

areas. According to the 1991 census, 31 percent of the population (8.61 million people) live in the three largest cities of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

### **Life Expectancy**

Women can expect to live almost 80 years, and men, 73, years according to 1991 data.

### **Family Size**

At the time of the 1991 national census, the average family size was 3.1, including 1.3 children.

### **Living Standard**

Canada has one of the world's highest living standards. For example, in 1991, 83 percent of Canadian households had at least one car; 97.5 percent had colour televisions, and one out of five had a computer.

### **Health Care and Social Security**

All Canadians have free access to health care, with the exception of dental services. Most people over 65 and social aid recipients receive the majority of their prescription drugs free of charge. Canada also has an extensive social security network, including old age pension, family allowance, unemployment insurance and welfare.

### **Native Peoples**

In 1991, 533 000 Canadians were either status or non-status Indians, and over one million claimed to be of native descent: of these, 783 980 were North American Indians, 212 650 were Métis and 49 255 were Inuit (formerly called Eskimos).

Ontario had the highest concentration of natives — 243 550 — but the Northwest Territories had the highest proportion: more than 60 percent of its population is of native descent.

Only 295 032 Canadian natives live on reserves or in native settlements.

### **Religion**

The majority of Canadians are Christian. According to the 1991

census, Roman Catholicism has the most adherents (54.2 percent of Canadians), followed by Protestantism. Other religions include Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. About 3.4 million people stated that they had no religious affiliation whatsoever.

### **Languages**

English, the mother tongue of 16.1 million Canadians, and French, the language of 6.5 million, are Canada's two official languages. However, many Canadians have a mother tongue other than English or French, including Italian, Chinese, German, Portuguese, Polish, Ukrainian, Dutch, Greek or other languages.

### **Ethnic Origin**

Canadians, including natives, who claim something other than British or French as their origin represent 42 percent of the population, or 11 million people. Among the largest ethnic are the German, Italian, Ukrainian, Dutch, Polish, Chinese, South Asian, Jewish, West Indian, Portuguese and Scandinavian.

### **Culture**

The native culture is the only truly indigenous culture of Canada, since all other Canadians were originally immigrants. They began moving to Canada in the 17th century, bringing with them their manner of dress, food preferences and customs. Canada opened its doors to immigration from all over the world in the early 20th century; in 1988, the multicultural character of the country was officially recognized when the Government passed the Multiculturalism Act.

### **Education**

The educational system varies from province to province and includes six to eight years of elementary school, four or five years of secondary school and three or four years at the university undergraduate level. The 1991 census revealed that among Canadians aged 15 and over,

56.9 percent had attended secondary school, 31.7 percent had gone to a trade school or other type of post-secondary institution, and 1.9 million - 11.4 percent of the population - had a university degree.

### **Sports**

The most popular sports in Canada include swimming, ice hockey, cross-country and alpine skiing, baseball, tennis, basketball and golf. Ice hockey, Canadian football and baseball are the favourite spectator sports.

### **Main Natural Resources**

The principal natural resources are natural gas, oil, gold, coal, copper, iron ore, nickel, potash, uranium and zinc, along with wood and water.

### **Gross Domestic Product**

The GDP measures the value of all goods and services produced by a country during a year. Canada's GDP was C\$ 688.5 billion Canadian dollars in 1992.

### **Leading Industries**

These include automobile manufacturing, pulp and paper, iron and steel work, machinery and equipment manufacturing, mining, extraction of fossil fuels, forestry and agriculture.

### **Exports**

Canada's leading exports are automobile vehicles and parts, machinery and equipment, high-technology products, oil, natural gas, metals, and forest and farm products.

### **Imports**

Canada imports machinery and industrial equipment including communications and electronic equipment, vehicles and automobile parts, industrial materials (metal ores, iron and steel, precious metals, chemicals, plastics, cotton, wool and other textiles), along with manufactured products and food. 🍁

