



Six out of every 10 Canadians (16 225 000) live in central Canada. Besides having the country's largest labour market, this region possesses the biggest industrial complex, the largest manufacturing output, most of Canada's scientific and research facilities, the greatest power-generating capacity (hydro-electric and nuclear), the biggest money markets and the two largest cities — Toronto and Montreal. Although there have been certain shifts westward in recent years, Ontario and Quebec remain the centre of industrial and financial activity.

Geographically, most of this territory is dominated by the Canadian Shield, with its rugged, hilly terrain, dense forests, turbulent rivers and innumerable lakes. Besides an abundance of commercial forests and hydro-electric potential, the Shield contains valuable deposits of metallic minerals including gold, silver, iron, nickel and copper. An important sector of the Canadian economy is based on extracting and processing these mineral resources.

