

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Canada

**CAPITAL:** Ottawa

**SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT:** Federal Multiparty Parliamentary State with Sovereign Monarchy

**AREA:** 9,976,139 Sq Km (3,851,809 Sq Mi)

**ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION** 30,532,900

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**LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY:** Canada is located on the North American Continent and occupies nearly all of it north of the United States except for Alaska to the west and a few small French islands. Topographically, Canada is divided into five regions. (1.) The Atlantic provinces which consist of rounded hills and rolling plains as well as rugged coasts. (2.) The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence lowlands which consist of fertile low lying plains and constitute the heartland of the population. (3.) The Canadian Shield which is an area of Precambrian rock with moss covered, frozen subsoil and treeless plains in the north as well as thick forests to the south. The Canadian Shield extends beyond the US border in two areas, the head of Lake Superior and in the Adirondack Mountains while as a whole it accounts for almost 50% of the land area. The shield is often described as a huge saucer centered on the Hudson and James Bays while it has an average elevation of less than 610 metres (2,000 feet). (4.) The interior plains which are unforested in the south and forested in the north with large deposits of oil and potash. (5.) The Cordillera region which is the western strip of folded and faulted mountains and plateaux. The country's highest point is Mount Logan at 5,951 metres (19,525 feet) which is located in the Yukon Territory while the average elevation for the Western Cordillera region is over 4,500 metres (14,765 feet). The Arctic Archipelago is located on a submerged plateau while a deeply submerged continental shelf runs along the entire west coast of the Arctic Archipelago from Banks Island to Greenland. The largest islands are those in the Arctic Archipelago, extending from St. James Bay to Ellesmere while on the western coast they are Vancouver and Queen Charlotte Islands, as well as Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, the Grand Manan and Campobello Islands and Anticosti Island on the eastern coast. The country's chief rivers include the Yukon and Mackenzie in the west, the North Saskatchewan, South Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan and the Athabasca Rivers in central Canada as well as the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers in the east. Major Cities (pop. est.); Toronto 3,893,000, Montreal 3,127,000, Vancouver 1,602,500, Ottawa 921,000, Edmonton 840,000, Calgary 754,000, Winnipeg 652,500, Quebec 645,500, Hamilton 600,000 (1991). Land Use; forested 54%, pastures 3%, agricultural-cultivated 5%, other 38% (1993).

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**CLIMATE:** Canada has a continental climate which is arctic in the north and maritime near the west coast, while near the US border a narrow strip has a temperate climate with cold winters. The north Canadian coast is permanently icebound except for Hudson Bay which is only frozen for 9 months of the year. The west coast and some inland valleys have mild winters and mild summers with rainfall occurring throughout the year. On the Atlantic coast

the winter temperatures are warmer than those of the interior, but summer temperatures are lower. Much of the southern interior of Canada has high summer temperatures and long cold winters. Average temperature ranges in Ottawa are from -15 to -6 degrees Celsius (5 to 21 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 15 to 26 degrees Celsius (59 to 79 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

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**PEOPLE:** The population consists of either Anglo-Canadian or French-Canadian descendants with 34% of the population of British origin, 26% of French origin and 26% of other European origin. The indigenous AmerIndian and Inuit groups represent only 1.5% of the population. The Canadian AmerIndians are distinguished into 7 cultural groups which are the Algonkin tribes, the Agricultural tribes of the eastern woodlands, the Plains tribes, the Pacific Coast tribes, the Western Cordillera tribes, the Basin tribes of the Yukon and Mackenzie Rivers, and the Eskimo tribes.

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**DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS:** Density; 3 persons per sq km (7 persons per sq mi) (1993). Urban-Rural; 76.6% urban, 23.4% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 49.3% male, 50.7% female (1991). Life Expectancy at Birth; 74.0 years male, 80.6 years female (1991). Age Breakdown; 21% under 15, 23% 15 to 29, 25% 30 to 44, 15% 45 to 59, 11% 60 to 74, 5% 75 and over (1991). Birth Rate; 15.2 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 7.2 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 8.0 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 6.8 per 1,000 live births (1990).

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**RELIGIONS:** Mostly Christians with 45% of the population Roman Catholic while 36% are either Anglican or of the United Church.

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**LANGUAGES:** The official languages are English and French, although 61% of the population speak English as their native language while 24% speak French. The remainder have a native tongue other than French or English.

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**EDUCATION:** Aged 25 or over and having attained: less than and complete primary education 20.6%, secondary 35.0%, post secondary/vocational 25.1%, university 19.3% (1986). Literacy; literate population aged 14 or over 16,185,000 or 95.6% (1975).

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**MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993:** In 1945 Canada joined the UN and in 1949 Canada founded the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with the USA. In 1958 the Progressive Party won the largest majority in the House of Commons in Canadian history. In 1959 the St. Lawrence Seaway, a joint US-Canadian project was opened and in 1962 the Trans-Canadian Highway, the country's first ocean to ocean road was complete. In 1965 a

new official flag flew for the first time. In 1967 Canadians celebrated the 100th anniversary of confederation with Expo '67 and a resurgence in French nationalism occurred after the visit by French Pres. Charles de Gaulle. This resulted in the formation of the Quebec Party which demanded complete separation from the federation. In 1969 The official Languages Act was put in place which required Federal facilities in Canada to provide service in both French and English if 10% of the people in a particular area speak either language. In Oct. 1970 militant separatists in Quebec kidnapped a provincial government official, who was murdered, as well as a British diplomat who was later liberated. In 1977 Quebec's Bill 101 declared French the official language of Quebec requiring governments, schools and businesses to use French. In 1980 voters in Quebec rejected a proposal to give provincial leaders the authority to negotiate with the federal government for independence. In 1982 a Constitutional Act ended British control over amendments to Canada's constitution and the Act also included a new Bill of Rights. In 1984 the Progressive Conservative Party with Brian Mulroney as leader won general elections. In 1987 the government tentatively agreed to a far reaching constitutional amendment at Meech Lake. On June 3, 1987 the Meech Lake Accord was finally approved which provided Quebec with the status of a "distinct society" and the right to preserve and promote that status. On Nov. 21, 1989 Prime Minister Mulroney took office and the US/Canadian free-trade agreement which he had negotiated came into effect in Jan. 1989. In 1990 the national debate again shifted back to the Meech Lake Accord and the refusal of two of the ten provinces to ratify the pact resulted in its failure. As a result there was a new impetus for Quebec's secession and they refused to sign the new 1982 Constitution until certain safeguards were put in place. In 1988 Quebec's Supreme Court ruled that the province's law banning English-language signs was unconstitutional, however, Quebec passed a new law outlawing those signs. In response some other nearby provinces declared themselves as exclusively English-speaking. In June 1990 an attempt to secure unanimous approval among the provinces for constitutional changes outline in the "Meech Lake" accord failed. In Feb. 1991 Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa issued an ultimatum to the rest of Canada to draw up a new constitution giving Quebec greater powers by the end of 1992 or Quebec will vote on secession. In April 1991 the government announced it was prepared to allocate \$355 million over the next 5 years to settle native land claims while in June the AmerIndians chose a new leader with the election of Ovide Mercredi, a Cree lawyer from Manitoba, as national chief of the Assembly of First Nations. In June 1991 a report from a 12-member commission, called the "Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future", found that many Canadians believed Quebec should not be given powers that would result in citizenship differentiation and that many also had reservations about bilingualism as official policy. Also in June 1991 Canada decided to join NAFTA and began talks with the US and Mexico. On Sept. 24, 1991 Prime Minister Mulroney's government put forward constitutional proposals to a special Senate-House of Commons committee that also considered other provinces desires while Quebec had made it clear it was intending to hold a referendum on the constitutional revisions in Oct. 1992. The proposals included shared citizenship and diversity, responsive institutions for a modern Canada and preparing for a more prosperous future while public opinion in both Ottawa and Quebec were mixed and cautious. On Mar. 12, 1992 a new round of constitutional talks with the federal government began with objective to reach a "multilateral consensus" on reform amongst the provinces, territories and native groups. On June 10, 1992 a long-term dispute

with France of fishing zones around the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon was settled by an international panel that allowed the French fisherman to access some 2,537 sq mi of their claimed 13,703 sq mi. On Aug. 4, 1992 the premiers of the provinces met with Mulroney with encouraging results and a series of sessions held over the following days. On Aug. 11, 1992 the US, Canada and Mexico reached an agreement on the NAFTA Treaty that would establish a free-trade zone of some 364 million people, although it still required ratification of the three countries' governments. On Aug. 22, 1992 approval for a final package of changes was announced with all government and native groups agreeing that a national referendum on the proposals was needed. The new proposals in the accord included the reduction in the number of Senate representatives from 104 to 62 while the number of seats in the House of Commons was to be increased by 42 to a total of 337 while the inherent right to self-government for the aboriginal peoples was recognized along with Quebec's position of a "distinct society". On Oct. 26, 1992 the proposals were decisively turned down by Canadians in the national referendum while although political leaders believed that an opportunity was lost most agreed that a no vote was preferable to a split between Canada and the Quebec province. Also during 1992 Canada sent 1,200 peace-keeping troops to Yugoslavia in March with another 1,200 assigned to assist later while 750 troops were sent to Somalia to help in relief operations there. On Feb. 24 1993 Prime Minister Mulroney announced his retirement with a bilingual woman, Kim Campbell, elected as his successor. On June 25, 1993 Campbell was sworn in as Canada's first female prime minister while national elections held on Oct. 25, 1993 resulted in the election of Jean Chretien of the Liberal Party as the country's new prime minister. Prime Minister Chretien was sworn in on Nov. 4, 1993 while Campbell stepped down as Progressive Conservatives party leader on Dec. 13, 1993. In 1993 Canada's international image as a leading peace-keeper was stained after 4 Canadian soldiers on the peace-keeping mission in Somalia were charge with torture and negligence and two with second-degree murder after 4 civilians were killed. By the end of 1993 Canada had spent some \$1 billion on peace-keeping activities in Yugoslavia. Also during 1993 interest rates as a result of the economic recession had dropped to a twenty year low.

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**CURRENCY:** The official currency is the Dollar (Can) divided into 100 Cents.

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**ECONOMY:** Gross National Product; USD \$574,936,000,000 (1993). National Debt; Can \$443,278,000,000 (1991). Imports; Can \$169,316,000,000 (1993). Exports; Can \$181,026,000,000 (1993). Tourism Receipts; USD \$5,897,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; Can \$19,300,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 14,056,000 or 48.30% of total population (1994). Unemployed; 11.1% (1994).

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**MAIN TRADING PARTNERS:** Its main trading partners are the USA, the EU and Japan.

**MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS:** Asbestos, Cereals, Coal, Cobalt, Copper, Dairy Products, Fish,

Fruit and Vegetables, Gold, Gypsum, Iron Ore, Lead, linseed, Livestock, Nickel, Oil and Natural Gas, Potash, Rape seed, Salt, Silver, Sulfur, Timber, Titanium, Tobacco, Uranium, Zinc.

**MAJOR INDUSTRIES:** Agriculture, Aluminum, Cement, Chemicals, Fertilizers, Food Processing, Forestry, Hydroelectricity, Iron and Steel Engineering, Mining, Oil and Gas Refining, Paper and other Timber Products, Telecommunications, Transport Equipment.

**MAIN EXPORTS:** Cereals, Chemicals, Coal, Crude Oil, Foodstuffs, Machinery, Metal Ores, Motor Vehicles, Natural Gas, Paper, Petroleum Products, Timber, Wood Pulp.

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**TRANSPORT:** Railroads; route length 86,880 km (53,985 mi) (1990), passenger-km 1,166,000,000 (725,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 239,404,000,000 (163,968,000,000 short ton-mi) (1990). Roads; length 849,404 km (527,795 mi) (1991). Vehicles; cars 13,061,000 (1991), trucks and buses 3,744,012 (1991). Merchant Marine; vessels 1,185 (1992), deadweight tonnage 2,896,830 (1992). Air Transport; passenger-km 57,873,000,000 (35,961,000,000 passenger-mi) (1991), cargo ton-km 1,391,200,000 (952,833,000 short ton-mi) (1991).

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**COMMUNICATIONS:** Daily Newspapers; total of 108 with a total circulation of 5,500,000 (1993). Radio; receivers 26,878,000 (1994). Television; receivers 17,400,000 (1994). Telephones; units 16,470,900 (1993).

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**MILITARY:** 70,500 (1995) total active duty personnel with 28.8% army, 14.2% navy, 24.3% air force and 32.7% not identified while military expenditure accounts for 2.0% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).