



# Economy and Culture of Canada

**A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE** The fur trade was a major economic activity in early Canada. It began in the 16th century, when Canada's Native American peoples, now known as the **First Nations**, started trading with European fishermen along the northern Atlantic coast. A brisk trade soon developed, and trappers and traders poured into Canada. They came first from France and later, from England. As the trade expanded westward, it depended heavily on daring French-Canadian boatmen called *voyageurs*. They moved animal pelts from the wilderness to trading posts, often paddling 16 hours a day. According to one trader, these hardy souls often endured "privation and hardship, not only without complaining, but even with cheerfulness."

## An Increasingly Diverse Economy

Canada is one of the world's richest countries. It is highly industrialized and urbanized. As you just read, Canada's early economy was based largely on the trade of its many natural resources. Today, the manufacturing and service industries fuel the nation's economic engines.

**CANADA'S PRIMARY INDUSTRIES** Farming, logging, mining, and fishing are important Canadian industries. They account for more than 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Only about 5 percent of Canada's land is suitable for farming, and only about 3 percent of the labor force is employed in agriculture. Nevertheless, Canada produces large amounts of food for domestic use and for export. Canada's biggest export trade is in forest products. No other country exports more wood pulp and paper products than Canada.

Mining, too, is a major industry because of Canada's extensive mineral deposits. Uranium, zinc, gold, and silver are just a few of the minerals Canada exports to the world.

Three ocean coastlines—Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic—give Canadians access to ample fish supplies. Canadian fish consumption per capita is low, so much of Canada's catch is exported. In fact, Canada exports more fish than any other country.

**THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR** About 15 percent of Canadians earn their living from manufacturing. Their efforts account for nearly one-fifth of the nation's GDP. Automobiles, steel, household appliances, electronics, and high-tech and mining equipment are

### Main Ideas

- Canada is highly industrialized and urbanized, with one of the world's most developed economies.
- Canadians are a diverse people.

### Places & Terms

**First Nations**

**métis**

**reserve**

### CONNECT TO THE ISSUES

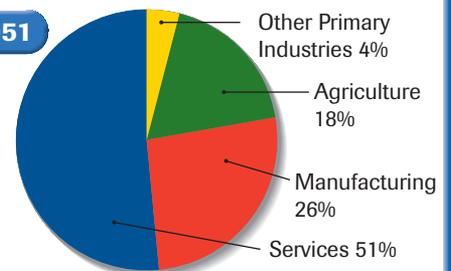
#### DIVERSE SOCIETIES

Canada is a land of immigrants with many diverse cultures.

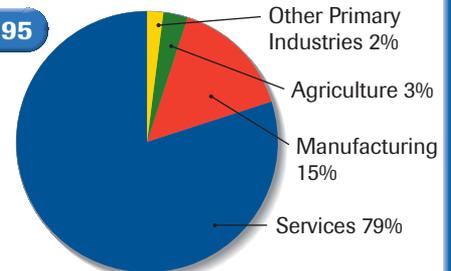
US & CANADA

### Canadian Economy\*

1951



1995



\*Based on rounded employment statistics

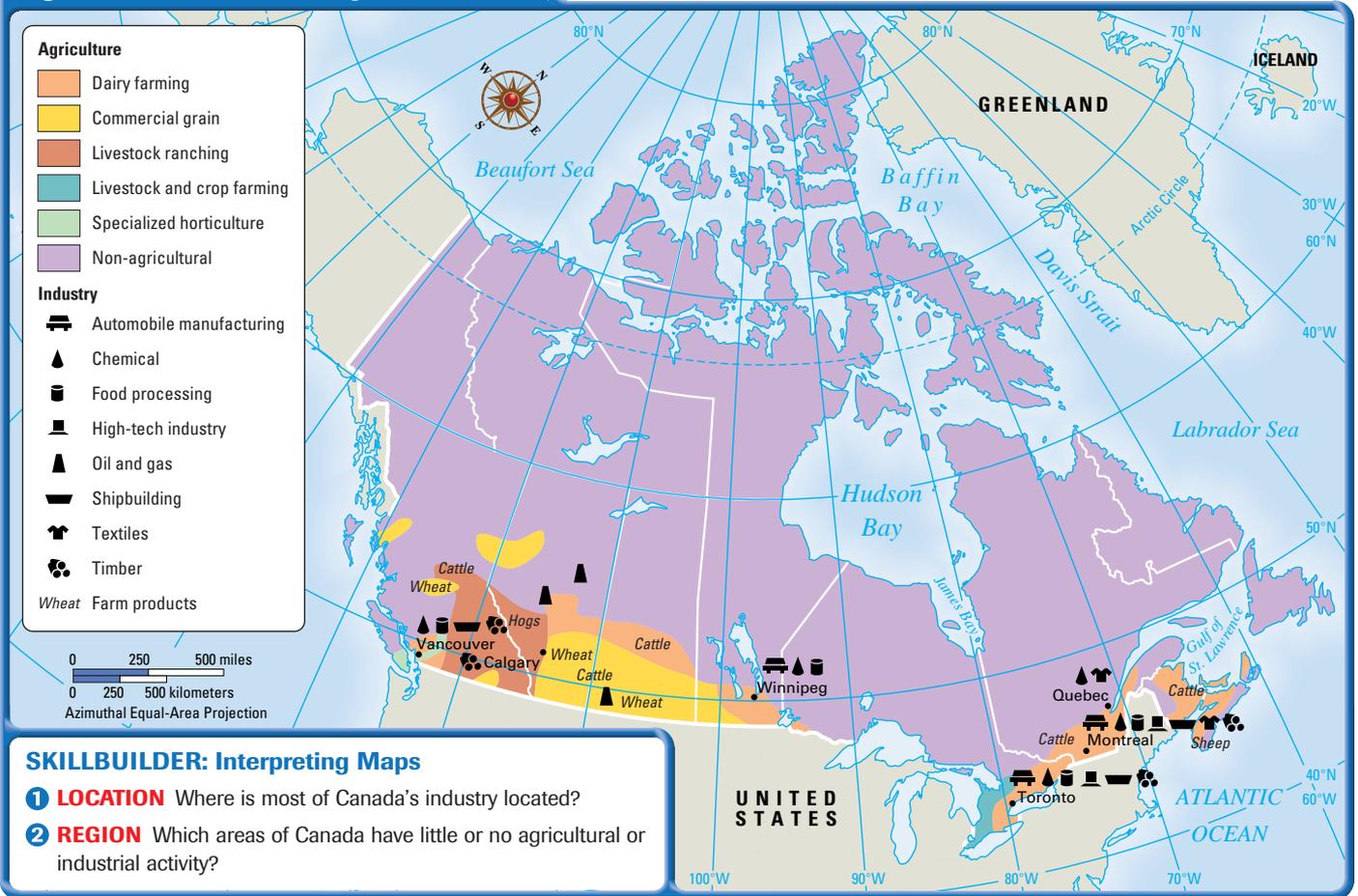
SOURCE: *Canada Year Book 1994*;

*Canada Year Book 1997*

### SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Graphs

- ANALYZING DATA** Which sector showed the greatest increase in growth from 1951 to 1995? the greatest decrease in growth?
- MAKING GENERALIZATIONS** What might account for these changes in the economy?

## Agriculture and Industry of Canada



just some of the products Canada manufactures. Most of the manufacturing is done in the Canadian heartland, which reaches from Quebec City, Quebec, to Windsor, Ontario. **A**

**SERVICE INDUSTRIES DRIVE THE ECONOMY** Canada's service industries are the country's real economic powerhouse. In fact, more than 60 percent of the GDP comes from service industries. Those industries employ more Canadians than all other industries combined. Service industries include finance, utilities, trade, transportation, tourism, communications, insurance, and real estate. Canada's spectacular natural beauty has made tourism one of the fastest growing of the service industries. At the end of the 20th century, the Canadian tourism industry employed the same percentage of workers—about 3 percent—as those who were engaged in agriculture.

Historically, Canada's economy has always relied on trade. The fur trade between Canada's native peoples and European fishermen was just the start of what would become a key Canadian industry. The United States is Canada's chief trading partner. This is largely because the two nations share the longest open border in the world and the same language—English. In 1994, Canada and the United States, along with Mexico, signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This pact made trade between them even easier than before. At the turn of the 21st century, about 85 percent of Canada's exports went to the United States, and about 75 percent of Canada's imports came from its neighbor to the south.



### Making Comparisons

**A** How is the Canadian heartland similar to the northeast region of the United States?

## A Land of Many Cultures

From its earliest settlement, Canada has been a land of diverse cultures. The first settlers were the Inuit and the First Nations peoples who came after the last Ice Age. Many thousands of years later, the English and French arrived, bringing their languages and traditions with them. Interaction between the French and native peoples gave rise to another culture, the **métis** (may•TEES), people of mixed French and native heritage.

More recent immigrants from Europe and Asia also have made their contributions to the cultural mix. As in the United States, Canada's cultural richness has come from all corners of the world.

### BACKGROUND

Official documents and information are printed both in English and in French.

**LANGUAGES AND RELIGION** Canada is officially a bilingual country. It has an English-speaking majority and a French-speaking minority. (Only in Quebec are French speakers in the majority.) In addition, the languages of First Nation peoples still survive, and the native languages of immigrants can be heard on many city streets.

As the English and the French settled Canada, their different cultures became a source of conflict. The English were largely Protestant, and the French were Roman Catholics. Religious and cultural conflicts between the two groups have continued over the years, as noted in the graphic at the bottom of this page. Today, these two religions continue to dominate Canadian society. But Muslims, Jews, and other religious groups are represented in ever-increasing numbers.

**CANADA'S POPULATION** Settlement patterns in Canada have always been influenced by the country's harsh environment and the accessibility of transportation routes. Canada's port cities—especially Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver—and its rich farmlands make up the country's most densely settled areas. In fact, more than 80 percent of all Canadians live on just 10 percent of the land. This region is mostly along a 100-mile-wide strip of land just north of the U.S. border. **B**



### Seeing Patterns

**B** Which physical factors influence Canada's population distribution?

### Clash of Cultures



## growing up in...Canada

**These boys are playing ice hockey** on an outdoor rink in Fergus, Ontario. Hockey is Canada's national pastime. Children learn to play this Canadian-invented sport at an early age. Many boys dream of playing professional hockey in the National Hockey League. On any given day, young people and adults can be found playing or watching a game at neighborhood ice rinks.

**If you lived in Canada, you would pass these milestones:**

- You could attend a private preschool at age 3 or 4.
- You would begin elementary school at age 5 or 6 and would be required to attend until age 16.
- You would choose to get a job or attend a college or university after high school graduation at age 18.
- You could drive at age 16.
- You could vote at age 18.
- You could get married at age 18 without written consent.



Canada's population has become increasingly urban. At the beginning of the 20th century, about one-third of the people lived in urban areas. By the end of the century, nearly four-fifths were city dwellers. Some Canadian population groups are clustered in certain areas. For example, about 75 percent of all French Canadians reside in Quebec. Many of Canada's native peoples are found on the country's 2,300 **reserves**, public land set aside for them by the government. The territories in the remote Arctic north are home to most of the Inuit. Large numbers of Canadians of Asian ancestry live on the West Coast. 

## Life in Canada Today

Most Canadians live active personal and professional lives and enjoy a relatively high standard of living. In 1998, Canada's labor force was nearly evenly split between men and women. Men made up about 55 percent of the work force and women, about 45 percent. As the chart on page 159 shows, Canada's service industries employ more than 75 percent of the work force. Manufacturing is a distant second, accounting for approximately 15 percent of Canadian workers. Canada's population is well educated. The oldest university, Laval, was established in Quebec during the period of French settlement. The first English-speaking universities were founded in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in the 1780s. Today, Canada boasts a 97 percent literacy rate.

**SPORTS AND RECREATION** Canadians value their leisure time and use it to engage in many recreational activities. Sports such as skating, ice hockey, fishing, skiing, golf, and hunting are popular. Canadians also enjoy their professional sports teams. Canada has its own football

**CONNECT TO  
THE ISSUES**  
**DIVERSITY**  
 Which major cultural groups are found in Canada?

league and its professional ice hockey, baseball, and basketball teams compete in U.S. leagues. The Canadian love of sport goes back to its native peoples, who developed the game we know as lacrosse, and to its early European settlers, who developed ice hockey. Two annual events that are favorites nationwide are the Quebec Winter Carnival, held in Quebec City, and the Calgary Stampede, pictured on page 99.

**THE ARTS** Not surprisingly, Canada’s long history and cultural diversity have given the nation a rich artistic heritage. The earliest Canadian literature was born in the oral traditions of the First Nations peoples. Later, the writings of settlers, missionaries, and explorers lent French and English influences to the literature.

The early visual arts included the realistic carvings of the Inuit and the elaborately decorated totem poles of the First Nations peoples of the West Coast. The artistry of the Inuit carvings has been evident since prehistoric times. Inuit carvers used ivory, whalebone, and soapstone to carve figurines of animals and people in scenes from everyday life. A uniquely Canadian style of painting developed among a group of Toronto-based artists called the Group of Seven early in the 20th century. The performing arts—music, dance, and theater—enjoyed spectacular growth during the last half of the century. The Stratford Festival in Ontario, honoring William Shakespeare, is known worldwide.

In this section, you read about life in Canada today. In the next section, you will learn more about Canada’s subregions.



**HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION** This Inuit artist carves a sculpture of two polar bears from gray soapstone.

**SECTION 2** Assessment

**1 Places & Terms**

Identify and explain these terms.

- First Nations
- métis
- reserve

**2 Taking Notes**

**REGION** Review the notes you took for this section.



- Which industries drive Canada’s economy?
- In which region is the majority of the population located?

**3 Main Ideas**

- Why are Canada and the United States close trading partners?
- How have Canada’s urban areas changed?
- What is Canada’s work force like?

**4 Geographic Thinking**

**Drawing Conclusions**

How have Canada’s physical resources contributed to its economic prosperity? **Think about:**

- its location
- its primary industries

**S** See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R5.



**MAKING COMPARISONS** Study the information in Chapter 6, Section 2, about the U.S. economy. Create a **Venn diagram** with three circles showing the economic activities Canada and the United States have in common and those that are unique to each.