

Canada

Geography

Location: Northern North America, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean and North Pacific Ocean, north of the conterminous US

Area:

total area: 9,976,140 sq km

land area: 9,220,970 sq km

Land boundaries: total 8,893 km, US 8,893 km (includes 2,477 km with Alaska)

Coastline: 243,791 km

Maritime claims:

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: varies from temperate in south to subarctic and arctic in north

Terrain: mostly plains with mountains in west and lowlands in southeast

Natural resources: nickel, zinc, copper, gold, lead, molybdenum, potash, silver, fish, timber, wildlife, coal, petroleum, natural gas

Land use:

arable land: 5%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 3%

forest and woodland: 35%

other: 57%

Irrigated land: 8,400 sq km (1989 est.)

Note: second-largest country in world (after Russia); strategic location between Russia and US via north polar route; nearly 90% of the population is concentrated in the region near the US/Canada border

People

Population: 28,434,545 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 21% (female 2,874,705; male 3,016,050)

15-64 years: 67% (female 9,529,272; male 9,531,107)

65 years and over: 12% (female 2,022,324; male 1,461,087) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 1.09% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 13.74 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 7.43 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: 4.55 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 6.8 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 78.29 years

male: 74.93 years

female: 81.81 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.83 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Canadian(s)

adjective: Canadian

Ethnic divisions: British Isles origin 40%, French origin 27%, other European 20%, indigenous Indian and Eskimo 1.5%

Religions: Roman Catholic 46%, United Church 16%, Anglican 10%, other 28%

Languages: English (official), French (official)

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1986)
total population: 97%

Government

Names:

conventional long form: none
conventional short form: Canada

Administrative divisions: 10 provinces and 2 territories*; Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Northwest Territories*, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Yukon Territory*

Independence: 1 July 1867 (from UK)

National holiday: Canada Day, 1 July (1867)

Constitution: amended British North America Act 1867 patriated to Canada 17 April 1982; charter of rights and unwritten customs

Legal system: based on English common law, except in Quebec, where civil law system based on French law prevails; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: three vertical bands of red (hoist side), white (double width, square), and red with a red maple leaf centered in the white band

Economy

Agriculture: accounts for about 3% of GDP; one of the world's major producers and exporters of grain (wheat and barley); key source of US agricultural imports; large forest resources cover 35% of total land area; commercial fisheries provide annual catch of 1.5 million metric tons, of which 75% is exported

Illicit drugs: illicit producer of cannabis for the domestic drug market; use of hydroponics technology permits growers to plant large quantities of high-quality marijuana indoors; growing role as a transit point for heroin and cocaine entering the US market

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 78,148 km; note - there are two major transcontinental freight railway systems: Canadian National (government owned) and Canadian Pacific Railway; passenger service provided by VIA (government operated)

Highways:

total: 849,404 km

Inland waterways: 3,000 km, including Saint Lawrence Seaway

Pipelines: crude and refined oil 23,564 km; natural gas 74,980 km

Ports: Becancour, Churchill, Halifax, Montreal, New Westminster, Prince Rupert, Quebec, Saint John (New Brunswick), Saint John's (Newfoundland), Seven Islands, Sydney, Three Rivers, Toronto, Vancouver, Windsor

Airports:

total: 1,386

Defence Forces

Branches: Canadian Armed Forces (includes Land Forces Command or LC, Maritime Command or MC, Air Command or AC, Communications Command or CC, Training Command or TC), Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)