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Canada has about one-tenth the population of the U.S. The lands have been inhabited for millennia by aboriginal peoples. Beginning in the late fifteenth century, British and French expeditions explored and later settled the Atlantic coast. France ceded nearly all of its colonies in North America in 1763 after the Seven Years War. In 1867, with the union of three British North American colonies through Confederation, Canada became a federal dominion. A gradual process of independence from the United Kingdom moved Canada towards statehood and culminated in the Canada Act 1982, severing the last vestiges of dependence on the British parliament. A federation now comprising ten provinces and three territories, Canada is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy with King Charles III as its head of state. It is a bilingual and multicultural country, with both English and French as official languages at the federal level. Technologically advanced and industrialized, Canada maintains a diversified economy that is heavily reliant upon its abundant natural resources and upon trade—particularly with the United States, with which Canada has had a long and complex relationship. In contrast to American individualism, Canadians have a strong ethic of "fairness," which for them means to do right by the less fortunate. Arguably, even more than its southern neighbor, Canadians have transcended geographical, ethnic and religious boundaries to create one nation, especially since the issue of Quebec separatism has been relegated to the past. Etymology The name Canada comes from a Saint Lawrence Iroquoian word meaning "village" or "settlement." In 1535, inhabitants of the present-day Quebec City region used the word to direct explorer Jacques Cartier toward the village of Stadacona. [7] Cartier used the word 'Canada' to refer to not only that village, but the entire area subject to Donnacona, Chief at Stadacona. [8] The French colony of Canada referred to the part of New France along the Saint Lawrence River and the northern shores of the Great Lakes. Later, it was split into two British colonies, called Upper Canada and Lower Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada in 1841. Upon Confederation in 1867, the name Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada in 1841. Upon Confederation in 1867, the name Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until their union as the British Province of Canada until the Briti referred to as the Dominion of Canada until the 1950s.[9] As Canada asserted its political autonomy from Britain, the federal government increasingly simply used Canada on legal state documents and treaties. The Canada Act 1982 with the renaming of the national holiday from Dominion Day to Canada Day. History Aboriginal and Inuit tradition holds that the First Peoples inhabited parts of Canada since the dawn of time. Archaeological studies support a human presence in northern Yukon from 26,500 years ago, and in southern Ontario from 9,500 years ago.[10] Europeans first arrived when the Vikings settled briefly at L'Anse aux Meadows circa 1000 C.E. The next Europeans to explore Canada's Atlantic coast included John Cabot in 1497 for England and Jacques Cartier in 1534 for France; seasonal Basque whalers and fishermen would subsequently exploit the region between the Grand Banks and Tadoussac for over a century. French explorer Samuel de Champlain arrived in 1603 and established the first permanent European settlements at Port Royal in 1605 and Quebec City in 1608. These would become respectively the capitals of Acadia and Canada. Among French colonists of New France, Canadiens extensively settled the St. Lawrence River valley, Acadians settled the present-day Maritimes, while French fur traders and Catholic missionaries explored the Great Lakes, Hudson Bay and the Mississippi watershed to Louisiana. The French and Iroquois Wars broke out over control of the fur trade was Canada's most important industry until the 1800s The English established fishing outposts in Newfoundland around 1610 and colonized the Thirteen Colonies to the south. A series of four Inter-colonial Wars erupted between 1689 and 1763, Mainland Nova Scotia came under British rule with the Treaty of Utrecht (1713); the Treaty of Paris (1763) ceded Canada and most of New France to Britain following the Seven Years' War. The Royal Proclamation (1763) carved the Province of Quebec out of New France and annexed Cape Breton Island (now Prince Edward Island) became a separate colony. To avert conflict in Quebec, the Quebec Act of 1774 expanded Quebec's territory to the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley, and re-established the French language, Catholic faith, and French civil law in Quebec; it angered many residents of the Thirteen Colonies, helping to fuel the American Revolution.[11] The Treaty of Paris (1783) recognized American independence and ceded territories south of the Great Lakes to the United States, Approximately 50,000 United Empire Loyalists fled the United States to Canada. [12] New Brunswick was split from Nova Scotia as part of a reorganization of Loyalist settlements in the Maritimes. To accommodate English-speaking Lower Canada and English-speaking Upper Canada, granting each their own elected Legislative Assembly. Canada was a major front in the War of 1812 between the United States and British Empire. Its defense contributed to a sense of unity among British North Americans. Large-scale immigration to Canada began in 1815 from Britain and Ireland. The timber industry would also surpass the fur trade in importance in the early 1800s. The desire for responsible government resulted in the aborted rebellions of French Canadians into British culture.[13] The Act of Union (1840) merged The Canadian Provinces into the United Province of Canada. French and English Canadians worked together in the Assembly to reinstate French rights. Responsible government was established for all British North American provinces by 1849. The signing of the Oregon Treaty by Britain and the United States in 1846 ended the Oregon boundary dispute, extending the border westward along the 49th parallel, and paving the way for British colonies on Vancouver Island (1849) and in British Columbia (1858). Canada launched a series of western exploratory expeditions to claim Rupert's Land and the Arctic region. The Canadian population grew rapidly because of high birth rates; British immigration was offset by emigration to the United States, especially by French Canadians moving to New England. Following several constitutional confederation creating "one Dominion under the name of Canada" on July 1, 1867 with four provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick.[14] Canada assumed control of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory to form the Northwest Territories, where Métis' grievances ignited the Red River Rebellion and the creation of the province of Manitoba in July 1870. British Columbia and Vancouver Island (which had united in 1866) and the colony of Prince Edward Island joined Confederation in 1871 and 1873, respectively. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's Conservative Party established a National Policy of tariffs to protect nascent Canadian manufacturing industries. To open the West, the government sponsored construction of three trans-continental railways (most notably the Canadian Pacific Railway), opened the prairies to settlement with the Dominion Lands Act, and established the North West Mounted Police to assert its authority over this territory as a separate territory in the region to better control the situation. Under Liberal Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier, continental European immigrants settled the prairies, and Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces in 1917. Canada automatically entered the First World War in 1914 with Britain's declaration of war, sending volunteers to the Western Front. The Conscription Crisis of 1917 erupted when conservative Prime Minister Robert Borden brought in compulsory military service over the objection of the French-speaking people of Quebec. In 1919, Canada joined the League of Nations independently of Britain; in 1931 the Statute of Westminster affirmed Canada's independence. The Great Depression of 1929 brought economic hardship to all of Canada. In response, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in Alberta and Saskatchewan presaged a welfare state as pioneered by Tommy Douglas in the 1940s and 1950s. Canada declared war on Germany independently during World War II under Liberal Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, three days after Britain. The first Canadian Army units arrived in Britain in December 1939. Canadian troops played important roles in the Battle of the Atlantic, the failed 1941 Dieppe Raid in France, the Allied invasion of Italy, the Battle of the Scheldt during the liberation of the Netherlands in 1944. The Canadian economy boomed as industry manufactured military materiel for Canada, Great Britain, China, and the Soviet Union. Despite another Conscription Crisis in Quebec, Canada finished the war with one of the largest armed forces in the world. In 1949, Newfoundland joined the Confederation as Canada's 10th province. Quebec underwent profound social and economic changes during the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s. Québécois first came to power in 1976. A referendum on sovereignty-association in 1980 was rejected by a solid majority of the population, and a second referendum in 1995 was rejected by a slimmer margin of just 50.6 percent to 49.4 percent. [15] In 1997, the Canadian Supreme Court ruled unilateral secession by a province to be unconstitutional; Quebec's sovereignty movement has continued nonetheless. emerged. Canada adopted its current Maple Leaf Flag in 1965. In response to a more assertive French-speaking Quebec, the federal government became officially bilingual with the Official Languages Act of 1969. Non-discriminatory Immigration Acts were introduced in 1967 and 1976, and official multiculturalism in 1971; waves of non-European immigration have changed the face of the country. Social democratic programs such as Universal Health Care, the Canada Pension Plan, and Canada Pension Plan, and Canada Student Loans were initiated in the 1970s; provincial governments, particularly Quebec, fought these as incursions into their jurisdictions. Finally, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau pushed through the patriation of the constitution from Britain, enshrining a Charter of Rights and Freedoms based on individual rights in the Constitution Act of 1982. Economic integration with the United States has increased significantly since World War II. The Canada-United States Automotive Agreement (or Auto Pact) in 1965 and the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement of 1987 were defining moments in integrating the two economies. Canadian nationalists continued to worry about their cultural autonomy as American television shows, movies and corporations became omnipresent.[16] However, Canadians take special pride in their system of universal health care and their commitment to multiculturalism.[17] Canada is a constitutional monarchy with King Charles III, King of Canada, as head of state; the monarch of Canada also serves as head of state; the monarchy with King Charles III, King of Canada also serves as head of state; the monarchy with those other states. The country is a parliamentary democracy with a federal system of parliamentary government and strong democratic traditions. Canada's constitution Act, 1867 (formerly the British North America Act) established governance based on Parliamentary precedent "similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom" and divided powers between the federal and provincial governments. The Constitution Act, 1982 added a Canadians that generally cannot be overridden by legislation of any level of government in Canada. However, a "notwithstanding clause," allows the federal parliament and the provincial legislatures to override certain sections of the Charter temporarily, for a period of five years. The Chamber of the political party that can obtain the confidence of a plurality in the House of Commons. Executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister and Cabinet ministers, all of whom are sworn into the King's Privy Council for Canada to become Minister and Cabinet are formally appointed by the Governor General (who is the Monarch's representative in Canada). However, the Prime Minister chooses the Cabinet, and by convention, the Governor General respects the Prime Minister's choices. Cabinet minister exercises vast political power, especially in the appointment of government officials and civil servants. The federal parliament is made up of the King and two houses: an elected by simple plurality in a "riding" or electoral district; general elections are called by the Governor General when the Prime Minister so advises. While there is no minimum term for a Parliament, a new election must be called within five years of the last general election. Members of the Senate, whose seats are apportioned on a regional basis, are chosen by the Prime Minister and formally appointed by the Governor General, and serve until age 75. Canada's four major political parties are the Conservative Party of Canada, the Liberal Party of Canada, the New Democratic Party of Canada and other smaller parties do not have current representation in Parliament, the list of historical parties with elected representation is substantial. Law The Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa, west of Parliament Hill. Canada's judiciary plays an important role in interpreting laws and has the power to strike down laws that violate the Constitution. The Supreme Court of Canada is the highest court and final arbiter and is led by the Right Honourable Madam Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin, P.C. Its nine members are appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister and minister of justice, after consultation with non-governmental legal bodies. The federal cabinet appoints justices to superior courts at the provincial and territorial levels. Judicial posts at the lower provincial and territorial levels are filled by their respective governments (see Court system of Canada for more detail). Common law prevails everywhere except in Quebec, where civil law predominates. Criminal law is solely a federal responsibility and is uniform throughout Canada. Law enforcement, including criminal courts, is a provincial responsibility, but in rural areas of all provinces except Ontario and Quebec, policing is contracted to the federal Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Foreign relations and military The Peacekeeping Monument in Ottawa. Canada and the United States share the world's longest undefended border, co-operate on military campaigns and exercises, and are each others largest trading partners. Canada has nevertheless maintained an independent foreign policy, most notably maintaining full relations with Cuba and declining participation in the Iraq War. Canada also maintains historic ties to the United Kingdom and France and to other former British and French colonies through Canada's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations and La Francophonie (French-Speaking Countries). Canada employs a professional, volunteer military force of regular and reserve personnel. The unified Canadian Forces (CF) comprise the army, navy, and air force. Canada joined the United Nations in 1945 and became a founding member of NATO in 1949. During the Cold War, Canada was a major contributor to UN forces in the Korean War, and founded the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) in cooperation with the United States to defend against aerial attacks from the Soviet Union Canada has played a leading role in United Nations peacekeeping efforts. During the Suez Crisis of 1956, Lester B. Pearson eased tensions by proposing the inception of the United Nations peacekeeping effort until 1989[21] and has since maintained forces in international missions in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere. Canada joined the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1990 and hosted the OAS General Assembly in Windsor in June 2000, and the third Summit of the American States (OAS) in 1990 and hosted the OAS General Assembly in Windsor in June 2000, and the third Summit of the American States (OAS) in 1990 and hosted the OAS General Assembly in Windsor in June 2000, and the third Summit of the American States (OAS) in 1990 and hosted the OAS General Assembly in Windsor in June 2001. in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). Since 2001, Canada has had troops deployed in Afghanistan as part of the US stabilization force and the UN-authorized, NATO-commanded International Security Assistance Force. years; the two-hundred member team has been deployed in relief operations after the December 2005 and the Kashmir earthquake in October 2005. In August 2007, Canadian sovereignty in Arctic waters was challenged following a Russian flag at the seabed at the North Pole. Canada has considered that area to be sovereign territory since 1925.[22] Provinces and territories A geopolitical map of Canada, exhibiting its ten provinces and three territories; in turn, these may be grouped into numerous regions. Western Canada consists of British Columbia and three Prairie provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba). Eastern Canada (comprised of the three Maritime provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia; and Newfoundland and Labrador). Three territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut) comprise Northern Canada. Provinces have a large degree of autonomy from the federal government, territories somewhat less. Each has its own provincial or territorial symbols. The provinces are responsible for most of Canada's social programs (such as health care, education, and welfare) and together collect more revenue than the federal government, an almost unique structure among federations in the world. Using its spending powers, the federal government can initiate national policies in provincial areas, such as the Canada Health Act; the provinces can opt out of these, but rarely do so in practice. Equalization payments are made by the federal government to ensure that reasonably uniform standards of services and taxation are kept between the richer and poorer provinces. All provinces have unicameral, elected legislatures headed by a Premier selected in the same way as the Prime Minister of Canada. Each province also has a Lieutenant-Governor representing the King, analogous to the Governor General of Canada, appointed on the recommendation of the Prime Minister of Canada, though with increasing levels of consultation with provincial governments in recent years. Geography and climate Did you know? Canada is the second largest country in the world by total area (including its waters), and the fourth by land area Canada occupies a major northern portion of North America, sharing land borders with the contiguous United States to the Pacific Ocean in the west; to the north lies the Arctic Ocean. By total area (including its waters), Canada is the second largest country in the world, after Russia.[23] By land area alone, Canada and in the world is Canadian Forces Station (CFS) Alert on the northern tip of Ellesmere Island—latitude 82.5°N—just 817 kilometres (450 nautical miles) from the North Pole.[25] Canada has the longest coastline in the world: 243,000 kilometres (151,019 miles.[26] The population density, is among the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence River in the southeast. To the north of this region is the broad Canadian Shield, an area of rock scoured clean by the last ice age, thinly soiled, rich in minerals, and dotted with lakes and rivers. Canada by far has more lakes than any other country and has a large amount of the world's freshwater. The Horseshoe Falls in Ontario is the largest component of Niagara Falls, one of the world's most voluminous waterfalls, a major source of hydroelectric power, and a tourist destination. In eastern Canada, the Saint Lawrence River widens into the Gulf, the Canadian Maritimes protrude eastward along the Appalachian Mountain range from northern Columbia. In western Canada, the Mackenzie River flows from the Great Slave Lake to the Arctic Ocean. A tributary of the Mackenzie is the South Nahanni River, which is home to Virginia Falls, a waterfall about twice as high as Niagara Falls. Northern Canadian vegetation tapers from coniferous forests to tundra and finally to Arctic barrens in the far north. The northern Canadian mainland is ringed with a vast archipelago containing some of the world's largest islands. Average winter and summer high temperatures across Canada vary depending on the location. Winters can be harsh in many regions of the country, particularly in the interior and Prairie provinces which experience a continental climate, where daily average temperatures are near -15 °C (5 °F) but can drop below -40 °C (-40 °F) with severe wind chills. In non-coastal regions, snow can cover the ground almost six months of the year, (more in the north). Coastal British Columbia is an exception and enjoys a temperature with a mild and rainy winter. On the east and west coast average high temperatures are generally in the low 20s °C (70s °F), while between the coasts the average summer high temperature ranges from 25 to 30 °C (75 to 85 °F) with occasional extreme heat in some interior locations exceeding 40 °C (104 °F). Economy Canada is one of the world's wealthiest nations with a high per capita income, a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Group of Eight (G8). Canada has traditionally had a lower per capita gross domestic product (GDP) than its southern neighbor (whereas wealth has been more equally divided), but higher than the large western European economies.[27] Since the early 1990s, the Canadian economy has been growing rapidly with low unemployment and large government surpluses on the federal level. Today Canada closely resembles the US in its market-oriented economic system, pattern of production, and high living standards. In the past century, the growth of the manufacturing, mining, and service sectors has transformed the nation from a largely rural economy into one primarily industrial and urban. As with other first world nations, the Canadians economy is dominated by the service industry, which employs about three quarters of Canadians. However, Canada is unusual among developed countries in the importance of the primary sector, with the logging and oil industries being two of Canada's most important. Canada is one of the few developed nations that is a net exporter of energy. Atlantic Canada has vast offshore deposits of natural gas and large oil and gas resources are centred in Alberta. The vast Athabasca Tar Sands give Canada the world's second largest reserves of oil behind Saudi Arabia. In Quebec, British Columbia, Newfoundland & Labrador, Ontario and Manitoba, hydroelectric power is a cheap and clean source of renewable energy. Canada is one of the most important suppliers of wheat, canola and other grains. Canada is the world's largest producer of zinc and uranium and a world leader in many other natural resources such as gold, nickel, aluminum, and lead; many, if not most, towns in the northern part of the country, where agriculture is difficult, exist because of a nearby mine or source of timber. Canada also has a sizable manufacturing sector centered in southern Ontario and Quebec, with automobiles and aeronautics representing particularly important industries. Canada is highly dependent on international trade, especially trade with the United States. The 1989 Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (which included Mexico) touched office of the contract of the contra a dramatic increase in trade and economic integration with the US. Demographics Toronto, Ontario skyline with the CN tower. Canada's population growth is from immigration and, to a lesser extent, natural growth is from immigration and, to a lesser extent, natural growth. About 80 percent of Canada's population growth is from immigration and, to a lesser extent, natural growth. ethnic origin is Canadian (accounting for 32 percent of the population), with substantial numbers of English, Scottish, French, Irish, and German populations, and smaller numbers of Chinese, Italian, First Nations, Indian, and Ukrainian. There are 600 recognized First Nations governments or bands encompassing over 1 million people. Canada has one of the highest per capita immigration rates in the world, [29] driven by economic policy and family reunification; Canada also accepts large numbers of refugees. Newcomers settle mostly in the major urban areas of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Canada is religiously diverse, encompassing a wide range of beliefs and customs. Canada has no official church, and the government is officially committed to religious pluralism. [30] The majority of Canadians identified as being Christians; of this, Catholics make up the largest group. The largest group. The largest group. The majority of Canadians identified as being Christians; of this, Catholics make up the largest group. The majority of Canadians identified as being Christians; of this, Catholics make up the largest group. with religions other than Christianity, of which the largest is Islam, followed by Judaism, Hinduism, and Sikhism. Canadian provinces and territories are responsible for education. Each system is similar while reflecting regional history, culture and geography. The mandatory school age ranges between 5-7 to 16-18 years, contributing to an adult literacy rate of 99 percent. Postsecondary education is also administered by provincial and territorial governments, who provide most of the funding; the federal government administers additional "big house" in Victoria, BC. Canadian culture has historically been influenced by British, French, and Aboriginal cultures and traditions. It has also been influenced by American media and entertainment are popular if not dominant in Canada; conversely, many Canadian cultural products and entertainers are successful in the U.S. and worldwide. Many cultural products are marketed toward a unified "North American" or global market. The creation and preservation of distinctly Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the National Film Board of Canada Canadians value multiculturalism, and see Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police are the federal and national police force of Canada and an international icon. National symbols are influenced by natural, historical, and First Nations sources. Particularly, the use of the maple leaf as a Canadian symbol dates back to the early eighteenth century and is depicted on its current and previous flags, the penny, and on the early eighteenth century and is depicted on its current and previous flags, the penny, and on the early eighteenth century and is depicted on its current and previous flags, the penny, and on the early eighteenth century and is depicted on its current and previous flags, the penny, and on the early eighteenth century and is depicted on its current and previous flags. official national sports are ice hockey (winter) and lacrosse (summer).[32] Hockey is a national pastime and the most popular spectator sport in the country. Canada's six largest metropolitan areas - Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa, Calgary, and Edmonton - have franchises in the National Hockey League (NHL), and there are more Canadian players in the league than from all other countries combined. After hockey, other popular spectator sports include curling and football; the latter is played at youth and amateur levels, but professional leagues and franchises are not as widespread. Canada has hosted several high-profile international sporting events, including the 1976 Summer Olympics, and the 2007 FIFA U-20 World Cup. Canada was the host nation for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler, British Columbia. Language The population of Montreal, Quebec is mainly French-speaking, with a significant English-speaking community. Canada's two official languages are English and French. Official Languages Act, and Official Languages Regulations; it is applied by the Commissioner of Official Languages. The large majority of Canadians speak either or both English and French. English and French have equal status in federal courts, Parliament, and in all federal government services in either English or French, and official language minorities are guaranteed their own schools in all provinces and territories. Although the majority of French-speaking Canadians live in Quebec, there are substantial Francophone population in the northern and southern Manitoba, with an Acadian population as well as concentrations in Southwestern Nova Scotia and on Cape Breton Island. Ontario has the largest French population outside Quebec. The Charter of the French Language in Quebec makes French the official bilingualism in the constitution. Other provinces have no official language(s) as such, but French is used as a language of instruction, in courts, and other government services in addition to English. Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec allow for both English and French has some legal status but is not fully co-official. 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Lonely Planet south and northwest. Canada, from west to east, is divisible into seven primary geographic regions: Western Cordillera: The Western Cordillera: The Western Cordillera region, characterized by its extensive mountain ranges, dominates the western landscape of Canada. It stretches from the Yukon Territory to the southern reaches of British Columbia. The topography is marked by a series of parallel ranges and valleys that influence the local climate and river systems. This region houses Mount Logan, Canadian Arctic: The Canadian Arctic encompasses Canada's northernmost parts, including parts of Nunavut, Northwest the USA border to the Canadian Shield. This region's landscape is mostly flat or gently rolling terrain, ideal for agriculture, particularly in the southern areas. Major rivers here include the Peace and the Saskatchewan, contributing to the fertile soil. Canadian Shield: Covering approximately half of Canadian Shield is a massive geological shield covered by a thin layer of soil that arcs around Hudson Bay. It's characterized by ancient crystalline rocks, countless lakes, and coniferous forests. The Canadian Shield to the south and east is the Hudson Bay Lowlands, one of the largest wetland areas in the world. This region is mostly a flat, swampy area with numerous rivers and streams draining into Hudson Bay. It's known for its muskeg, a type of wetland that predominates the landscape. St. Lawrence Lowlands: The St. Lawrence Lowlands stretch from Quebec to Ontario, following the St. Lawrence River. This region is the most densely populated part of Canada, with fertile soil and a relatively mild climate. It is characterized by its rolling hills, deep soils, and the notable presence of the Great Lakes. Appalachian Region includes parts of Quebec and Atlantic Canada, extending into the island of Newfoundland. This area features rolling hills, deep river valleys, and rugged coastlines. The Long Range Mountains in Newfoundland, a continuation of the Appalachians, contain the country's low point at sea level. Islands and Major Bodies of Water: Canada's geography is also defined by its significant water bodies, including the Great Lakes, shared with the United States, and numerous vast, deep freshwater lakes like Great Slave Lake to the Arctic Ocean, is among the longest river systems in North America. This political map of Canada includes the country's ten provinces and three territories, each distinguished by different colors. From west to east, the provinces are British Columbia with Edmonton, Saskatchewan with Regina, Manitoba with Fredericton, Prince Edward Island with Charlottetown, Nova Scotia with Halifax, and Newfoundland and Labrador with St. John's. The three territories are the Yukon with Igaluit. The map also indicates major cities such as Vancouver, Calgary, Saskatoon, Ottawa, and Montreal, and it includes geographical features like Hudson Bay, Great Bear Lake, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The national capital, Ottawa, is prominently marked in the province of Ontario. Canada is the largest country in North America. bi-national land border in the world. Canada is also bounded by the Arctic Ocean to the north, by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the French island of Greenland in the northeast and the French island regions of Saint Pierre and Miguelon in the southeast. Canada Bordering Countries: The United States Of America. Regional Maps: Map of North America This page was last updated on January 8, 2024 Visit the Definitions and Notes page to view a description of each topic.comparison ranking: total 37; female 38; male 38comparison ranking: total 40comparison ranking: total 185comparison ranking: total 40comparison ranking: total 37; female 38; male 38comparison ranking: total 40comparison rankin ranking: total population 5comparison ranking: total 44comparison ranking: total 126comparison ranking: 16comparison ranking: total 32 Introduction & Ouick FactsPrime ministers of Canada References & Edit History Facts & Stats Geography & Travel Country in the world in area (after Russia), occupying roughly the northern two-fifths of the continent of North America. Despite Canada's great size, it is one of the world's most sparsely populated countries. This fact, coupled with the grandeur of the landscape, has been central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity, as expressed by the Dublin-born writer Anna Brownell Jameson, who explored central to the sense of Canadian national identity and the sense of Canadian national identity and the sense of Canadian national identity and the sen the boundless wilderness around you; the mysterious depths amid the multitudinous foliage, where foot of man hath never penetrated...the solitude in which we proceeded mile after mile, no human dwelling within sight." Although Canadians are comparatively few in number, they have crafted what many observers consider to be a model multicultural society, welcoming immigrant populations from every other continent. In addition, Canada harbours and exports a wealth of natural resources and intellectual capital equaled by few other countries. Audio File: Anthem of Canada harbours and exports a wealth of natural resources and intellectual capital equaled by few other countries. Audio File: Anthem of Canada harbours and exports a wealth of natural resources and intellectual capital equaled by few other countries. est.) 42,512,000 Currency Exchange Rate: 1 USD equals 1.374 Canadian dollar Head Of State: King of Canada (British Monarch): Charles III, represented by Governor-General: Mary May Simon Form Of Government: federal multiparty parliamentary state with two legislative houses (Senate [1051, 2]; House of Commons [338]) Official Languages: English; French Official Religion: none Official Religion: none Official Name: Canada Total Area (Sq Km): 9,984,670 Total Area (Sq Mi): 3,855,081 Monetary Unit: Canadian dollar (Can\$) Population Projection 2030: 41,364,000 Density: Persons Per Sq Mi: (2025) 1.1 Density: Persons Per Sq Mi: (2025) 4.3 Urban-Rural Population: Urban: (2018) 81.4% Rural: (2018) 18.6% Life Expectancy At Birth: Male: (2020-2022) 79.3 years Female: (2020-2022) 83.8 years Literacy: Percentage Of Population Age 15 And Over Literate: Male: (2020) 54,040 Canada is officially bilingual in English and French, reflecting the country's history as ground once contested by two of Europe's great powers. The word Canada is derived from the Huron-Iroquois kanata, meaning a village or settlement. In the 16th century, French explorer Jacques Cartier used the name Canada to refer to the area around the settlement that is now Quebec city. Later, Canada was used as a synonym for New France, which, from 1534 to 1763, included all the French possessions along the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes. After the British conquest of New France, the name Quebec was sometimes used instead of Canada. The name Canada was fully restored after 1791, when Britain divided old Quebec into the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada (renamed in 1841 Canada West and Canada East, respectively, and collectively called Canada). In 1867 the British North America Act created a confederation from three colonies (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Canada) called the Dominion of Canada. The act also divided the old colony of Canada into the separate provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Dominion status allowed Canada a large measure of self-rule, but matters pertaining to international diplomacy and military alliances were reserved to the British crown. Canada became entirely self-governing within the British Empire in 1931, though full legislative independence was not achieved until 1982, when Canada obtained the right to amend its own constitution. Canada shares a 5,525-mile- (8,890-km-) long border with the United States (including Alaska)—the longest border in the world not patrolled by military forces—and the overwhelming majority of its population lives within 185 miles (300 km) of the international boundary. Although Canada shares many similarities with its southern neighbour—and, indeed, its popular culture and that of the United States are in many regards indistinguishable—the differences between the two countries, both temperamental and material, are profound. "The central fact of Canadian history," observed the 20th-century literary critic Northrop Frye, is "the rejection of the American Revolution." Contemporary Canadians are inclined to favour orderly central government and a sense of community over individualism; in international affairs, they are likely to have a pluralistic way of viewing the world. More than that, Canadians live in a society that in most legal and official matters resembles Britain—at least in the English-speaking portion of the country. Quebec, in particular, exhibits French adaptations: more than three-fourths of its population speaks French as their primary language. The French character in Quebec is also reflected in differences in religion, architecture, and schooling. Elsewhere in Canada, French influence is less apparent, confined largely to the dual use of French and British influences are supplemented by the cultures of the country's Native American peoples (in Canada often collectively called the First Nations) and Inuit peoples, the former being far greater in number and the latter enjoying semiautonomous status in Canada's newest territory, Nunavut. In addition, the growing number of immigrants from other European countries, Southeast Asia, and Latin America has made Canada even more broadly multicultural. Canada has been an influential member of the Commonwealth and has played a leading role in the organization of French-speaking countries known as La Francophonie. It was a founding member of the United Nations and has been active in a number of major UN agencies and other worldwide operations. In 1989 Canada joined the Organization of American States and signed a free trade agreement with the United States, a pact that was superseded in 1992 by the North American Free Trade Agreement (which also includes Mexico). A founding member (1961) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Canada is also a member of the Group of Seven (G7), which includes the world's seven largest industrial democracies and, as the Group of Eight (G8), had included Russia until it was indefinitely suspended from membership in 2014. Which Country Is Larger By Area? Quiz The national capital is Ottawa, Canada's fourth largest city. It lies some 250 miles (400 km) northeast of Toronto and 125 miles (200 km) west of Montreal, respectively Canada's first and second cities in terms of population and economic, cultural, and educational importance. The third largest city is Vancouver, a centre for trade with the Pacific Rim countries and the principal western gateway to Canada's developing interior. Other major metropolitan areas include Calgary and Edmonton Alberta; Quebec city, Quebec; and Winnipeg, Manitoba. Jacques Cartier referred to the St. Lawrence as the "rivière de Canada" and the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century. But on 10 August 1535 he had given the name was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of the century was in general use until the end of first voyage to Canada, Samuel de Champlain spoke of the "river of Canada," but by 1613 used Saint Laurent for the gulf. The name Canada was used loosely, even in official correspondence, as a synonym for New France, which included all French possessions. However, it was always understood, as Father Pierre Biard pointed out in the Jesuit Relation for 1616, that "Canada...is not, properly speaking, all this extent of country which they now call New France; but it is only that part, which extends along the banks of the great River Canada, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence." In 1664 François Du Creux, in his work Historia Canadensis, drew the same distinction. Conquest of New France As French explorers and fur traders pushed ever westward and southward, the area to which the name "Canada" applied increased rapidly. However, its extent seems never to have been defined officially. In March 1762, after the Conquest of New France, General Thomas Gage informed General Jeffery Amherst that the limits between Canada and Louisiana had never been clearly described. He could only state "what were generally believed... to have been the Boundaries of Canada & give you my own Opinion." He judged "not only the [Great] Lakes, which are Indisputable, but the whole Course of the Mississippi from its Heads to its Junction with the Illinois" had been considered by the French to be part of Canada. This may be one reason why Britain temporarily abandoned the name and called the colony the Province of Quebec, then considerably enlarged, into the provinces of Upper Canada and Lower Canada. In 1841 they were joined to form the Province of Canada. In 1867 the British North America Act united the Province of Canada." The new area was relatively small, but it expanded rapidly. The purchase of Rupert's Land in 1870 extended it to the Rocky Mountains and the Arctic Ocean. The addition of British Columbia in 1871 created a Canada extending from sea to sea; Prince Edward Island was added in 1873 and Britain handed over title to the Arctic islands in 1880. This gave Canada substantially the present boundaries, except for Newfoundland and Labrador, which joined the federation in 1949. In a striking comment, the distinguished American historian Samuel Eliot Morison remarked that "never, since the Roman empire, have two local names received such a vast extension as Canada and St. Lawrence." (See also Exploration; Territorial Evolution.) Canada is the secondlargest country in the world by land area, located in the northern part of North America. Known for its stunning natural landscapes, multicultural population, and high quality of life, Canada is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. Quick Facts Capital: Ottawa Largest City: Toronto Official Languages: English and French Currency: Canadian Dollar (CAD) Government: Federal parliamentary democracy Population: Over 39 million (as of 2024) Geography Canada stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the east to the eas mountains, forests, lakes, and tundra. History Indigenous peoples inhabited the land for thousands of years before European colonization began in the 16th century. Canada became a self-governing dominion within the British Empire in 1867 and gained full legislative independence in 1982. Provinces and Territories Canada is made up of: Culture Canada is known for its cultural diversity, bilingualism, and inclusive values. It has strong traditions in literature, music, sports (like hockey and lacrosse), and cuisine influenced by Indigenous, French, British, and global cultures. Government and Politics Canada is a constitutional monarchy with King Charles III as head of state, represented by the Governor General. The country has a Prime Minister, a House of Commons, and a Senate. It operates under a federal system that grants powers to provinces and territories. Economy Canada has a highly developed, mixed-market economy. Key industries include natural resources (oil, forestry, mining), technology, finance, and manufacturing. 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