



ALBERTA TOPS CANADA'S GROWTH RANKINGS: RBC ECONOMICS

TORONTO, June 12, 2012 — Alberta's economy was off to an impressive start in 2012, according to the latest [RBC Economics Provincial Outlook](#). The province led the nation in the majority of economic performance indicators, by a wide margin in several instances. Going forward, RBC expects Alberta's real GDP to grow at a rate of 4.0 per cent this year and 3.9 per cent next year.

"Strong gains across a wide array of economic indicators so far this year confirm that the impressive pick-up in activity we saw last year – when real GDP growth exceeded five per cent for the first time since 2006 – was no fluke," said Craig Wright, senior vice-president and chief economist, RBC. "Massive investment in the energy sector will continue to drive activity throughout the provincial economy. Add in another banner year for Alberta's oil production and a turnaround in the housing sector and we will have the elements for continued strong economic growth."

RBC's report indicated that growth was broad-based across industrial sectors, a telltale sign that the benefits of strong capital investment are spreading throughout Alberta's economy. Oil and gas extraction, utilities, wholesale and retail trade, transportation, business and personal services and public administration are all industries that experienced growth in 2011.

In the first two months of this year, provincial crude oil production was up noticeably from a year ago and was a key driver of double-digit export gains. Higher sales abroad by chemical and petroleum product manufacturers, as well as by machinery and equipment fabricators, also contributed to stronger provincial exports so far this year.

"Alberta's job market remains particularly vibrant, leading the country with employment growth year-over-year and the lowest jobless rate among the provinces, at 4.9 per cent as of April," added Wright. "Bright job prospects are attracting increasing numbers of workers from outside the province, boosting population growth to 2.0 per cent – the fastest across the country."

Positive income and demographic conditions have also supported nation-leading growth in retail sales and housing starts to date in 2012, far outpacing gains made in other provinces.

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The RBC Economics Provincial Outlook assesses the provinces according to economic growth, employment growth, unemployment rates, retail sales, housing starts and consumer price indices. The full report and provincial details are available online as of 8 a.m. ET today at rbc.com/economics/market/pdf/provfcst.pdf.

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