labour market participation by underrepresented groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attracting high-skilled immigrants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education completion rates
 COMMUNITIES <i>Connected to innovation & growth</i> Government of Canada Leads Infrastructure Canada Centre for Rural Economic Development	F. BUILD RESILIENCE AND LIVEABILITY 22. Keep pace in growing urban centres 23. Support communities in transition 24. Partner with Indigenous communities and organizations 25. Strengthen rural communities 26. Build resilience to natural disasters 27. Protect arable land G. ENHANCE DIGITAL ACCESS 28. Improve broadband 29. Build smart communities 30. Deliver effective virtual services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Broadband coverage and performance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community infrastructure investments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immigration to rural communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well-being for Indigenous, rural, and remote communities

PILLARS FOR GROWTH

DIVERSIFICATION: “Build a broader economy”

Our farmers, forestry and mining professionals, and energy producers are already world leaders in innovation. To remain competitive, our resources sectors should continue to develop and deploy new technologies and increase their environmental stewardship. A shift towards more value-added production of food, energy, and materials is also needed. This will result in more jobs being created in our communities and more investment flowing into the West. At the same time, emerging sectors, such as digital and clean technology, will grow and shape the jobs of the future.

TRADE: “Seize global opportunities”

Better transportation infrastructure will increase the flow of goods and expand markets. Stronger export strategies will help even small firms connect to global supply chains and attract new investments. More western Canadian firms will export goods and services. They will increasingly look beyond the US and take full advantage of Canada’s world-class set of trade agreements.

SKILLS: “Talent for the new economy”

The abilities of Indigenous Peoples, women, immigrants, and youth will be recognized and developed. Continuous learning will close skill gaps and help western Canadians embrace change. Employers will have access to the talent they need.

COMMUNITIES: “Connected to innovation and growth”

Cities, towns, and rural communities across the West will be better connected by infrastructure and services. For example, broadband access and digital resources will increase across the West. Communities large and small will be positioned to adapt and thrive. They will be more liveable for families and welcoming for newcomers.

The following sections will explore these connected pillars and highlight priorities for the **Western Canada Growth Strategy**. The Government of Canada is excited to work alongside western Canadians to realize their vision for the future.



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DIVERSIFICATION

"BUILD A BROADER ECONOMY"

Over the last three decades, the West has led Canada's economic growth. The western economy has long been rooted in our natural resources and agriculture. Our industries and jobs are more diverse today than they have ever been. However, these sectors still account for a large share of our economy.

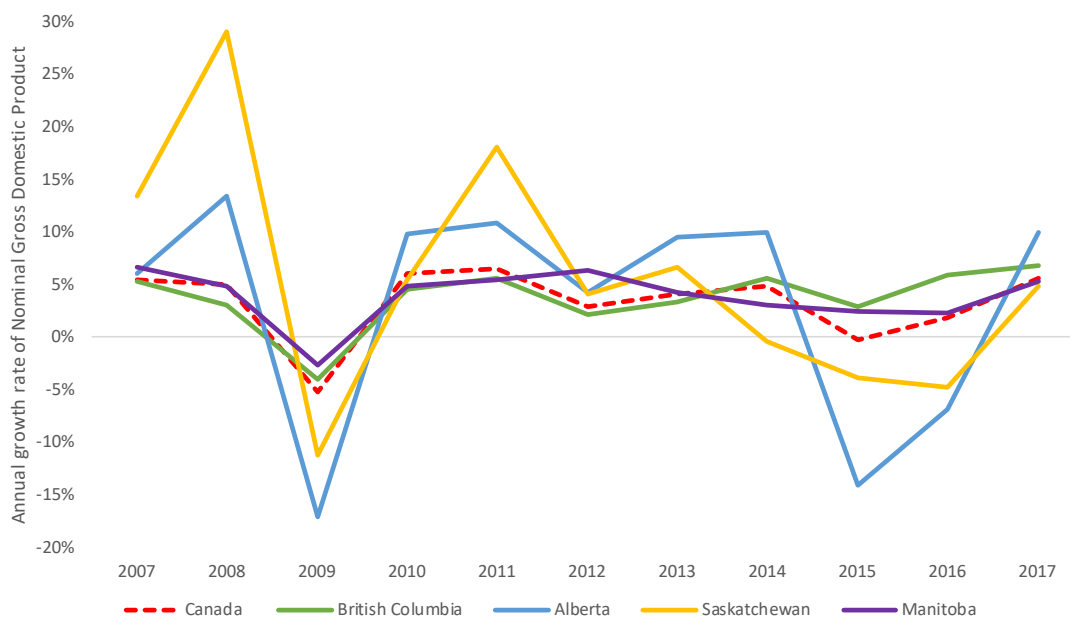
Boom and bust cycles are taking their toll. When commodity prices are high, resource-rich provinces such as Alberta and Saskatchewan have strong job creation and investment. However, there is a trade-off. In 2014, oil prices began falling sharply, plunging Alberta into recession. The impact was similar in Saskatchewan, where low potash and uranium prices were already hurting investment and growth. Tens of thousands of high-paying jobs were lost—and not just in the resource sector. Lower revenues

have strained government finances, putting pressure on services such as health care and education.

Alberta and Saskatchewan's growth is three times more volatile than the average for all provinces, mainly due to their higher dependence on resource sectors. Overall, British Columbia and Manitoba have more diverse industries and employment. However, communities and regions in both of these provinces also face major challenges when local mines or forestry mills close due to low commodity prices.

Now is the time to diversify our industries and build a more resilient economy. One where innovative businesses grow, while western Canadian families and their communities thrive. Exciting opportunities are being explored across the West. We must work together to spur growth in new sectors, while also transforming our traditional strengths.

ALBERTA AND SASKATCHEWAN EXPERIENCE GREATER ECONOMIC VOLATILITY



Source: Statistics Canada



GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

SUPERCHARGING
DIGITAL INNOVATION

As part of the **Innovation and Skills Plan**, the Government of Canada challenged businesses to work with other innovation partners to transform their sectors.

Based in Vancouver, British Columbia, the **Digital Technology Supercluster** is doing just that. More than 200 partners, including industry leaders, start-ups, universities, and researchers, are working together on digital solutions for some of the most pressing challenges in our resource, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors.

With more than \$150 million in federal funding, the Supercluster has announced its first round of projects. For example, TELUS Health, GenXys, LifeLabs, and Genome BC are working together on a new digitally integrated system that helps doctors prescribe the right drug to the right person at the right time.

The next phase of investments will help prepare Canadians for the jobs of tomorrow by growing their digital skills. This will include projects that foster the talents of Indigenous Peoples, women and other underrepresented groups.

Bold ideas from the West will spark new innovations across the country and improve the lives of Canadians. The Supercluster aims to grow Canada's GDP by \$5 billion and create 13,500 jobs over the next decade.

GROW EMERGING SECTORS

The West is home to clean technology firms that produce world-leading energy efficiency, wastewater, and bio-fuel products. Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Winnipeg are hubs for digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, e-commerce, and online media.

Western Canadians want to grow these and other emerging sectors. They see the value of a more diversified and innovative economy. However, key challenges remain for companies pioneering new technologies and services.

While Canada is ranked as one of the easiest countries to start a business, the same cannot be said for growing larger companies. Canadian firms tend to remain small, with only one in a thousand firms crossing the 100-employee threshold each year.

WESTERN CANADIANS MUST WORK TOGETHER TO CONNECT OUR INNOVATORS AND ENTREPRENEURS TO THE CAPITAL, TALENT, AND PARTNERSHIPS THEY NEED TO GROW.

The Government of Canada is helping emerging sectors to grow. For example, the **Accelerated Investment Incentive** is encouraging innovative businesses to expand and adopt new technologies. **Targeted Regulatory Reviews** and the resulting **Regulatory Roadmaps** have been developed for high growth sectors. This includes updating outdated regulations, providing clear guidance for industry, making use of digital tools, and piloting new approaches for areas such as medical devices and autonomous vehicles.

Western provinces are also supporting innovative sectors and businesses. For example, Saskatchewan’s **Technology Startup Incentive** is helping early-stage firms bring new products and services to market and create jobs.

HOWEVER, MORE ACTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS ARE NEEDED IF WE WANT TO MAKE EMERGING SECTORS A LARGER PART OF OUR ECONOMY. WE MUST FIND NEW WAYS TO:

STRENGTHEN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

Entrepreneurs need to build connections to other businesses, funders, universities, colleges, and governments. A stronger network for emerging sectors will see more ideas being developed and brought to the market.

SUPPORT HIGH-GROWTH WESTERN FIRMS

Business services need to be tailored for innovative firms, with programs that target financing gaps, export opportunities, and industry leadership. As more local businesses scale-up, they can anchor smaller firms, attract talent and investment, and have the resources to expand into other markets.

BUILD INCLUSIVE TECHNOLOGY SECTORS

Indigenous Peoples, women, immigrants, and youth need better access to high-paying careers and entrepreneurship in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. Emerging sectors that embrace inclusion will benefit from more diverse talents.

ACCELERATE INNOVATION ADOPTION


Governments should support emerging sectors and buy innovative products that improve public services. Western businesses also need to adopt technologies that help them compete.

MODERNIZE REGULATIONS

Our laws and approval processes are not keeping pace with the speed of business. Governments need clearer, more effective regulations that balance growth opportunities with the public’s well-being.

GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

ACCELERATING INNOVATION IN ALBERTA'S OIL PATCH



Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance (COSIA) is an industry-led partnership that is leading the way in clean technology innovations in our energy sector.

Through COSIA, its members have invested over \$1.4 billion to develop solutions that limit oil sands impacts related to emissions, land, water, and tailings. This has had a tangible impact. For example, at in situ operations, COSIA innovations have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 11 per cent and cut net water use by 42 per cent, since 2012.

The organization brings together industry, governments, academia, and the public to develop and share environmental solutions for oil sands producers. For example, in 2017 the Governments of Canada and Alberta invested \$20 million alongside industry support to develop the Alberta Carbon Conversion Technology Centre near Calgary. The one-of-a-kind facility is testing commercial-scale technologies that help offset harmful CO₂ emissions.

TRANSFORM RESOURCE SECTORS

There is strong demand for western Canada's natural resources, crops, and livestock. These sectors are highly innovative. However, we must unlock even more of their value, while also addressing environmental challenges.

For example, both crop and livestock farming are changing rapidly. Access to digital tools and other technologies are needed to keep our agricultural producers competitive. Sustainable aquaculture is also a growing opportunity for British Columbia and other parts of the West.

At the same time, petrochemical manufacturing is an example of how our energy sector can become more value-added. Similarly, our vast metal and mineral reserves have applications for solar panel, wind turbine, and electric vehicle manufacturing.

Transportation bottlenecks, higher production costs, trade uncertainty, and regulatory burdens are making the West's resource sector less globally competitive. Only 13 per cent of business leaders agree that Canada's regulations are efficient.

Most western Canadians favour continued development of our resources, but they want it done responsibly. Made-in-the-West solutions are constantly being developed that make our oil and gas, mining, forestry, and agricultural production both cleaner and more productive.

WESTERN CANADA MUST CONTINUE TO LEAD THE WAY.

With over \$150 million in federal investment, the prairie-based **Protein Industries Supercluster** is unlocking new agri-food innovation. More than 100 partners across the prairies are working together to add value to our crops and tap into growing global demand for quality food products and ingredients. By embracing transformative technologies now, the West will continue to lead in areas such as plant

genomics, crop data, and food safety. This initiative will add \$4.5 billion to Canada's GDP and create over 4,500 jobs.

The Government of Canada is also supporting the transformation of our resource sector through the **Clean Growth Program**, which is investing \$155 million over four years into clean technology projects for the energy, mining, and other resource industries.

Budget 2019 announced over \$250 million to help Canada's forestry sector innovate and grow. The Calgary-based **Clean Resource Innovation Network (CRIN)** also received \$100 million to reduce oil and gas producers' environmental impacts, including reducing water and land use, as well as improving wellsite remediation.

The Business Development Bank of Canada has earmarked \$500 million through its **Energy Diversification** financing stream to help small oil and gas firms weather the current market uncertainty. The Government of Canada is also positioning the energy sector for the future by providing nearly \$100 million through the **Strategic Innovation Fund** for new petrochemical projects in Alberta's Heartland.

The western provinces are also taking action. For example, Alberta's **Petrochemical Diversification Program** is providing up to \$1.1 billion in royalty credits for new manufacturing plants that will turn natural gases into plastics, fabrics, and fertilizers.



GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES CREATING RESOURCE PARTNERSHIPS

Fort McKay First Nation and Mikisew Cree First Nation have acquired a 49 per cent interest in Suncor's East Tank Farm Development, which provides a hub for receiving, processing, and shipping bitumen.

Partnerships such as this help Indigenous communities and businesses benefit from nearby resource developments. They create jobs and procurement opportunities, while also funding infrastructure and social programs.

IN ORDER TO SPEED UP THE TRANSFORMATION OF OUR RESOURCE SECTORS, WE MUST:**INVEST IN
CLEANER
RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT**

Further industry-led research and development is needed to reduce environmental impacts from our energy, mining, and forestry sectors.

**EMBRACE
TECHNOLOGIES
THAT INCREASE
PRODUCTIVITY**

Emerging technologies can also help our resource and agricultural sectors increase their productivity. Our farmers and resource professionals should embrace new ways of doing things, such as digital tools and processes.

**CAPTURE
MORE VALUE
FOR OUR
PRODUCTS**

Western Canada mostly exports raw, unrefined commodities. Industry needs to develop more innovative energy, food, mineral, and forestry products. Meanwhile, governments should create the conditions that enable value-added production to thrive. There is also an opportunity to explore new value chain opportunities for our resource sectors.

**GROW
REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIPS**

Resource sector projects offer tremendous economic potential for many rural and remote communities. Stronger community involvement increases local benefits. There needs to be more participation of Indigenous businesses and organizations in natural resource projects.



|trade

TRADE

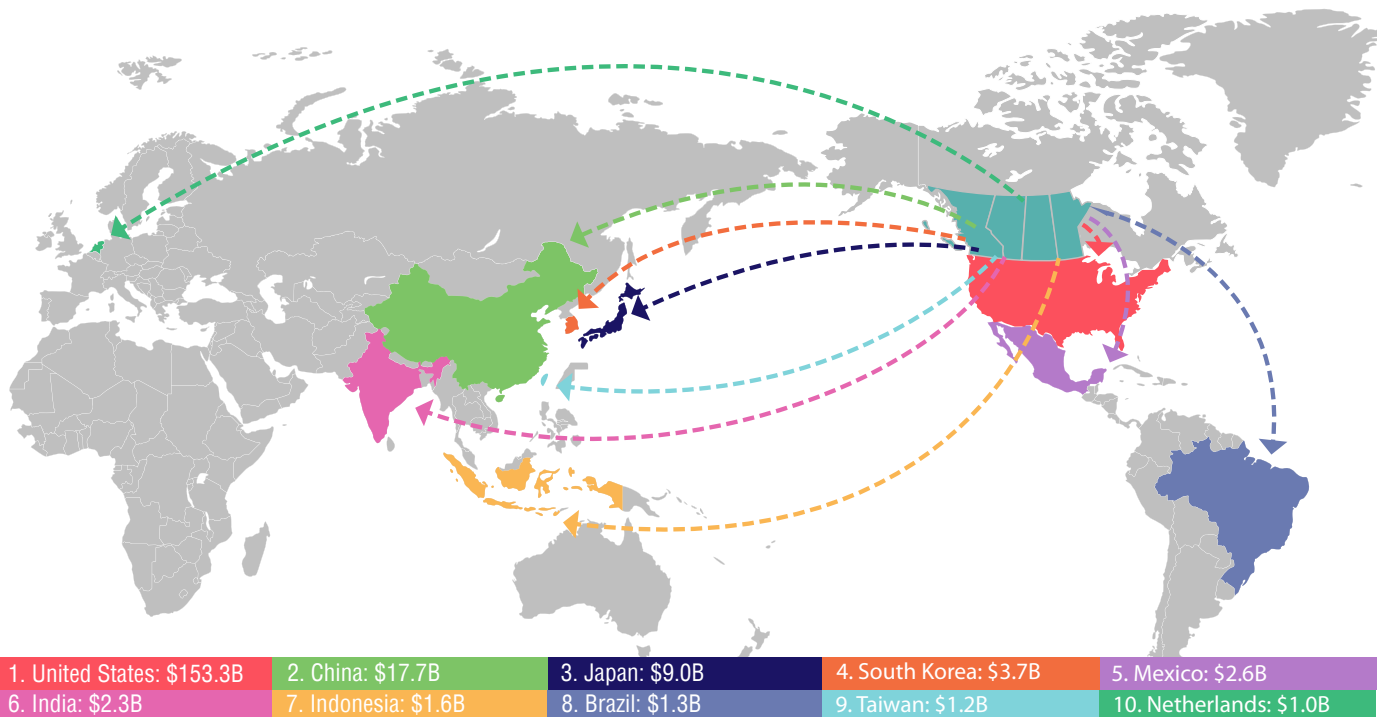
“SEIZE GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES”

Trade is vital for the western Canadian economy. In 2017, the West exported over \$193 billion in goods and over \$30 billion in services to other countries. Western provinces also exported \$154 billion worth of goods and services to each other and the rest of Canada.

The West is well-positioned to take advantage of growing global opportunities. British Columbia is Canada’s gateway to Asia’s rapidly expanding markets. Our exporters benefit from the strongest set of free trade agreements in the G7, which cover 62 per cent of the world economy.

The region has a large trade surplus of goods, with our natural resource exports leading the way. Over 70 per cent of all western Canadian goods are bound for the US. Easy access to the world’s largest economy helps our exporters, but in many cases holds them back from tackling other lucrative markets. Asia is one of the fastest growing regional economies, but accounts for only 19 per cent of western Canada’s exports.

WESTERN CANADA’S TOP 10 EXPORT DESTINATIONS



Source: Trade Data Online, merchandise exports, 2018

While there are great opportunities to grow our exports and expand into new markets, there are also significant challenges. The world is dealing with trade uncertainty and western Canada is not immune. Trade barriers are making it more complex and expensive to ship our products to both established and emerging markets. Tariffs and product regulations are impacting our agricultural, forestry, and manufacturing exports. Interprovincial trade, even within the West, can also be challenging for our companies.

Western Canada also needs to broaden the range of products and services that we export, with over 45 per cent currently linked to oil and gas. Western Canadian oil also trades at a significant discount, with our dependence on the US market and transportation bottlenecks costing our economy an estimated \$80 million every day.

The federal and provincial governments are working on solutions for these trade issues. Western Canadians must also embrace these challenges and pursue growing global demand for our goods and services, such as energy, food, and materials. These sectors underpin our quality of life with high-paying jobs and growth opportunities for many western communities. However, we need to resolve transportation bottlenecks that are limiting export access and increasing costs. Our businesses need export-readiness and other targeted services to understand and tackle new markets.

IMPROVE EXPORT ACCESS

Western Canadian businesses need better ways to move their products and services to global markets. We need to upgrade and expand our transportation infrastructure, including major ports, rail systems, and pipelines. Current bottlenecks help explain why Canada has one of the slowest growing export sectors among OECD and G7 countries.

To help address these challenges, the Government of Canada is accelerating funding for the \$2.4 billion **National Trade Corridors Fund**. This will support many western transportation projects, including a number of improvements at the Port of Vancouver, as well as road and rail upgrades on the prairies.

The federal government’s \$4.5 billion purchase of, and renewed public consultations for, the **Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project** demonstrates commitment to western Canada’s energy sector.

WESTERN CANADA’S TOP EXPORTS



Oil & Gas

\$96 BILLION



Crops,
Livestock,
and Food

\$35 BILLION



Minerals and
Metals

\$26 BILLION



Wood & Paper

\$20 BILLION



Chemicals

\$13 BILLION

Source: Trade Data Online, merchandise exports, 2018.
Groupings include related manufacturing



GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

TAPPING INTO NEW MARKETS

The Government's National Trade Corridors Fund (NTCF) funds infrastructure projects that reduce export bottlenecks and help Canadian businesses take advantage of new overseas markets. The NTCF provided \$9.2 million to Ashcroft Terminal Ltd. in British Columbia to build a new rail link, extra rail track and an internal road network. These new infrastructure projects will provide producers and shippers improved efficiency in the shipment of goods, support the movement and storage of rail cars to enhance fluidity through Canada's Pacific Gateway Trade Corridor, and ensure that rail and truck operations do not interfere with each other, thereby increasing safety.



WESTERN CANADIANS MUST CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN OUR TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE IN ORDER TO:

GET WESTERN ENERGY TO NEW MARKETS

The West needs more pipelines and overseas routes to ship our oil, liquefied natural gas (LNG), and other energy products to Asia and the Gulf Coast. Innovative technology, updated regulations, and community engagement will help create safe and cost-efficient transportation options.

REDUCE BOTTLENECKS

Our agri-food, forestry, mining, and manufacturing sectors are also facing challenges shipping their goods. Governments and industry should invest in ports, rail, road, and air infrastructure, as well as improving logistics to move more western products to market.

MODERNIZE TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Our governments, communities, industry, and trade partners need to work together to set trade and transportation priorities for the West. Together, we should tackle today's infrastructure challenges, while also setting the stage for autonomous vehicles, rising digital trade, and changing world markets.

GROW MARKETS

Improving western Canada’s trade infrastructure is only part of the solution. Western companies and producers can benefit from knowledge and relationships that help them start and grow their exports. Trade programs are being tailored to regional needs. At the same time, western Canadian businesses should explore more global opportunities.

Companies that export grow faster and are more profitable. However, only 12 per cent of Canadian small-and medium-sized businesses are exporters, and 87 per cent of these export only to the US. We need to have truly global ambitions. This includes both tackling new markets and diversifying types of exports.

Since launching in 2016, **CanExport** has helped over 1,000 firms undertake more than 1,300 export development projects to more than 90 markets, resulting in over \$375 million in new exports. As part of the Government of Canada’s new Export Diversification Strategy, the **CanExport** program will triple in size to help more firms tap into global demand for western products and services. There will also be more trade commissioners in western Canada, to help connect companies with specialized initiatives such as the **Business Women in International Trade** program, which led three trade missions involving over 125 women-owned firms and business support organizations in 2018.

MORE WESTERN CANADIAN COMPANIES NEED TO START EXPORTING AND GROWING THEIR GLOBAL MARKET SHARE. WE NEED TO COLLABORATE ON SOLUTIONS TO:

LEVERAGE TRADE AGREEMENTS

Our businesses need to take full advantage of Canada’s rising number of free trade pacts. They need stronger resources and industry initiatives to help them navigate and thrive in new markets. Canada’s negotiation of new trade agreements should also promote western Canadian interests.

ENHANCE EXPORT SERVICES

More western firms need to participate in programs that help them plan, launch, and grow their exports. Governments should tailor their trade services for western Canadians, including specialized programs that increase exports by underrepresented groups, such as women, youth, and immigrant-owned businesses.

IMPROVE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GLOBAL MARKETS

Western Canadian businesses need timely and accurate information to find opportunities and develop their exports. Governments need to strengthen their analysis of growing global demand for western products. Working with industry, they can also build on-the-ground contacts, suppliers, and intelligence to connect our firms to global buyers.

STRENGTHEN REGIONAL EXPORT COLLABORATION AND MARKETING

Governments and companies should better align their export efforts. More partnerships and better marketing to increase trade. Companies and sectors need to work together to set export targets and plan shared actions. We also need to reduce interprovincial barriers.



| skills

SKILLS

“TALENT FOR THE NEW ECONOMY”

Western Canada has a young, entrepreneurial, and highly educated workforce that can spark new growth. The economy and jobs are changing. We must grow westerner’s skills and attract global talent to compete in the knowledge economy.

Greater use of artificial intelligence and automation means that many repetitive and procedural jobs will change or even disappear. Impacts will be felt in the construction, energy, transportation, and agriculture sectors that underpin the western economy with well-paying jobs.

The explosion of disruptive technologies and platforms such as Facebook, Amazon, and Uber are changing how business is done and what jobs look like. Rapidly evolving fields such as cloud computing, agile development, and cyber security are creating widespread demand for digital skills and multi-disciplinary approaches.

In some occupations, there has been a shift away from full-time employment towards temporary and project-based work. This opens up opportunities for entrepreneurial, flexible, and remote work, but it also creates greater demand for lifelong learning supports.

Western Canada can lead the way towards an economy that is empowering and inclusive. To get this right, governments, post-secondary institutions, industry, and other partners need to improve education and training programs.



GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

NEW CAREER PATHWAYS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Over the last 10 years, Canada's Indigenous population has grown twice as fast as the non-Indigenous population. On average, Indigenous Peoples have lower labour force participation rates than non-Indigenous, and closing this gap would add an estimated \$7 billion to Canada's GDP.

Partnerships between Indigenous communities, industry, and other organizations have led to stronger education, skills, and career opportunities. For example, Aki Energy, one of Manitoba's premier social enterprises, aims to partner with First Nations in the province to lower their energy bills through renewable energy projects including geothermal and solar energy options. Aki Energy provides training for local employment as well as technical expertise, financing, and project management to ensure the renewable energy projects create economic growth for Indigenous Peoples in the province.

STRENGTHEN EDUCATION AND UPSKILLING

The western provinces lead the country in population growth. Our youth population is projected to grow at double the national rate. Though western Canadians are increasingly pursuing post-secondary education, there are notable differences in their skills. For example, students in Manitoba and Saskatchewan have below-average literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving scores.

Higher education dramatically closes the gap in employment outcomes and earnings for Indigenous Peoples. However, Indigenous Peoples in the West are three times less likely to have completed bachelor degrees or higher, compared to the non-Indigenous population.

Skills gaps such as these are challenging for workers and employers alike. In 2017, more than half of Canada’s high-growth businesses had difficulty finding the talent needed to grow. To help fill these gaps, and support overall growth of the economy, employers must be able to attract top talent from around the world. In addition, having the right mix of skills and including everyone is critical for our future but too often, the people in greatest need of education or training opportunities are among the least likely to receive them.

Currently, only one in five graduates are in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. Women are increasingly enrolling in these programs, but not advancing in STEM careers. The West is home to 37 per cent to Canada’s apprentices, but only 11 per cent are women.

The diversity of western Canada’s population is a strength, but there needs to be inclusive opportunities to expand skills and develop career pathways. Industry and community partners need to explore innovative training options, such as boot-camps, mobile workshops, and online resources to address skill shortages.

WESTERN CANADIANS MUST DEVELOP THE RIGHT MIX OF SKILLS FOR THE NEW ECONOMY.

The Government of Canada’s newly established **Future Skills Centre** will lead projects that identify demand for emerging skills, explore innovative approaches to skills development, and support the adoption of best practices across Canada. **CanCode** aims to equip Canadian youth, including underrepresented groups, with the skills they need to be prepared for further studies, including advanced digital skills and STEM courses. To date, CanCode has reached about 350,000 girls, over 68,000 Indigenous students, over 100,000 youth at risk, and 34,000 newcomers to Canada.

Budget 2019 includes nearly \$800 million to increase work-integrated learning opportunities for post-secondary students. This will add up to 84,000 new placements per year by 2023-24. It will also address gender disparity and promote skills programs for underrepresented groups. In addition, the government will modernize the **Youth Employment Strategy**, launch the **Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program**, and make the **Global Talent Stream** a permanent program. The new **Canada Training Benefit** will also help workers take the time they need to keep their skills relevant and in-demand.

The Government of Canada’s new **Skilled Trades Awareness and Readiness Program** will help encourage Canadians to explore and prepare for careers in the skilled trades. This includes groups that face barriers such as women, Indigenous Peoples, newcomers to Canada, persons with disabilities, and youth.

Western provinces are also taking action. For example, both British Columbia and Alberta have announced the creation of new post-secondary spaces in technology programs to support continued sector growth.

GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

CONNECT WESTERN BUSINESSES TO GLOBAL TALENT

The Government of Canada’s Global Talent Stream (GTS) gives innovative Canadian businesses fast access to top global talent when Canadian workers are unavailable. This permanent stream fast tracks work visa applications for eligible workers with skills required by Canadian employers in fields such as Information Technology and STEM, in as little as 10 business days. Since its launch in 2017, Canadian employers participating in the GTS have committed to create 40,000 new jobs for Canadians and permanent residents, develop more than 10,000 co-op placements, and invest more than \$90 million in skills development and training.

Vancouver-based Terramerra used the GTS to quickly hire an international expert in microscopic worms when they were unable to find the right skills in Canada. The scientist is helping Terramerra develop innovative environmentally safe bio-pesticides, while providing on-the-job training to colleagues and co-op students from the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University. He is also sharing his knowledge and expertise with Canadian academics, who will in turn transfer this knowledge to the universities’ students—Canada’s future scientists.



TO ENSURE WESTERN CANADA'S WORKFORCE IS INCLUSIVE AND FUTURE-READY, WE NEED TO FIND BETTER WAYS TO:

DEVELOP ESSENTIAL SKILLS THAT KEEP PACE WITH CHANGE

Western Canadians need learning supports throughout their lives. To meet shifting demands, post-secondary institutions and employers need to work closely to identify gaps and opportunities to upskill. Business and leadership skills can be developed earlier and across all fields of study.

CONNECT ACADEMIC SKILLS WITH PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

Educators and employers need to improve work-integrated learning opportunities. This leads to better career outcomes for students, while giving businesses access to talent and new ideas.

STRENGTHEN CAREER PATHWAYS

Early exposure to trades and STEM can open career pathways in areas of growth. In addition, programs should be more responsive to the needs of Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth.

ATTRACT GLOBAL TALENT

Businesses and academic institutions need access to global talent when skills are not available locally. Governments should simplify immigration processes, improve foreign credential recognition, and invest in settlement supports in the West.

INCLUDE AND EMPOWER WESTERN CANADIANS

We need to reduce and eliminate barriers faced by underrepresented groups. We all need to take concrete steps to challenge the unconscious bias that leads to inequity and exclusion.





communities

COMMUNITIES



“CONNECTED TO INNOVATION AND GROWTH”

In the last census, eight of the ten fastest growing Canadian municipalities were in the West. A combination of beautiful natural landscapes and opportunity make the West an appealing place to live, work, and play. Businesses, workers, and their families are looking for vibrant communities.

Modern infrastructure and services are needed in rapidly growing cities and communities across the West. Major cities are attracting new residents and businesses, but are dealing with mounting pressures related to affordable housing, public transit, local services, and environmental challenges. Mid-sized cities such as Kelowna, Lethbridge, and Brandon are also growing. They are proving how innovation can happen outside of larger centres, by offering comparable amenities and services.

Many small centres are dealing with diverse challenges and new opportunities are emerging. They often lack the resources to adapt to new economic realities. For instance, agricultural communities on the prairies stand to benefit from growing global demand for plant-based proteins and food products. At the same time, larger farming operations are struggling to attract workers.

Indigenous communities face unique barriers to education and jobs, resulting in lower high school graduation and higher unemployment than the non-Indigenous population. Sixteen First Nation communities in western Canada are dealing with long-term drinking water advisories due to inadequate treatment infrastructure.

Mobility is key. Often, those living in rural areas have to travel far distances or relocate to access quality education, health, and other services. Transportation barriers such as a lack of transit or driver training and testing options can make it difficult to get to school or work.

New solutions are required in urban and rural communities to ensure they continue to prosper.

BUILD RESILIENCE AND LIVEABILITY

Western Canadians are known for pioneering solutions that overcome geographic challenges and harsh environments. However, rapid population growth and accelerated climate change are straining current infrastructure. Improving the effectiveness of our public services and supports requires cooperation and investment from government, industry, and communities.

Many rural communities are vulnerable to the destabilizing effects of economic transition. The loss of a core industry can make it difficult to retain young workers and draw new residents. This is leading to an aging population and stagnant economy in some communities.

Natural disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity. Over the last decade, western Canada has experienced more natural disasters than any other region. Three of the most expensive disasters in Canadian history occurred in the West. Insured losses from wildfires in Fort McMurray and Slave Lake, as well as major flooding in Calgary reached \$6.4 billion. Innovative approaches to planning and development are needed to mitigate the increased risk of natural disasters.

WESTERN CANADIANS WANT TO LIVE IN COMMUNITIES WELL POSITIONED TO ADAPT AND CAPITALIZE ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.

The Government of Canada's **Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund** provides funding for infrastructure projects that better manage the risks of natural disasters. In addition, Budget 2019 announced \$259 million to support increased resiliency and emergency management for communities on-reserve. Provinces are also taking action, such as Alberta's **Community Resilience Program** that builds supports against floods and droughts.

Housing is essential for peoples' well-being. A permanent address is often needed to secure employment. Over the next decade Canada's **National Housing Strategy** will invest over \$55 billion to build stronger communities and help Canadians across the country access a safe, affordable home.

Budget 2019 announced further investments of nearly \$740 million to upgrade water systems and operator training for Indigenous communities to eliminate long-term drinking advisories. In addition, a transfer of \$2.2 billion through the federal **Gas Tax Fund** will support municipal infrastructure projects.

Substantial investments by federal, provincial, and municipal governments are increasing the speed, capacity, and proximity of public transit services. Expansion projects in major cities, such as Vancouver's **Evergreen Line**, Edmonton's **Valley Line**, and Winnipeg's **Southwest Rapid Transit** are improving affordable transportation and reducing traffic congestion.

Tourism is an important driver of economic growth and job creation in western Canadian communities. Canada's **Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy** is empowering communities, from small to big, to grow their visitor economy. The \$58.5 million **Canadian Experiences Fund** will help communities create, improve or enhance tourism products, facilities, and experiences.

THE WEST IS GROWING AND SO IS THE NEED. WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO:

KEEP PACE IN GROWING URBAN CENTRES

Government coordination is required to provide affordable housing and public transportation.

STRENGTHEN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Governments should work with communities to retain youth and attract immigrants to pursue local opportunities. Transportation solutions are also needed to improve mobility and access to services.



Lake Diefenbaker, SK

SUPPORT COMMUNITIES IN TRANSITION

Communities experiencing economic shocks require investment and industry partners to spur new growth. Satellite university and college campuses, local research centres, manufacturing operations, and tourist attractions can bring prosperity back to those communities.

BUILD RESILIENCE TO NATURAL DISASTERS

Municipalities should work with other levels of government and insurers to invest in risk assessment, hazard reduction, and green infrastructure.

PARTNER WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Governments need to work alongside Indigenous communities to build secure and affordable housing, high quality schools, and reliable water treatment systems. Industry should actively pursue Indigenous partners to mutually benefit from shared expertise.

PROTECT ARABLE LAND

Protect arable land. The effects of climate change threaten the future of agricultural communities and food production across the prairies. Governments and industry need to invest in sustainable water and soil management.



Churchill, MB

GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

COMMUNITY
RESILIENCE
IN NORTHERN
MANITOBA

Image courtesy of Arctic Gateway Group

Reliable transportation infrastructure is essential to growing our economy and ensuring our quality of life. For many remote and rural communities, it serves as a critical lifeline. Air, rail, and sea are the only methods of transportation for significant portions of northern Manitoba, including the Town of Churchill and surrounding communities.

In 2016, the Port of Churchill shut down. The following year, catastrophic flooding closed sections of the region's main rail line. Communities in the northern half of the province had relied on these transportation links for more than 80 years. Jobs were lost. Residents and businesses faced far steeper costs for shipping and travel. New solutions were needed.

To support communities through this difficult time, a two-pronged approach was taken. First, the **Churchill and Region Economic Development (CRED) Program** was established to spark immediate economic development opportunities across the region. To date, over 60 CRED projects have supported skills training, employment, business, and food security initiatives in Churchill, Thompson, The Pas, and other northern Manitoba communities.

Second, the Arctic Gateway Group (AGG) partnership was formed to fix the rail line and return service to the communities. AGG is a new ownership model that includes over 30 First Nations and communities in the region, AGT Food and Ingredients, and Fairfax Financial Holdings.

AGG's hard work restored rail service before the onset of winter 2018 to get goods and people moving. To continue repairing the rail line and revitalizing the Port of Churchill, AGG has hired over 200 employees from electricians, to heavy equipment operators, to maintenance workers.

All of these activities anchor the future for the communities of northern Manitoba and for Canada's Arctic interests. From disaster, the communities joined together to create new opportunity.

“

“BOLD INVESTMENTS INTO MUCH NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE WILL CREATE LONG-TERM SOCIOECONOMIC GROWTH FOR THE NORTH. WE SEE IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT THE SUCCESS AND GROWTH OF THE BUSINESS, CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OCN AND FOR ALL OF OUR PARTNERS IN NORTHERN MANITOBA.”

Onekanew (Chief) Christian Sinclair,
Opaskwayak Cree Nation

”

ENHANCE DIGITAL ACCESS

Connected technologies demand fast and reliable access to the internet. Computing power and fast networks enable scientific and industrial research. Access to these digital tools help people, businesses, and communities be more competitive.

Canada is lagging. For some digital services, we pay more and have slower speeds than many other countries. This limits the adoption of technologies that would improve our innovation and productivity.

In rural areas, the need is clear. For example, internet connection speeds in 98 per cent of households in rural Saskatchewan are too slow to support the online delivery of business, education, or health services.

GOVERNMENTS CAN WORK ALONGSIDE INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS TO IMPROVE THE REACH, PERFORMANCE, AND AFFORDABILITY OF INTERNET CONNECTIONS.

Affordable, high-speed internet access in rural and remote communities is a priority for all levels of government and industry. Budget 2019 establishes a national connectivity target, where every Canadian home and business will have access to speeds of at least 50/10 Mbps within the next 10 years. Work is underway to address connectivity gaps through the Government of Canada’s **Connect to Innovate program** and Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission’s **Broadband Fund**.

As well, the Government of Canada continues to make it easier to access its programs online. For example, Service Canada’s **Service Transformation** is increasing digital self-serve options, such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, and passport services.

TO ENSURE COMMUNITIES HAVE THE DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN A TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCING ECONOMY, WE MUST FIND NEW WAYS TO:

IMPROVE BROADBAND

Industry and governments need to work together to improve the availability of affordable, high-speed internet. Stronger connectivity will help all communities participate in the digital economy.

BUILD SMART COMMUNITIES

Municipalities need effective and secure data collection to reduce waste and traffic congestion, while also improving public services and safety.

DELIVER EFFECTIVE VIRTUAL SERVICES

Governments should continue rolling out a full suite of digital services. Virtual access to business, education, and health care services reduces barriers faced by those in rural and remote communities.

GROW WEST SPOTLIGHT

LEADING
THE DIGITAL
CHARGE

Many rural communities are forced to deal with internet that is both slow and expensive. In 2013, the Olds Institute, a non-profit regional development agency, installed a fibre-optic network.

Residents and businesses in Olds, Alberta, now have gigabit internet access that are competitive with conventional high-speed internet subscriptions in large cities. Prospective residents now see Olds' internet access as an asset. It has transformed the digital access of Olds College and businesses no longer talk of leaving due to connectivity constraints.





**| moving
forward**

WESTERN CANADA GROWTH STRATEGY

NEXT STEPS

In 2018, **Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD)** engaged westerners to hear their ideas for strengthening our economy. They shared diverse perspectives and identified complex challenges, which are highlighted in the *What We Heard Report*. However, they also pointed to western ingenuity and resilience.

The West has weathered price collapses and recessions before. We have pioneered new products and services. We have tackled new markets. Our communities have bounced back from unexpected disasters, both natural and economic.

Westerners recognize today's pressing challenges, but are still confident in their future. They want governments, communities, industry, and other partners to work differently and seize opportunities. They want to be part of the solution.

WESTERN CANADIANS HAVE A BOLD VISION FOR BUILDING A MORE INNOVATIVE, INCLUSIVE, AND CONNECTED ECONOMY. ONE THAT CREATES JOBS AND SUPPORTS BUSINESSES, SO THAT OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES CONTINUE TO PROSPER.

THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA IS LISTENING AND TAKING ACTION

WD and its federal partners share the vision of western Canadians. A strong and agile West is critical for Canada's future. The Government of Canada is committed to making federal programs and services more responsive to the needs of western Canadians.

The **Western Canada Growth Strategy** draws from public engagement to set priorities for diversification, trade, skills, and communities. WD and its federal partners are taking action, but this is only the beginning.

WESTERN CANADA GROWTH STRATEGY

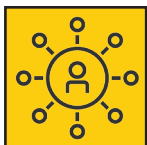
OUR PATH FORWARD

PILLARS	PRIORITIES	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
 DIVERSIFICATION <i>Build a broader economy</i> Government of Canada Leads Western Economic Diversification Canada Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Natural Resources Canada Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	A. GROW EMERGING SECTORS 1. Strengthen innovation ecosystems 2. Support high-growth western firms 3. Build inclusive technology sectors 4. Accelerate innovation adoption 5. Modernize regulations B. TRANSFORM RESOURCE SECTORS 6. Invest in cleaner resource development 7. Embrace technologies that increase productivity 8. Capture more value for our products 9. Grow regional economic partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDP growth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDP share of emerging industries <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business R&D expenditures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercialization of technologies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Company collaborations with post-secondary partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High-growth firms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clean technology adoption
 TRADE <i>Seize global opportunities</i> Government of Canada Leads Global Affairs Canada Transport Canada	C. IMPROVE EXPORT ACCESS 10. Get western energy to new markets 11. Reduce bottlenecks 12. Modernize trade infrastructure and plan for the future D. GROW MARKETS 13. Leverage trade agreements 14. Enhance export services 15. Improve our knowledge of global markets 16. Strengthen regional export markets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Export of goods and services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diverse export markets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy and non-energy exports <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SMEs exporting
 SKILLS <i>Talent for the new economy</i> Government of Canada Leads Employment and Social Development Canada Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada	E. STRENGTHEN EDUCATION AND UPSKILLING 17. Develop essential skills that keep pace with change 18. Connect academic skills with practical experience 19. Strengthen career pathways 20. Attract global talent 21. Include and empower western Canadians	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment growth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Share of professional jobs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labour market participation by underrepresented groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attracting high-skilled immigrants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education completion rates
 COMMUNITIES <i>Connected to innovation & growth</i> Government of Canada Leads Infrastructure Canada Centre for Rural Economic Development	F. BUILD RESILIENCE AND LIVEABILITY 22. Keep pace in growing urban centres 23. Support communities in transition 24. Partner with Indigenous communities and organizations 25. Strengthen rural communities 26. Build resilience to natural disasters 27. Protect arable land G. ENHANCE DIGITAL ACCESS 28. Improve broadband 29. Build smart communities 30. Deliver effective virtual services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Broadband coverage and performance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community infrastructure investments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immigration to rural communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well-being for Indigenous, rural, and remote communities

— Now we need more western partners to commit to the strategy and take action today —

BRINGING THE STRATEGY TO LIFE

For more than 30 years, WD has been helping grow the western economy and improve the lives of western Canadians. The department has strong relationships both on the ground and with its federal partners. To help coordinate the strategy, WD will:



CONVENE WESTERN PARTNERS

Provinces, communities, Indigenous organizations, industry, academia, and other stakeholders all have a role to play. Working together, we need to chart a path forward. Actions can move at different speeds. A one-size fits all approach will not work.



DEVELOP WESTERN SOLUTIONS

Partners will develop new ideas, investments, and partnerships that are more responsive to the needs of western Canadians. WD will work more closely with other federal departments to ensure that western Canadian perspectives are fully recognized in national decisions.



MEASURE PROGRESS

It is important to assess the impact of the strategy and track successes. WD will work with partners to determine specific results for the programs and initiatives that are part of the strategy. Analyzing outcomes will also help improve our efforts and identify gaps.



CALLING ON WESTERN CANADIANS

As part of WD's engagement for the strategy, western Canadians shared their perspectives and potential solutions. They want more innovative businesses leading the way. They think our resource sectors must adapt to stay competitive. More western firms need to be trading across Canada and in global markets. We need to nurture western Canadian's diverse talents. Our communities, big and small, need to be well-positioned for the future.

Similar conversations are taking place across the West. Provincial governments are looking at new ways to spur growth. Cities and towns are resetting priorities. Entrepreneurs and industry are searching for the next big opportunity. Indigenous Peoples are exploring new solutions and partnerships. Universities, colleges, and educators are looking at exciting new models for learning and research.

The **Western Canada Growth Strategy** aims to take some of these ambitious ideas and make them a reality. While local actions can be effective, we must also recognize the impact that stronger regional and national partnerships can have. We need the commitment and energy of western Canadians to move the strategy forward.

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT.

WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN CREATE THE FUTURE THAT WESTERN CANADIANS WANT!



CONTACT US:



wd.grow-west.deo@canada.ca



Toll Free: 1-888-338-WEST-9378

APPENDIX

The following provides examples of current federal initiatives* that advance the pillars of the **Western Canada Growth Strategy**.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA (AAFC)

AAFC will be the lead federal partner helping farmers and agri-food producers to transform their sectors under the strategy's diversification pillar. The department will continue to support innovative federal and provincial programming under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Advance Payments Program

This program provides easier access to credit through cash advances.

AgriAssurance

This program supports industry to develop and implement assurance systems to meet market requirements (e.g., food safety, plant and animal health, and market attributes).

AgriCompetitiveness

This program supports a limited number of national associations in support of business management, youth, and on-farm safety.

Agricultural Clean Technology

This program enables Provincial-Territorial led initiatives that drive changes required to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions intensity of Canadian agricultural production.

AgriDiversity

This program strengthens the sector and builds capacity by helping diverse groups to take on a greater leadership role in the sector and building business skills of under-represented groups.

AgriInnovate

This program accelerates the demonstration, commercialization, and/or adoption of innovative products, technologies, processes, or services.

AgriMarketing

This program increases and diversifies exports through industry-led promotional activities that differentiate Canadian products, and leverage Canada's reputation for safe, high quality food.

AgriScience Projects

This program supports leading-edge discovery and applied science, and innovation driven by industry research priorities.

Business Risk Management programs

This suite of programs help farmers manage risks that threaten the viability of the farm. They provide protection against different types of income and production losses. The suite includes: AgriStability, AgriInvest, AgriInsurance, AgriRecovery, and AgriRisk.

**Note: This list is not comprehensive, for a complete list of programming, please visit federal partners' websites.*



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

Canadian Agricultural Loans Act Program

This program provides easier access to credit to establish, improve, and develop farms, as well as loans to process, distribute, or market the products of farming.

Canadian Agricultural Strategic Priorities Program

This program facilitates the ability to seize opportunities, to respond to new and emerging issues, and to pathfind and pilot new solutions in new and ongoing issues.

Dairy Processing Investment Fund

This program provides funding for investments that will improve productivity and competitiveness.

Farm Debt Mediation Service

The service helps bring producers and their creditor(s) together with a mediator in a neutral forum to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative

This program's objective is to increase development opportunities for Indigenous Peoples by building their capacity to participate in the agri-food sector.

Living Laboratories: Collaborative Program

This programs puts in place demonstration facilities to improve adoption of innovations, agro-ecosystem resilience, and sustainable production practices for the sector.

Regional Collaborative Partnership

This program supports, enables, and encourages provinces coming together to address shared challenges and/or priorities.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA (ESDC)

ESDC will continue to focus on building a workforce that is ready for the future. Working with western partners, they will be the federal co-lead for the skills pillar of the strategy. For example, new investments in work-integrated learning will support stronger labour market outcomes and growth in the West.

Apprenticeship Incentive Grant

This grant offers financial support to individuals to help them enter and progress within an apprenticeship program in a designated Red Seal Trade.

Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women

This grant offers financial support to women to help them enter and progress within an apprenticeship program in Red Seal trades where they are underrepresented.

Apprenticeship Completion Grant

This grant offers financial support to individuals to complete their apprenticeship program in a designated Red Seal trade.

Foreign Credential Recognition Program

This program funds provincial and territorial governments' international credential recognition programs.

Future Skills

This plan prepares Canadian policies and programs to adapt to changing skills needs over time. A Future Skills Council and Centre will be established to analyze workforce trends and emerging skills, as well as skill assessment and development methods.

Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program

This program is designed to help reduce the employment and skills gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, focusing on moving clients along the skills continuum and supporting them in achieving their employment goals.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

Labour Market Development Agreements

These bilateral transfer agreements enable provinces and territories (PTs) to design and deliver Employment Insurance-funded employment programs and services best suited to the needs of their local labour markets. Through skills training and employment assistance, the funding provided under these transfer agreements helps eligible Canadians to prepare for, find, advance in, and keep good jobs. PTs are also responsible to provide support to eligible employers to train their employees.

Literacy and Essential Skills Program

This program supports the testing, replicating, and scaling up of effective and innovative essential skills training models to help Canadians better prepare for, get and keep a job, as well as adapt and succeed at work. Funded projects complement provincial and territorial programming, and support individuals facing multiple barriers to employment such as Indigenous people, youth, newcomers, and official language minority communities.

Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities Program

This program supports third party service providers to assist persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment or self-employment. It supports employment-focused interventions designed to assist persons with disabilities who have limited or no attachment to the labour market. The program also works with employers to prepare workplaces for the integration of persons with disabilities and to raise the profile of persons with disabilities in the employer community.

Skills and Partnership Fund

This demand-driven, proposal-based program encourages stakeholders, such as training institutions, community organizations, local business, and industry, to partner with Indigenous organizations to support skills development, job training, and employment supports for Indigenous people.

Skills Boost

This program provides financial assistance for adults who would like to upgrade their skills with additional education. Eligible candidates are adults who are studying full time or part time, have low- or middle-income levels, or are on employment insurance.

Skilled Trades Awareness and Readiness Program

This program encourages Canadians, including groups that face barriers (e.g., women, Indigenous Peoples, newcomers to Canada, persons with disabilities, and youth), to explore and prepare for careers in the skilled trades.

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

This program provides employers with access to foreign workers on a temporary basis when qualified Canadians and Permanent Residents are not available, and ensures foreign workers are protected. The Global Talent Stream of this program assists Canadian employers to access highly-skilled global talent to expand their workforce and be competitive on a global scale.

Union and Training Innovation Program

This program supports technical apprenticeship training for Red Seal Trades. Supports include helping organizations purchase new training equipment, among other activities that encourage the trades to be more inclusive of women and Indigenous Peoples.

Youth Employment Strategy

This initiative helps youth aged 15-30 by providing them access to information and helping them gain the job experience, skills, and other abilities they may need. While the program will provide opportunities for all youth, an emphasis will be placed on youth that have less opportunity, as well as those who are underrepresented and underemployed.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA (GAC)

Working with western stakeholders, GAC will be a powerful advocate for modern and efficient trade supports to get our products to new markets. GAC will co-lead federal efforts under the strategy's trade pillar. The Trade Commissioner Service will play a role by expanding advice and services in areas such as digital, e-commerce, and intellectual property that will make western innovators more competitive.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

Canada Trade Missions

Led by the Minister of International Trade or other senior government officials, Canada Trade Missions provide an opportunity for the business community to learn about foreign markets and network in order to build partnerships for potential export opportunities.

Canadian Technology Accelerators

These accelerators support small technology firms working in information communication technology, robotics and devices, life sciences, and clean technology. Supports include mentorship, office space, investor networks, and other services to increase their participation in the technology community.

CanExport

This program supports global export marketing activity for Canadian small- and medium-sized businesses by reimbursing up to half of their expenses related to expanding into global export markets.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES, AND CITIZENSHIP CANADA (IRCC)

IRCC will continue their efforts to attract global talent and strengthen supports for newcomers. They will be the federal co-lead for the strategy's skills pillar. Their work will also help strengthen communities, through initiatives such as the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot.

Provincial Nominee Program

This program provides a pathway to permanent residence for immigrants who can support the Canadian economy with their skills, education, and work experience. Each province and territory, with the exception of Quebec and Nunavut, has a regionally tailored program based on their labour market needs.

Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot

This pilot attracts immigrants to rural and northern communities who have an economic development need that can be supported by the targeted attraction of immigrants. It tests how economic opportunity and community-based settlement approaches can attract and retain newcomers to better distribute the benefits of immigration across Canada.

INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA (ISC)

ISC will support the strategy by continuing to improve infrastructure and services for Indigenous communities. For example, the Water in First Nation Communities initiative is improving access to safe drinking water for on reserve communities.

Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Development Program

This program funds Aboriginal businesses, corporations, and communities to increase economic opportunities within the Aboriginal community.

Indigenous Homes Innovation Initiative

This initiative funds Indigenous-led projects that improve housing infrastructure for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. This includes housing strategies for those on and off reserve, as well as rural and urban communities. Partnered with the Smart Cities Challenge, this initiative supports community-led approaches for housing solutions.

Strategic Partnerships Initiative

This initiative builds strategic partnerships among multiple federal government departments to ensure Indigenous Peoples can participate in current programs and economic opportunities.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE CANADA (INFC)

As federal co-lead for the strategy's communities pillar, INFC will work with federal and western partners to address infrastructure gaps through the Investing in Canada plan. In addition, the Rural Economic Development Strategy will support opportunities for residents of rural and remote communities.

Clean Water and Wastewater Fund

This program provides short-term funding to infrastructure projects that improve water collection, treatment, and distribution systems.

Smart Cities Challenge

This is a pan-Canadian competition open to all municipalities, local or regional governments, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. The Challenge empowers communities to adopt a smart cities approach by improving the lives of their residents through innovation, data, and connected technology.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

This program delivers funding through bilateral agreements with provinces and territories for transportation, community, cultural, and recreational infrastructure, as well specific support for rural and northern communities. These agreements will provide long-term funding to address ongoing infrastructure needs over the next decade.

Federal Gas Tax Fund

This is a permanent source of funding provided up front, twice-a-year, to provinces and territories, who in turn flow this funding to their municipalities to support local infrastructure priorities. Municipalities can pool, bank, and borrow against this funding, providing significant financial flexibility for various infrastructure projects.

Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund

This national merit-based program supports large-scale infrastructure projects to help communities better manage the risks of disasters triggered by natural hazards.

Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program

This five-year program provides funding, training, and resources to help Canadian municipalities adapt to the impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

INNOVATION, SCIENCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ISED)

ISED will be a federal co-lead for the strategy's diversification pillar. They will continue to support western businesses and partners, including implementing recommendations from the industry-led Economic Strategy Tables and continuing to support the Innovation Superclusters Initiative.

Accelerated Growth Service

This service provides business advice to Canadian companies and streamlines government services for financing, innovation, and exporting.

CanCode

This initiative aims to equip Canadian youth, including traditionally underrepresented groups, with the skills they need to be prepared for further studies, including advanced digital skills and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses.

Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy

This strategy takes a whole-of-government approach to increase and diversify Canada's tourism sector.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

Digital and Data Consultations

In summer 2018, ISED held national consultations to better understand how Canada can support the data-driven digital economy. Discussions included Canadians across the country, as well as firms of all sizes, academics, and non-profits, and focused on three areas: Future of work, unleashing innovation, and privacy and trust.

Economic Strategy Tables

These are strategies that industry-led groups developed to grow Canada's advanced manufacturing, agri-food, clean technology, digital industries, health and biosciences, and natural resource sector.

Innovation Supercluster Initiative

This initiative funds industry-led collaborative projects to grow important sectors of the economy. Two of Canada's superclusters are located in the West—the Digital Technology Supercluster is in British Columbia, while the Protein Industries Supercluster is among the prairies.

Intellectual Property Strategy

The strategy includes initiatives to support Canadian businesses, creators, entrepreneurs, and innovators, including groups that have traditionally been less likely to use intellectual property (IP). For example, it helps Indigenous entrepreneurs better understand, protect, and access intellectual property at both the domestic and international level relating to the relationship between IP and the protection of Indigenous knowledge and cultural expressions.

Strategic Innovation Fund

This fund supports research and development by innovative businesses to help them expand, attract investments, and improve collaborative relationships between organizations.

Universal Broadband Fund

This initiative will focus on extending “backbone” broadband infrastructure to under-served communities. For the most difficult-to-reach communities, funding may also support “last-mile” connections to individual homes and businesses.

NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA (NRCAN)

NRCAN will continue to support western Canada's important resource sectors and co-lead the strategy's diversification pillar. They will head efforts to make resource producers more sustainable and competitive, through initiatives such as the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan, the Clean Growth Program, and the Joint Working Group on the Future of Vision for Canada's Upstream Oil and Gas Industry.

Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan

This plan will position Canada for long-term success in a world that increasingly values the minerals and metals needed for a clean, digital economy—and which are produced in a sustainable, ethical manner. Strategies to achieve this include increasing economic opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, investing in research and development, improving workforce skills, and using innovative engineering technology.

Clean Energy in Rural and Remote Communities Program

This program will invest \$220 million to support a suite of diverse projects across Canada, to reduce the reliance of rural and remote communities on diesel fuel for heat and power.

Clean Growth Program

This program invests in projects that increase clean technology commercialization and adoption throughout the natural resource sector. Projects that reduce environmental impacts from energy, mining, and forestry operations are eligible.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

Cleantech Challenge

This is a competition for entrepreneurs to develop innovative clean technology solutions. The goal of the program is for candidates to advance their innovative clean technology ideas into a business. Winners of the challenge may receive funding to develop their business, commercialize their innovation, and get expert advice.

Emerging Renewable Power Program

This program provides up to \$200 million to expand the portfolio of commercially viable renewable energy sources available to provinces and territories as they work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their electricity sectors.

Forest Bioeconomy Framework for Canada

This framework outlines a comprehensive approach and specific actions for increasing the use of forest biomass throughout the economy by developing advanced bioproducts and other innovative, low-carbon solutions.

Indigenous Forestry Initiative

This initiative funds Indigenous communities and governments pursuing economic development projects in the forestry sector. Funded projects focus on skills development, training, and forestry related technology or services.

Investments in Forest Industry Transformation Program

This program funds Canadian pilot projects to commercialize and integrate new technologies into the forestry industry.

Smart Grid Program

This program will invest \$100 million in utility-led projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, better utilize existing electricity assets and foster innovation and clean jobs.

TRANSPORT CANADA (TC)

TC will co-lead the strategy's trade pillar to support a safe and secure, efficient, and environmentally responsible trade network. TC continues to modernize Canada's trade infrastructure and regulations, making it easier for western business to ship their products.

National Trade Corridors Fund

This competitive program funds projects that strengthen the efficiency and resilience of transportation corridors, such as improvements to ports, rail lines, and roads that promote the diversification of Canada's overseas trade.

The Ports Modernization Review

A review of measures to optimize the movement of goods, strengthen relationships with local communities (including Indigenous Peoples), and promote environmentally sustainable infrastructure and operations. It aims to enhance safety and security of transportation ports, as well as optimize their governance and financial management.

Freight Rail / Bill C-49

The Transportation Modernization Act includes measures to increase the efficiency, reliability and transparency of the freight rail system.

Canadian Centre on Transportation Data

This is a joint initiative with Statistics Canada to increase the accessibility of multimodal transportation data and system performance indicators on air passengers, railways, road and ports, as well as key strategic transportation corridors.

TREASURY BOARD OF CANADA SECRETARIAT (TBS)

TB is leading the Government of Canada's work to modernize our regulatory system.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

Regulatory Reform

Targeted regulatory reviews are exploring ways to reduce barriers to innovation, economic development, and investment in the Canadian economy, and help ensure that the Canadian regulatory system can accommodate emerging technologies and businesses.

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA (WD)

With a strong history of supporting industry innovation and economic development, WD will co-lead federal efforts under the diversification pillar. WD will receive \$100 million in new funding over the next three years to strengthen programming and coordinate the strategy.

Canada Coal Transition Initiative

This initiative supports Canadian workers and communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan affected by the transition to a low carbon economy. Budget 2018 allocated \$25 million to WD to support community members with entrepreneurial training programs, job search, skills development, and business supports. Budget 2019 announced an additional \$105 million for WD towards infrastructure funding for impacted communities.

Canadian Experiences Fund (CEF)

This program supports communities across Canada to create, improve or enhance tourism products, facilities, and experiences. WD received \$11 million over two years to deliver the CEF in western Canada.

Regional Economic Growth through Innovation

This program aims to grow the economy through innovation and by creating more well-paying Canadian jobs. It includes several program streams, tailored to each region, that foster strong, dynamic, and inclusive innovation ecosystems across the country.

Western Canada Business Network

This group of independent organizations helps western Canadians start, grow and expand their businesses. The network includes Community Futures, Indigenous Business Development Services, Women's Enterprise Initiative, Francophone Economic Development, Entrepreneurs with Disabilities, Small Business BC, Business Link in Alberta, Square One in Saskatchewan, and Business InfoCentre in Manitoba.

Western Diversification Program

This program makes strategic investments in initiatives with not-for-profit organizations that enhance and strengthen the economy of western Canada.

Women Entrepreneurship Strategy

This strategy encourages women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses by increasing their access to expert advice, capital, talent, and business networks. The strategy is nationally coordinated by ISED, with targeted funding delivered in the West by WD.



DIVERSIFICATION



TRADE



SKILLS



COMMUNITIES

**#GROW
#WEST**

