

the land has no permanent population. Much of northern Canada is wilderness forest or frozen Arctic wasteland. In sharp contrast is the urban environment in which most Canadians live and which most visitors see. Nearly 80 per cent of Canadians live in large urban centres located within 400 km of the border with the United States. Sixty per cent of the population is concentrated between Quebec City and the western end of Lake Ontario. Climate, geography and history explain these patterns of settlement.

The length and severity of winter in much of Canada has kept the population concentrated along the country's southern border. But Canada is by no means entirely a land of perpetual ice and snow. Indeed, less snow falls in some parts of western Canada than in parts of Europe or the United States. On Vancouver Island, people pick their last roses at Christmas and their first daffodils at the end of February. Early August days in eastern Canada can be as hot and humid as in the tropics. 5



The Trans-Canada Highway, 9,600 km in length, links the nation's east and west coasts. The road is believed to be the longest in the world.