

Canada

Canada is a constitutional monarchy, an independent federal state and parliamentary democracy with two official languages and two systems of law: civil law and common law, a member of the Commonwealth. It is the second largest country in the world. Its area is 9,976,000 square kilometers. Its population is about 30.1 million. The capital of Canada is Ottawa.

The country is situated in North America. It is bordered in the north by the Arctic Ocean, in the east by the Atlantic Ocean, in the south by the United States and in the west by the Pacific Ocean and Alaska.

In the center there is a great plain the Canadian Shield. It has many lakes and is rich in minerals. More than half of the population lives in the St. Lawrence Lowlands, between Quebec and Lake Huron. West of the Canadian Shield as far as the Rocky Mountains are the Great Plains or prairies, fertile farming lands. North of the prairies are the Northwest Territories, wild areas where few people live. In the west are the Rocky Mountains, the Coast Mountains and the Selkirks; the highest peak, Mount Logan, is in the Yukon territory. There are many rivers in Canada, and among them are the St. Lawrence, the Mackenzie, the Saskatchewan, the Columbia and the Yukon.

Climate, while generally temperate, varies from freezing winter cold to blistering summer heat.

Canada's natural vegetation can be best described as falling into five areas: the boreal forest, the forests of the southeast and the southwest, the grasslands and the tundra.

Government. Canada is a federative state consisting of ten provinces and three territories. Canadian provinces are: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Saskatchewan. There are three large northern territories — Yukon,

the Northern Territories and Nunavut, which mainly lie north of the 60th parallel.

Head of State is Queen of Britain, represented by Governor General. Head of Government is Prime Minister. The roots of Canada's parliamentary system lie in Britain. The Canadian Parliament consists of the Senate (the Upper House) and the House of Commons.

The Senate is patterned after the British House of Lords. Its 104 members are appointed, not elected, and are divided essentially among Canada's four main regions of Ontario, Quebec, the West and the Atlantic Provinces. The Senate has the same powers as the House of Commons, with a few exceptions.

The House of Commons is the major law-making body. It has 301 members, one from each of the 301 electoral districts. The representatives are elected every five years.

But the real executive power is in the hands of the Cabinet under the Prime Minister. Strictly speaking, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet are the advisers of the monarch. However, the real power belongs to the Cabinet, and the Governor General acts on its advice. The Cabinet develops government policy and is responsible to the House of Commons.

Canada is a young country, but it has a legal system rich in tradition. Common law, which is used in all provinces except Quebec, is based on principles that were developed in medieval England. The principles of Quebec's civil law date back to the Roman Empire and reflect many principles of French law. The supreme law of the country is Canada's Constitution. In 1982 the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms became a fundamental part of the Canadian Constitution. The Charter sets out the basic rights and liberties of each person in Canada, which must be respected by all governments.

Languages. English and French are both official languages, but 20% of the population speaks only French. Tension between French-speaking Quebec and the other nine provinces where English is the majority language remains high.

Economy. Since the Second World War more people have worked in manufacturing than in agriculture. But farming is still important: cereals, dairy products, fruit, wool, fur. One of the most important industries is the manufacture of wood pulp and paper.

In the 20th century Canada became an industrial country with highly developed agriculture.

Largest cities. The largest cities are Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary.

Vocabulary

independent — независимый
Commonwealth — (Британское)

Содружество

civil law — гражданское право

common law — общее право

to border — граничить

plain — равнина

Canadian Shield — Канадская
возвышенность

prairies — прерии

fertile farming land — плодородная
сельскохозяйственная земля

temperate — умеренный

blistering — мучительный

peak — пик

natural vegetation — природная
растительность

boreal forest — северный лес

grasslands — пастбище, луг

root — корень

to lie — лежать

to pattern — делать по образцу,
копировать

to appoint — назначать

to divide — делить

essentially — по существу

law-making body — законода-
тельный орган

executive power — исполнитель-
ная власть

adviser — советник

to be responsible — быть ответ-
ственным

supreme law — высший закон

medieval — средневековый

to date back to — относиться
(еще) к

**Canadian Charter of Rights and
Freedoms** — Хартия прав
и свобод Канады

to set out — излагать

to respect — уважать

tension — напряжение

agriculture — сельское хозяйство

to manufacture — изготавливать

cereals — злаки

wool — шерсть

fur — мех