

Canada, which occupies the top half of the North American continent, is the second-largest country in the world. With an area of 9 970 000 km², it stretches over 5 500 km from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific and over 4 600 km from the northern tip of Ellesmere Island to the United States border. Its population is 26 million.

This vast country is not, of course, fully inhabited; 89 per cent of the land has no permanent population. In sharp contrast are the urban areas, where nearly 80 per cent of Canadians live in large centres located within 300 km of the southern border. Fifty-eight per cent of the population is concentrated in a relatively small area in the extreme southern parts of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

