

# CANADA



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**Canada** is a country in the northern part of North America. Its ten provinces and three territories extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific and northward into the Arctic Ocean, covering 9.98 million square kilometres (3.85 million square miles), making it the world's second-largest country by total area and the fourth-largest country by land area.

# GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Canada occupies most of the continent of North America, sharing land borders with the contiguous United States to the south (the longest border between two countries in the world) and the US state of Alaska to the northwest. Canada stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the west; to the north lies the Arctic Ocean. Greenland is to the northeast.





Since the end of the last glacial period, Canada has consisted of eight distinct forest regions, including extensive boreal forest on the Canadian Shield. Canada has around 31,700 large lakes, more than any other country, containing much of the world's fresh water. There are also fresh-water glaciers in the Canadian Rockies and the Coast Mountains.



Canada is geologically active, having many earthquakes and potentially active volcanoes, notably [Mount Meager](#), [Mount Garibaldi](#), [Mount Cayley](#), and the [Mount Edziza volcanic complex](#).<sup>[97]</sup> The volcanic eruption of the [Tseax Cone](#) in 1775 was among Canada's worst natural disasters, killing 2,000 [Nisga'a people](#) and destroying their village in the [Nass River](#) valley of northern British Columbia.



# GOVERNMENT

Canada is a federal parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy, with Queen Elizabeth II being the head of state. The country is officially bilingual at federal level. It is one of the world's most ethnically diverse and multicultural nations, the product of large-scale immigration from many countries.



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Canada has a [parliamentary system](#) within the context of a [constitutional monarchy](#), the [monarchy of Canada](#) being the foundation of the executive, [legislative](#), and [judicial](#) branches. The sovereign is Queen [Elizabeth II](#), who is also monarch of [15 other Commonwealth countries](#) and each of Canada's 10 provinces. As such, the Queen's representative, the [Governor General of Canada](#) (at present [David Johnston](#)), carries out most of the federal royal duties in Canada.



Following several constitutional conferences, the 1867 Constitution Act officially proclaimed Canadian Confederation on July 1, 1867, initially with four provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. Canada assumed control of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory to form the Northwest Territories, where the 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 been united in 1866) joined the confederation in 1871, while Prince Edward Island joined in 1873.



Canada is a federation composed of ten provinces and three territories. In turn, these may be grouped into four main regions: Western Canada, Central Canada, Atlantic Canada, and Northern Canada (*Eastern Canada* refers to Central Canada and Atlantic Canada together). Provinces have more autonomy than territories, having responsibility for social programs such as health care, education, and welfare.



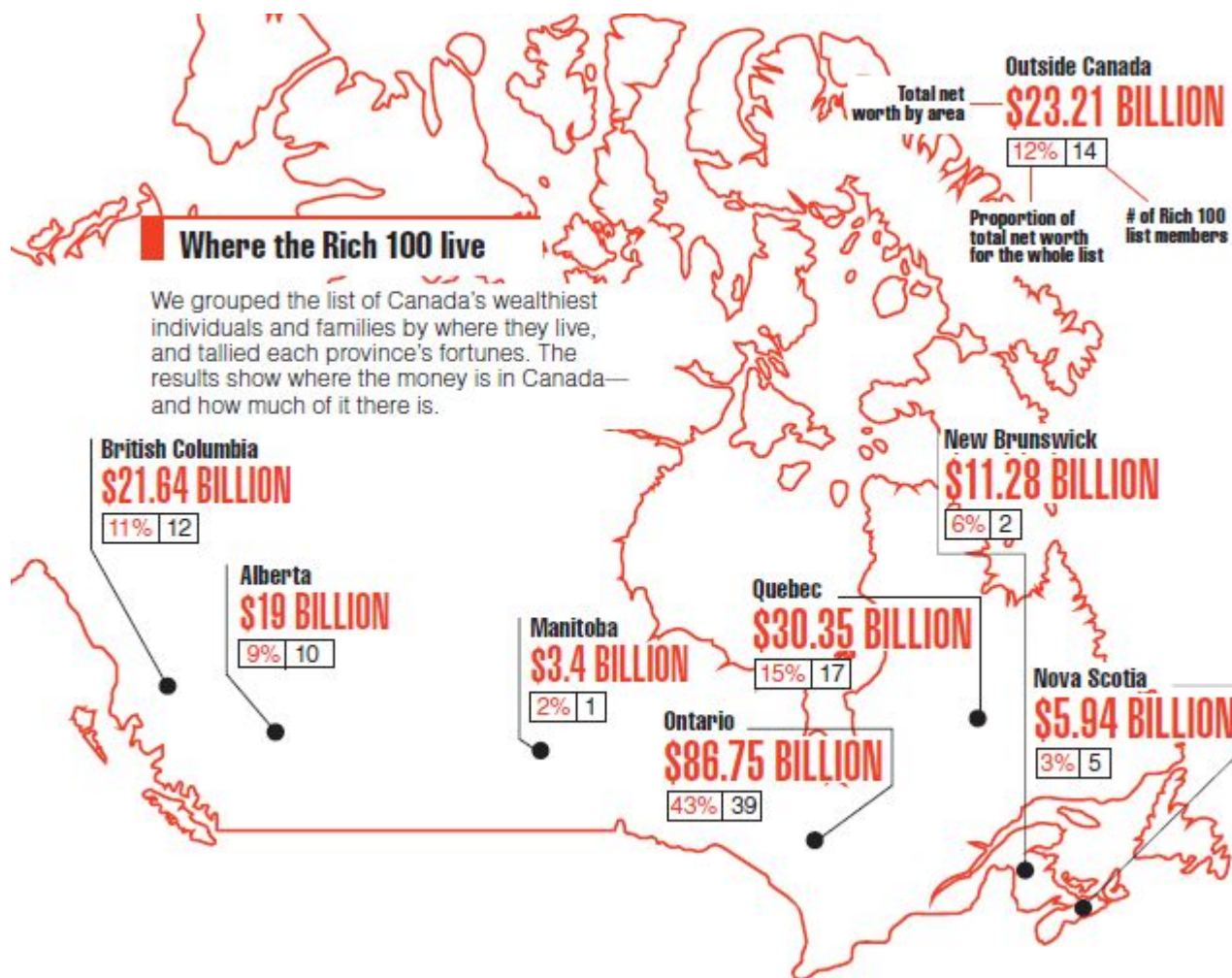
# CANADA MAP





# ONE OF THE MOST RICH COUNTRIES

Canada is a developed country and has the tenth highest nominal per capita income globally, and the ninth highest ranking in the Human Development Index. It ranks among the highest in international measurements of government transparency, civil liberties, quality of life, economic freedom, and education.





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