

Manitoba. The economy has been built on agricultural resources, mainly wheat and other grain crops but a variety of livestock products are also important. Manufacturing is varied, led by food processing and metal fabricating. Mineral production is primarily based on metals, especially nickel, copper and zinc; petroleum is also notable. There is a commercial freshwater fishery.

Saskatchewan. Agriculture is the leading industry with wheat and other grains the major component. The large value of mineral production is divided among non-metals, principally potash (Saskatchewan is a major world producer of potash), fuels and metals, notably uranium. The manufacturing sector is relatively small and varied.

Alberta. About half the value of minerals produced in Canada comes from Alberta, almost entirely related to fuels — petroleum, natural gas and its byproducts (including natural gas liquids and sulphur), and coal. Agriculture is an important sector with grains and livestock prominent. There is a substantial diversified manufacturing sector.

British Columbia. Natural resources are the basis of the economy. Forestry is particularly important, both as a primary activity and as the largest component of the province's manufacturing sector. Although lumber is the main forest product, pulp and paper production is also substantial. Other manufacturing includes food processing and metals. The province's mineral production is very large, with both fuels (coal, natural gas and petroleum) and metals (notably, copper and molybdenum) predominating. Dairy products and cattle are the main forms of agriculture; fruit, vegetables and specialty crops are also prominent. Salmon makes up over half the landed value of the extensive fishery with herring also important.

Yukon. Mining is a leading activity with gold and silver the principal products, at present.

Northwest Territories. The mining industry is large with zinc, gold and lead the leading minerals. There is also some oil and gas production. Fur and fisheries resources, the mainstay of the native population, are exploited commercially to some extent.

1.1.3 Settlement

There is no permanent settlement in approximately 89% of Canada. Only the smallest province, Prince Edward Island, is completely occupied. Large parts of the interior of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Gaspé Peninsula are vacant. Around the coast of Newfoundland and on the shores of the St. Lawrence River below Quebec City there are only narrow bands of settlement.

About 58% of Canada's population lives between the American border and a 1046 km east-west line from Quebec City to Sault Ste Marie, Ont. In this area, the cities of Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, London, Windsor, Quebec City and Kitchener account for more than one-third of the population.

The largest tract of continuous settlement is in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, north of the United States border. This block occupies about 6.2% of Canada's area and contains five major cities: Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina. North of this mainly agricultural block, astride the Alberta - British Columbia border, is the Peace River district, an agricultural area which reaches the 57th parallel.

The southern half of British Columbia is settled in interconnecting strips following mountain valleys and coastal plains. BC's population is most dense, however, in the lower mainland, principally in the Vancouver area.

North of the areas already described are a number of remote settlements, the largest being in Ontario and Quebec between the 47th and 50th parallels. Outside these urban-rural blocks are numerous settlements related to mining, forest industries, transportation, administration, defence, hunting and fishing but with little or no agriculture.

1.2 Physical features

1.2.1 Mountains

The great Cordilleran mountain system is Canada's most impressive physical feature. Many peaks in the various ranges of the Canadian Cordillera are over 4500 m high and approximately 1500 km² of territory lie above the 3048 m mark. Mount Logan, 5951 m above sea level, in the St. Elias Mountains of Yukon is the highest point in Canada.

Rosland, BC is the highest city in Canada (1056 m) and Lake Louise, Alta. is the highest hamlet (1540 m). Chilko Lake in British Columbia, with an area of 158 km², is the highest major lake (1171 m). Heights of the more important Canadian mountains and other elevations are given in Table 1.2.

1.2.2 Inland waters

Abundant water supplies have contributed significantly to Canada's development.

Each year millions of tonnes of water fall on Canada as rain and snow. Much of it evaporates, some is stored in lakes, groundwater reservoirs and glaciers, and a larger amount runs off in rivers or streams to the oceans. The Atlantic and Pacific