



# *Enhancing the Attractiveness of non- metropolitan areas: The role of Special Economic Zones*

15<sup>TH</sup> OF MARCH 2023

OECD – CFE/DAF/TAD/DEV



# Opening Remarks

---



**Dorothee Allain Dupre**

*Head of Division*

*Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division*

*OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions & Cities (CFE)*



**Ana Novik**

*Head of Division*

*Investment Division*

*OECD Directorate for Financial and*

*Enterprise Affairs (DAF)*



# Session I. Enhancing the attractiveness of non-metropolitan areas and the role of Special Economic Zones



**Claire Charbit**

**Moderator**

*Head of Unit*

*OECD Regional Attractiveness  
and Migrant Integration Unit  
(RAMI/RDG)*



**Wojciech Tyborowski**

**Director**

*Invest in Pomerania, Poland*



**Valerio Buemi**

**Senior Consultant**

*Special Economic Zones of  
Eastern Sicily, Italy*



## Session II. Promoting investment in the agricultural sector to enhance the attractiveness of regions



**Indiana Trejos**

*Vice Minister Foreign Trade, Costa Rica*



**Jorge Sequeira Picado**

*Director General*

*Costa Rica Investment Promotion Agency  
CINDE, Costa Rica*



**Alexandre Masse**

*Project Leader for the French Territories of  
Industry*

*National Agency for Territorial Cohesion  
ANCT, France*



**Adriana García Vargas**

*Agricultural Economist*

*OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate  
(TAD)*



**Victor Umaña**

*Trade and agriculture Policy Expert  
Member of the Board of Director of  
PROCOMER, Costa Rica*



**Chris Mc. Leod**

*Vice President Global Marketing and  
Communications,  
Edmonton Global, Canada*



# Conclusions and next steps

---



Sebastián Nieto Parra  
*Head of Unit*  
*Latin America and the Caribbean Unit*  
*OECD Development Centre (DEV)*



Claire Charbit  
*Head of Unit*  
*OECD Regional Attractiveness and Migrant Integration*  
*(RAMI/RDG)*



***Thank you! / Merci! /Gracias!/Grazie!/ Obrigado!***

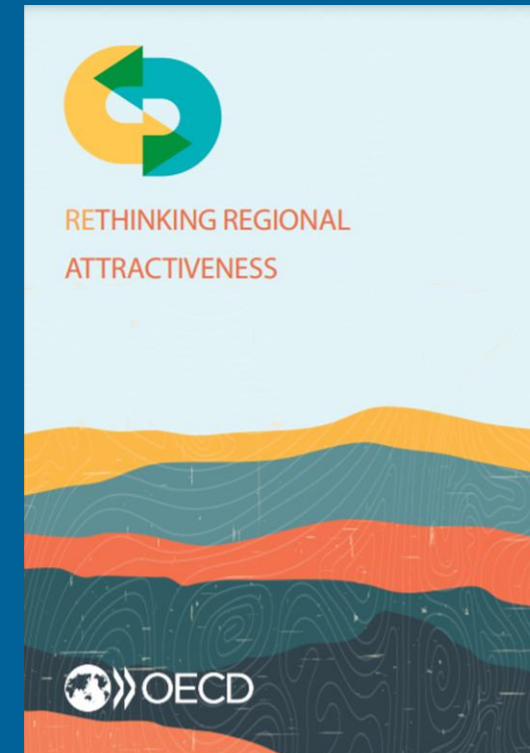
**For more information follow us in our website:**

**<https://www.oecd.org/fr/regional/globalisation.htm>**

[Regions in globalisation - OECD](#)

**OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions & Cities (CFE)**

- Claire Charbit – [claire.charbit@oecd.org](mailto:claire.charbit@oecd.org)
- Peter Haxton – [peter.haxton@oecd.org](mailto:peter.haxton@oecd.org)
- Maya Camacho – [maya.camacho@oecd.org](mailto:maya.camacho@oecd.org)



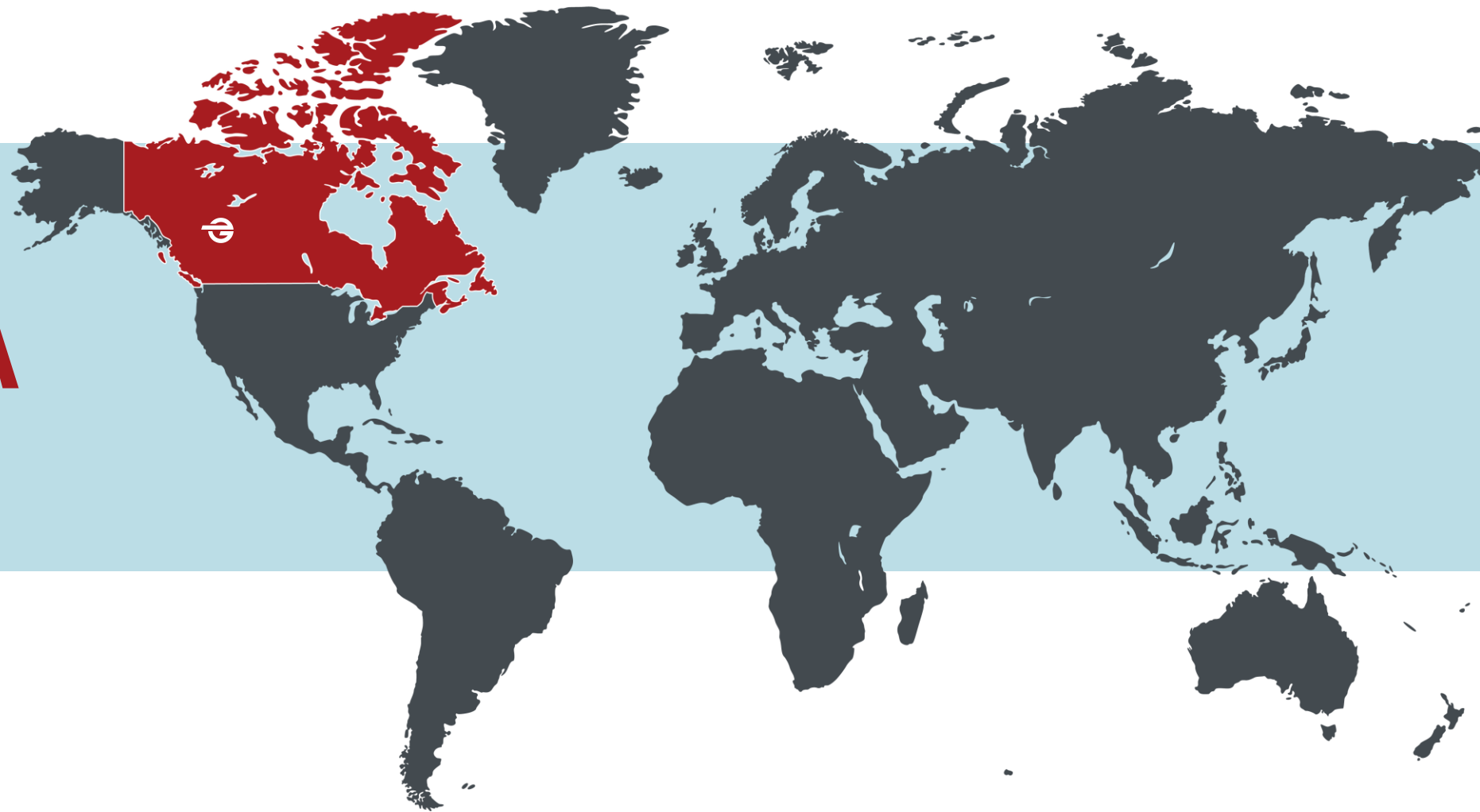


**PORT  
ALBERTA**

*OECD – Enhancing Regional  
Attractiveness/SEZs/FTZs*

---

**CANADA**





**ALBERTA**



*About the Edmonton Metropolitan Region economy...*

We are Canada's fifth-largest economy, and the fastest-growing region

We generate 30% of Alberta's GDP

With 1.5 million people and 725,000 jobs, we offer diversity and talent

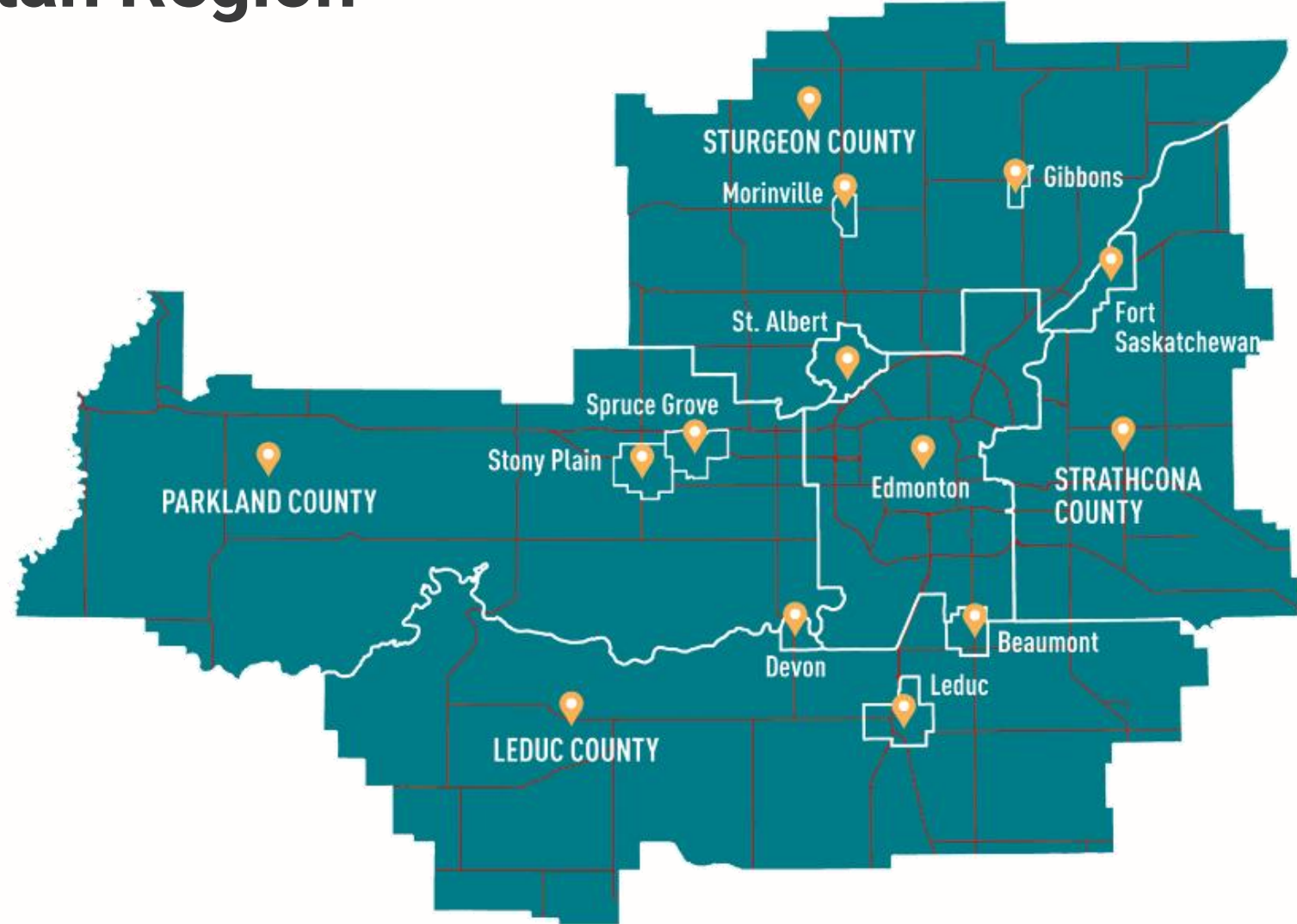
We offer the strongest export growth—more than double the national average

We have world-class expertise in engineering, medicine and health research, agriculture, artificial intelligence, reinforcement learning and more

We're an energy-rich region at the centre of petrochemical and clean hydrogen production

# Edmonton Metropolitan Region

The purpose of Edmonton Global is to *radically transform and grow the economy* of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region



**THE EDMONTON METROPOLITAN REGION**

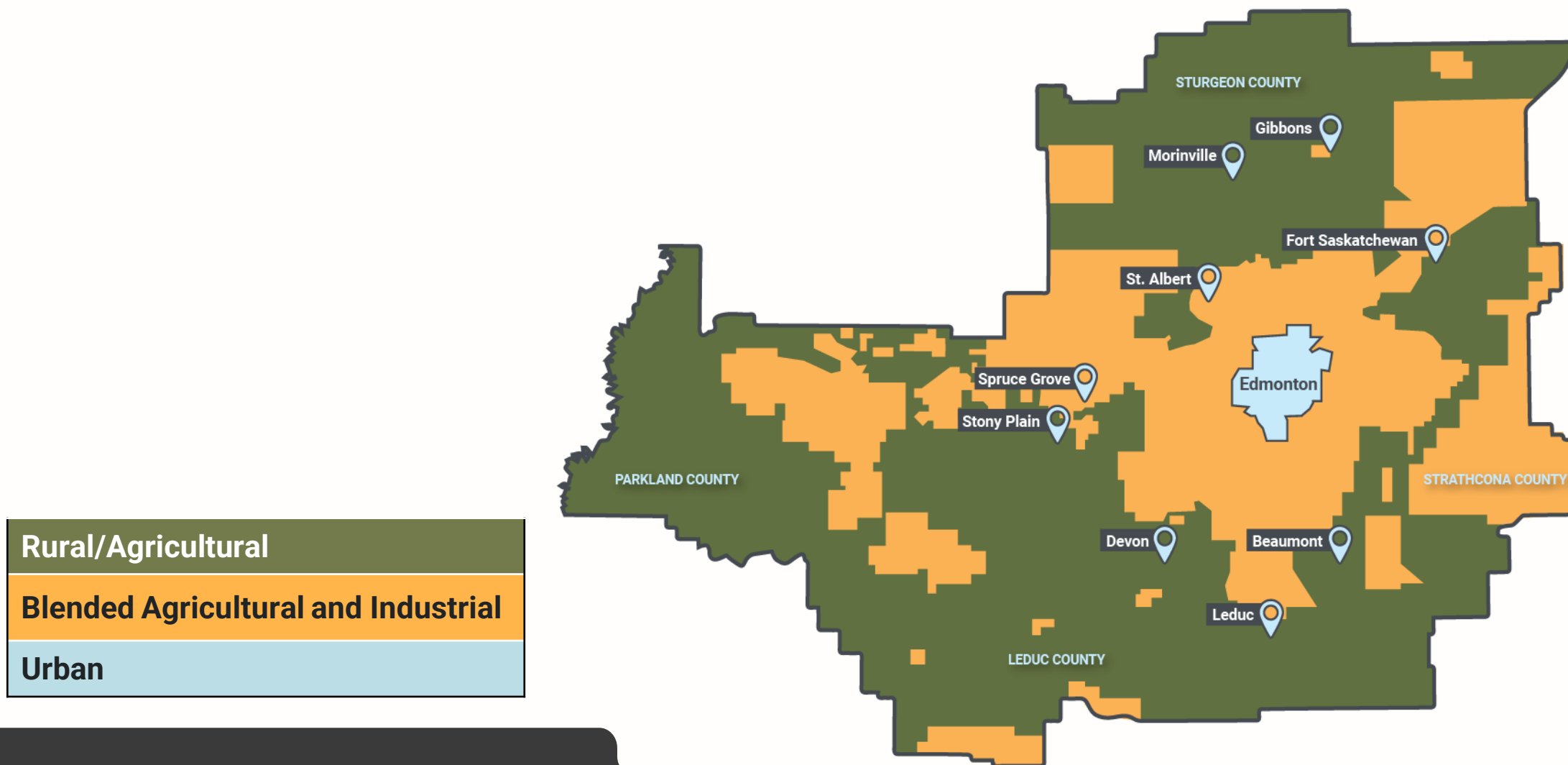
# FOOD & AGRICULTURE

An agricultural powerhouse, and a gateway to leading innovative practices and revolutionary farming

- 2.4 million acres of farmland
- Integrated supply chain linking North America, Europe, and Asia with expertise in food
- 22,000 workers in the food & agriculture industry
- Talent and innovation driven by centres of research & development within universities and poly technical institutions and government centres



# Unique mix of Rural/Agricultural, Industrial, and Urban

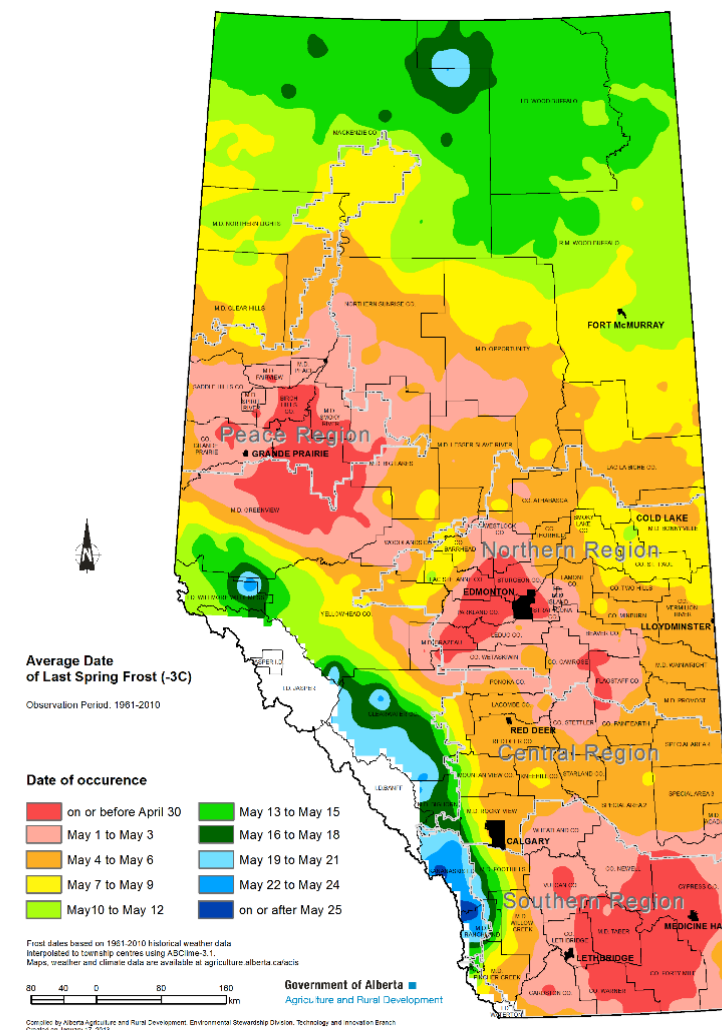


Rural/Agricultural
Blended Agricultural and Industrial
Urban

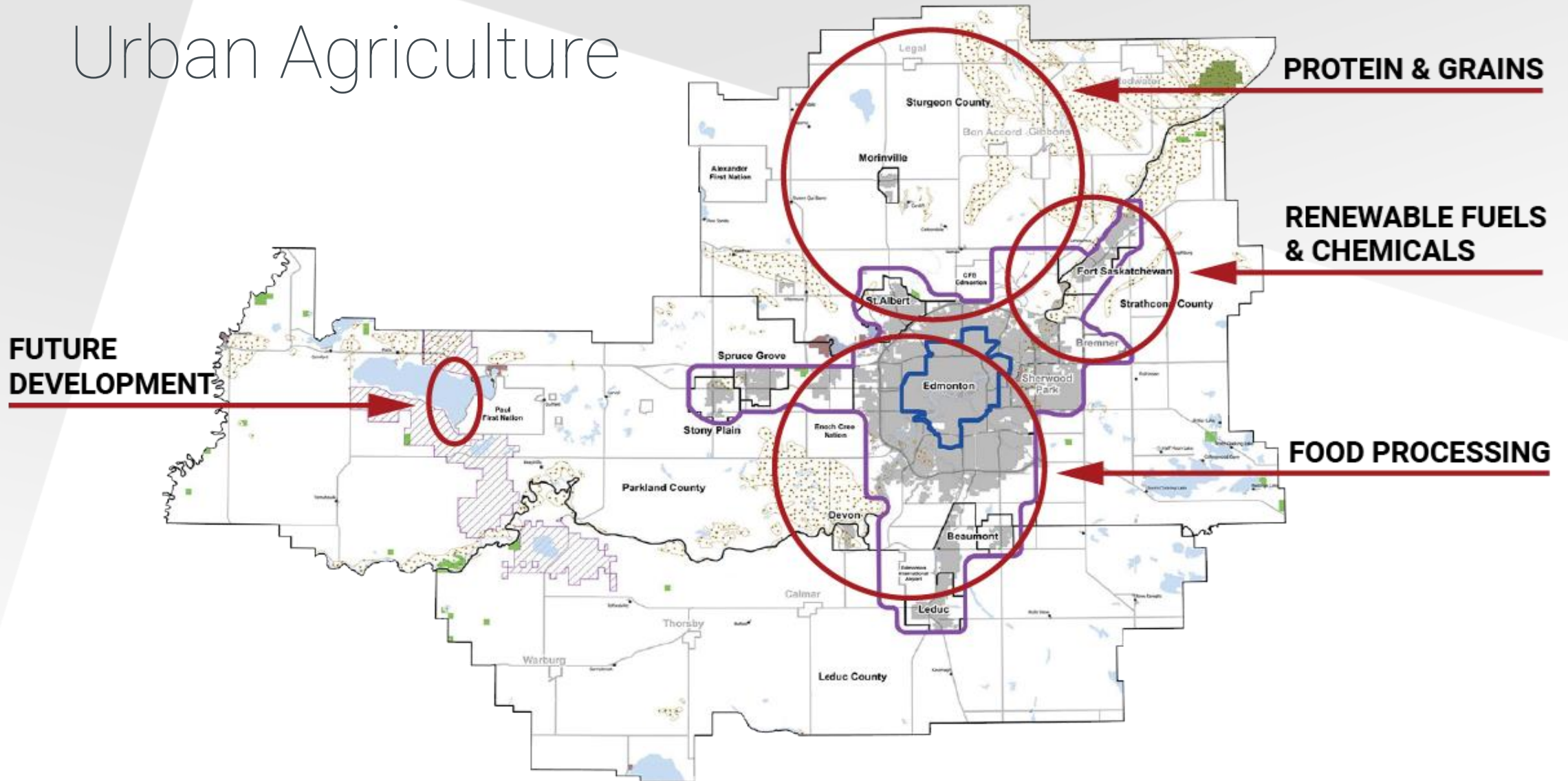
# Uniqueness of region – value to agribusiness

- Edmonton region occupies a unique microclimate with high potential for diversification
- Large urban base + strong agriculture potential creates significant opportunity
- Opportunities in value-added agriculture
- Focus on environment
- Transportation routes (e.g., Port of Prince Rupert)
- Value-added tax credit (12%)

*By global standards, regional soil quality, climatic stability, and water availability will be key future economic drivers*



# Urban Agriculture



**CANADA**

# Access to Global Markets

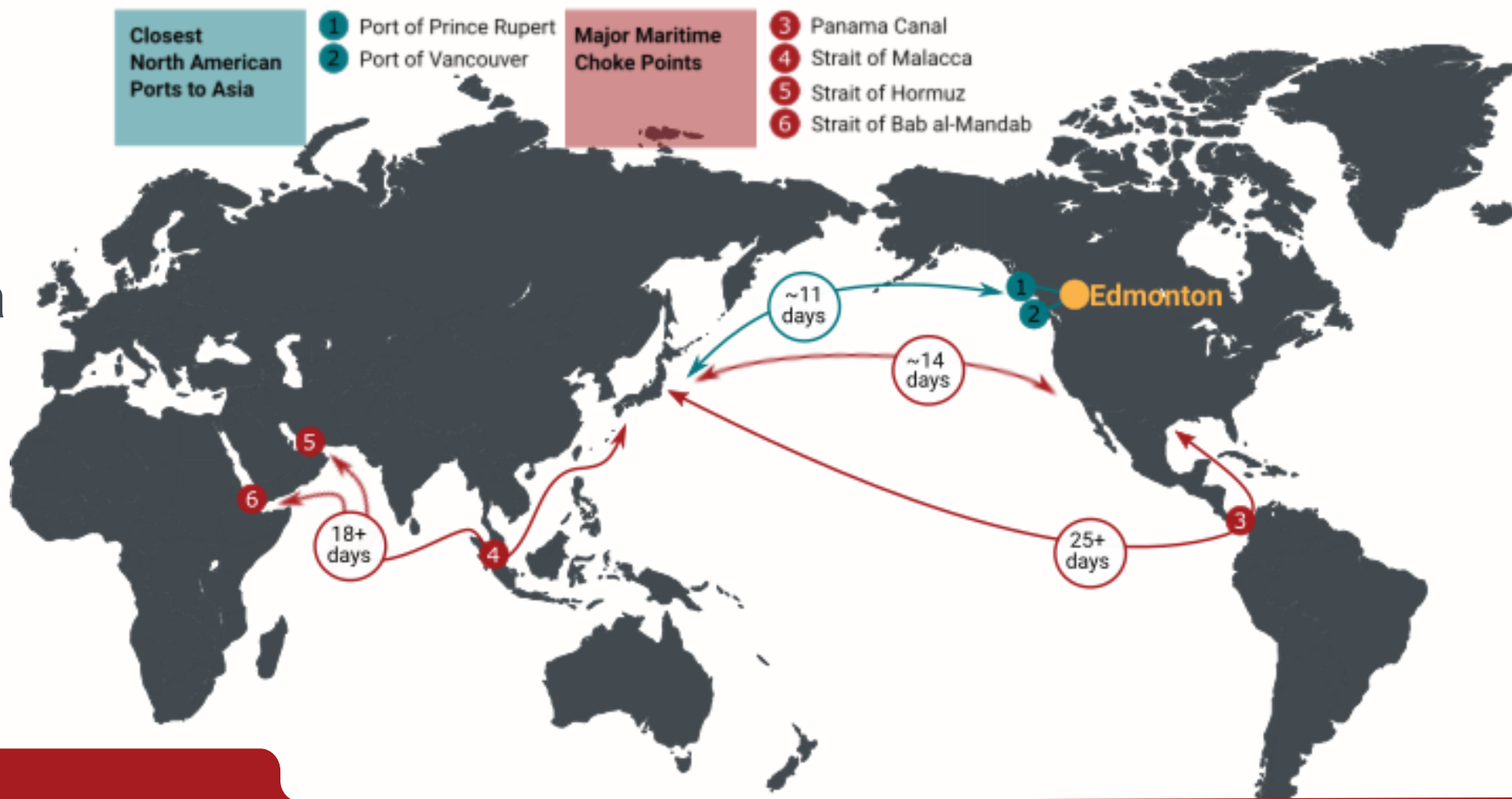
- *Preferential market access through 14 trade agreements to 51 countries with nearly 1.5 billion consumers and a combined GDP of US\$49.3 trillion*





# The Connecting to the world

- Key Markets:
- Japan
  - South Korea
  - California
  - China



# Transformational Opportunities



## Hydrogen

- \$100 Billion annual opportunity
- Hydrogen Hub



## Health & Life Sciences

- Pharmaceuticals R&D and manufacturing
- Diabetes



## Food & Agriculture

- Value-added agriculture
- 1:1 vs 30:1
- Plant proteins



## Global Logistics

- Port Alberta
- Foreign Trade Zone



## AI & Tech

- Ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> globally in AI
- Fast growing tech hub in North America



**PORT  
ALBERTA**

## Foreign Trade Zone

- Set of policies, regulations, collaboration to enhance trade and attract investment

PortAlberta.ca

Fourth Webinar in the Rethinking Regional Attractiveness Series

## Enhancing the attractiveness of non-metropolitan areas and the role of Special Economic Zones: The case of Eastern Sicily SEZ

*Catania, 15/03/2023*

*Valerio Buemi  
Senior expert in facilitation, market and institutional relations  
Special Economic Zone of Eastern Sicily*

## Overview

"The SEZ is a geographically delimited and clearly identified area,.. also consisting of non-territorially adjacent areas, as long as they reveal a functional economic nexus, and including at least a port area..(TEN-T).

For performing economic and entrepreneurial activities, companies ...may benefit from special conditions"(art. 4 D.L. 91/2017).

The Eastern Sicily SEZ is distinguished by five ports/production hubs (Milazzo-Messina, Catania, Augusta, Pozzallo and Gela), whose connection will be further enhanced by the infrastructure investments launched by the NRRP, but which already presents a great potential as a **logistics platform**.

In the Eastern Sicily SEZ strategic relevance can be assigned to the **technology** sector (Microelectronics and Nano-electronics, Remote Sensing and Operation, Computing Architectures, Systems and Control Engineering, Robotics, Advanced Materials), the **pharmaceutical** industry, the presence of various **industrial plants** in the **Energy** field (with production partly moving towards the green transition), and to the **agri-food sector**, which includes Italy's second largest fruit and vegetable market.



## Governance

- All the 8 Italian SEZs are supervised and coordinated by a **national Steering Committee**, constituted by the **Ministries of South and Territorial Cohesion, Regional Affairs, Public Administration, Economy and Economic Development**, along with **7 Presidents of Regions** and **8 Commissioners**, appointed by the **Presidency of the Council of Ministers**.
- The **Government Commissioner** fulfils the following tasks, supported by an administrative and technical staff and a local Steering Committee:
  - Provides **coordination** and **drive** for **SEZ attractiveness** and **operation**.
  - Contributes to **identifying priorities**, **characterisation**, **perimeter** of **SEZ areas**.
  - Promotes the **signing of protocols** to **simplify administrative procedures**.
  - **Implementing Body** for **NRRP projects**.
  - Manages the **Digital Single Gateway** for **investments in SEZ area**.
  - Issues **Single Authorizations**.

# Eastern Sicily SEZ



## Eastern Sicily SEZ territories and GIS platform

- Eastern Sicily SEZ total area: **3.670 HA**
- **39 Municipalities** (2 "Metropolitan Cities" and 3 "Free Municipal Consortia")

<https://siciliaorientale.zes.gov.it/en/geolocation-platform/>



## Implementation of the NRRP for enhancing the SEZ competitiveness and attractiveness



Investments	Overall aim	Resources	Lines of action
<b>4) Interventions for the Special Economic Zones (SEZs)</b>	Relaunching economic development by improving the SEZ areas infrastructures, which are instrumental in increasing the competitiveness of the companies located there and the attractiveness of investments.	630 MLN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- «Last-mile» connection;</li> <li>- <b>Digital logistics</b> and <b>energy and environmental efficiency works</b>;</li> <li>- Strengthening <b>infrastructures resiliency</b> and <b>safety</b> with relation to the seaports access</li> </ul>

Implementation	PROCESS GOALS	SHORT AND MEDIUM-TERM RESULTS
	Better infrastructures for the <b>industrial areas (primary infrastructure)</b>	<b>Removal of obstacles to the effective attractiveness of these areas for private investors</b>
	«Last-mile» connections to the <b>European and national transport networks</b>	<b>Expansion of connected businesses for the benefit of small and medium enterprises</b>
	<b>Resilient Infrastructural Systems</b> that can serve the integrated logistics of these areas with each other and with the wider European single market	<b>Consequent increase in the employment rate of these areas and growth of territorial and social cohesion in the Southern regions of Italy, the true overall objective of the entire SEZ project</b>
		<b>Infrastructure works: interventions on reindustrialisation and environmental restoration, consisting of: upgrading of primary, technological and logistical networks, including green energy production</b>
		<b>Removal of pollution phenomena; monitoring of environmental matrices (air, water and soil) and their evolution resulting from economic activities. There will be no new land consumption.</b>



## The TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Infrastructures

In the Eastern Sicily SEZ the following **Comprehensive** and **TEN-T network infrastructures** are located:

- Augusta Seaport (Core network);
- Catania Airport (Comprehensive);
- Catania Freight Terminal (Comprehensive);
- Catania Seaport (Comprehensive);
- Messina Seaport (Comprehensive);
- Milazzo Seaport (Comprehensive);
- Siracusa Seaport (Comprehensive);
- Gela Seaport (Comprehensive);
- A19 Motorway Catania – Palermo (Core network);
- A20 Motorway Messina – Palermo (Comprehensive);
- Catania-Siracusa-Gela dir. Augusta Motorway (Core network);
- Catania – Palermo Railway line (Core network);
- Messina – Palermo Railway line (Comprehensive);
- Messina-Catania-Bicocca dir. Augusta Railway line (Core network)

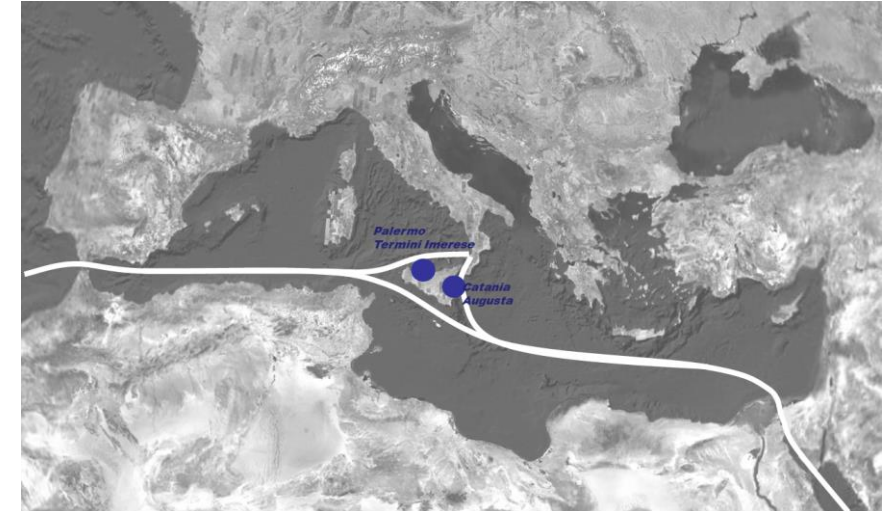
Other infrastructures: Vittoria and Melilli lorry parking areas, Comiso Airport,

Catania-Ragusa Motorway (under project).



## Infrastructural goals

Porti italiani collegati all'Infrastruttura  
Ferroviaria Nazionale (IFN), 2022



- **Connection of seaports and freight terminals to the National Railway Infrastructure** (In Southern Italy there are only 5 freight terminals (against the 16 ones located in Northern Italy) and only the 21% of seaports is connected to the National Railway Infrastructure (vs. an average percentage worth 37%).
- **Digitization of Logistics and Infrastructures**
- **Strengthening of production specialisations** (100 € invested in Southern Italy generate an additional spill-over worth 58 € across the country) and **production chains enhancement** (the average size of companies in Southern Italy is 6,3 workers vs 16 in the rest of Italy)
- Southern Italy produces the **35,9% of Italian renewable energy**. **Opportunity for the Sicilian Energy Triangle**: Priolo-Gela-Milazzo in the context of **green transition**.

## Promotion strategies, Collaborations and Internationalization process

- ✓ **Signing of Memoranda of Understanding with banks and financial institutions: Unicredit – Intesa San Paolo - IRFIS**
- 📖 **Organization of presentation meetings about the SEZ** with entrepreneurs selected as primary players and stakeholders;
- 📖 Operation as a **financial partner for companies wishing to invest in the Eastern Sicily SEZ**, through the offer of credit and financial instruments, advisory support and the allocation of a dedicated credit.



- ✓ **The Eastern Sicily SEZ is a Voting of the World Free Zones Organization.**  
The **World Free Zones Organization**, headquartered in **Dubai (United Arab Emirates)**, is a global no-profit association, to which the most important **Free Zones** and **Special Economic Zones** from Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and America are associated.

- ✓ **Cooperation and Promotion of scientific and technological research centers:**

- Universities of Catania, Messina and Enna**

- Scientific and technological Research Hubs:** Scientific and Technological Park (Catania); Micro and Nano Systems Technology Hub (Catania); Ship, Commercial and Recreational Transport Technology Hub (Messina)

- High-Technology Clusters:** Bio-medical Technology Cluster – BIO-Med Sicily (Catania); High-Technology Cluster on Advanced Manufacturing Systems (Catania); Environmental Technology Cluster Envitech Sicily (Catania)

## Administrative simplifications and tax benefits in the Eastern Sicily SEZ

### Administrative simplifications (authorizations, licence applications, permits or use concessions, etc.)



#### Reduction of procedural time

#### Single Authorization

- All the companies that intend to establish a factory/production site must require a permit to operate to the Municipality where that facility will be settled.
- The main administrative advantages of investing in a SEZ are the **direct and sole interaction with our organization** through the **Single Digital Gateway** (<https://www.impresainungiorno.gov.it/route/zes?cod=siciliaorientale&locale=EN>) for obtaining the **Single Authorization to operate**, instead of dealing with several bureaucratic entities, and the **reduction of the procedures timeline by 1/3**.
- As regards the **environmental permits**, the procedure is regulated and managed by the municipality where the investment project is located, but the **SEZ Commissioner's office may urge the procedure outcome in a timeframe consistent with the investment**.



#### Customs Free Zone

Application for access to the Customs Free Zone (CFZ) under the Customs Code of the European Union (EU Regulation n. 952/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council, dated 9 October 2013).

### Tax benefits



#### National incentives

- Incentives exclusively dedicated to the SEZs (Tax credit up to 100 M€)
- Tax reduction
- Incentives that can be applicable also in SEZs



#### Regional incentives

- Regional incentives of a tax and non-tax nature that can be applicable also in SEZs

## CONTACTS

### **OPERATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

Via Domenico Tempio 26, 95121 Catania

Piazza Cavallotti 3, 98122 Messina

### **INSTITUTIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

Via Sicilia 162, 00187 Roma

### **MAIL & PEC**

[segreteriazes.siciliaorientale@agenziacoessione.gov.it](mailto:segreteriazes.siciliaorientale@agenziacoessione.gov.it)

[commissariozes.siciliaorientale@pec.agenziacoessione.gov.it](mailto:commissariozes.siciliaorientale@pec.agenziacoessione.gov.it)

### **WEBSITE**

<https://siciliaorientale.zes.gov.it/en>



**Invest**  
in Pomerania

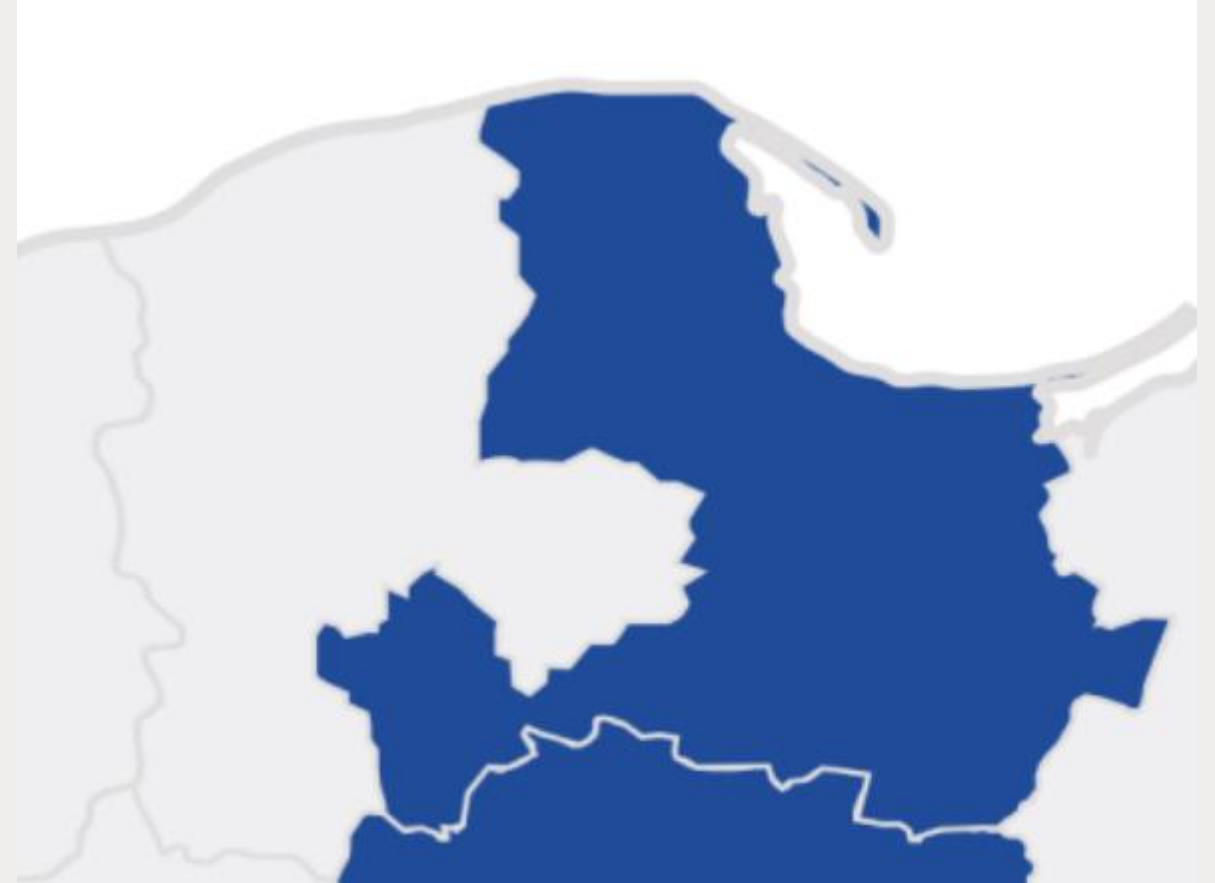
**Polish Investment Zone**

Quantitative criteria

Qualitative criteria

Supporting less  
developed locations

## Two special economic zones



## Quantitative criteria

- depends on the unemployment rate
- and the size of the company

## Qualitative criteria

- sustainable social development
- sustainable economic development



## Evaluation criteria

### Sustainable economic development

Investment in high potential industries in line with government economic policy and regional specialisation

Partial R&D activities

Enhancement of human resources potential (nursery, pre-school, people with disabilities)

Cooperation with suppliers (tooling)

Robotization and Automation

Investment in renewable energy sources

Membership in Key National Cluster (only available for manufacturing projects)

Status of medium, small or micro enterprise

### Sustainable social development

Creation of highly paid (for services sector) or specialised (for manufacturing investment) and stable job placements

Low impact on the environment

Investment located in medium-sized cities or counties impacted by high unemployment

Upskilling of employees, cooperation with educational institutions

Additional perks and benefit for employees



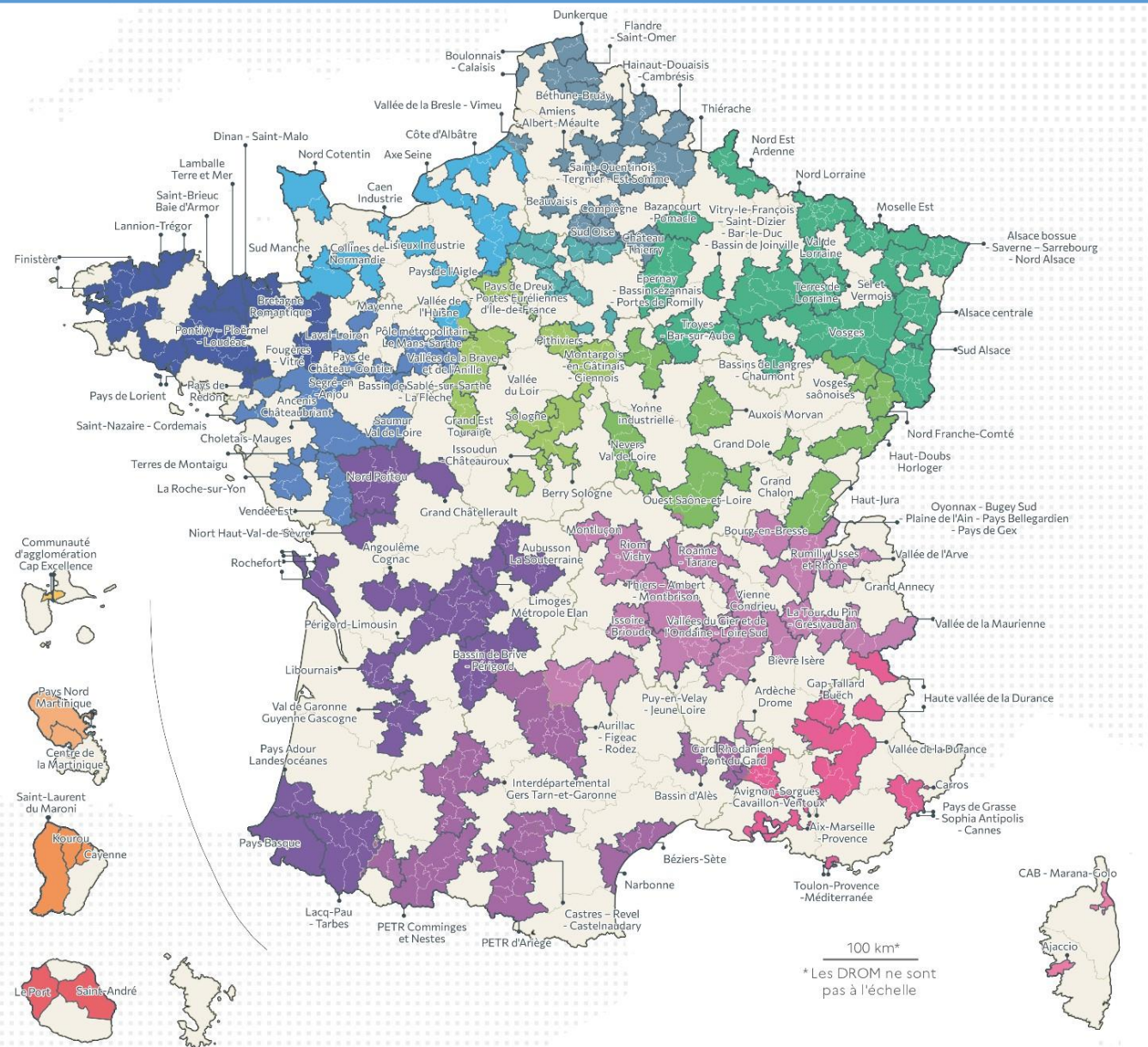
Territories of Industry  
15 March 2023



agence nationale  
de la cohésion  
des territoires

# 1

## A programme deployed throughout the country to implement the strategy of industrial reconquest



542

Inter-Municipal Bodies in industrial territories / *territoires d'industrie*

30 Millions

of inhabitants in the Territories of Industry

1,7 Millions

of industrial jobs in the Territories of Industry

15,3%

Rate of industrial employment in industrial territories, compared to 9.5% outside industrial territories

2

The aim of the *Territoires d'industrie* programme is to provide, in and through the territories, concrete responses to the challenges of supporting industry

A programme based on 4 pillars

- An approach that starts from the needs on the ground and gives territories free will to build their action plans
- Animation in each industry territory by local elected officials and industrial Entrepreneurs in pairs
- A cross-cutting approach to address local needs in terms of skills, land or ecological transition
- An inter-ministerial programme co-piloted by the Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion and the Ministry of Industry/ Economy

A nationwide programme





Key figures of the programme

