

to exchange information on federalism issues, program review, budgeting and access to information legislation, indigenous issues, social programming, and sustainable development.

- The modernization of Mexico's public service is also an area of co-operation. A Mexican delegation visited Ottawa in January 2003 to discuss modernizing the public service as an element of good governance. The delegation examined development of an "e-campus" project for training and upgrading the skills of their government officials.
- Ministerial contact has also been frequent. Since January 2001, Canadian ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Trade, Finance, Justice, Defence, Agriculture, Health, Intergovernmental Affairs, Natural Resources, Environment, and Labour have each met their Mexican counterparts.
- There is also strong co-operation between independent institutions, such as human rights commissions, and between Elections Canada and the Mexican Federal Electoral Institute.
- A highlight in the Canada-Mexico relationship has been the expansion of Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, which provides a way to meet the labour demands of Canadian farm employers when there is a shortage of Canadian workers. Mexico, which supplied nearly 11,000 workers in 2002, has become the principal source. Mexicans make up over 50 per cent of Canada's recruitment of temporary farm workers.
- Contact between Canadian and Mexican citizens has increased in recent years. About a million Canadians visit Mexico annually and some 153,000 Mexican tourists visited Canada in the first 11 months of 2002.
- Cultural and academic exchanges have expanded. There are 10 Canadian studies programs at Mexican universities and 10,000 Mexican students studying full time in Canada. Canadian Film Week is a major annual film festival in Mexico City, and in October 2002, Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister attended the International Cervantino Festival in Guanajuato, Mexico, at which Canada was the country of honour. The festival showcased Canadian culture through music, theatre, dance, art, literature, and film.

## **Trade and investment**

- Mexico is Canada's largest trading partner in Latin America. With a gross domestic product of nearly \$957.6 billion and nearly 100 million people, Mexico is the globe's ninth ranked economy and 11th most populated country.