

International Convention on Cultural Diversity

Canadian Heritage and the Government of Canada have played a key role in the development of a new Convention on Cultural Diversity within UNESCO. Once adopted, the Convention will set out clear ground rules enabling countries to promote cultural diversity.

Canada is now a member of the UNESCO Executive Council. In that role, we will continue our work to ensure that the goals of the Convention are realized, and that it conforms to other international obligations and agreements.



Heritage Institutions



Every year, millions of visitors learn more about Canada's culture and history by exploring our national heritage institutions. There are 2,500 museums in Canada, plus 800 archives and 250 libraries with heritage collections. Together, they contribute more than \$1 billion a year to the Canadian economy and employ over 35,000 people, directly or indirectly.

Official Languages

As a result of federal-provincial agreements in education, thousands of minority language students are studying in their first language at approximately 1,000 schools across Canada. In addition, about 2.6 million youth are learning English or French as a second language: 24% of young Canadians (aged 15 to 19) speak both official languages.



Multiculturalism

In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt an official multiculturalism policy. Today, 80% of young Canadians say that diversity and multiculturalism are important to them. Our policy is designed to preserve and enhance our multicultural heritage while working to achieve equality for all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada. In the most recent Census (2001), 47% of the population reported ethnic origins other than British, French or Canadian.



Did you know?

- 70% of Canadians agree that Canadian culture needs to be actively supported or it will "get lost in a global world." (*Ekos*, 2002)
- More than 740,000 people were employed in the arts and cultural industries in 2001, contributing \$26 billion to the Canadian economy.
- Canadian exports of cultural goods and services have increased 38% since 1996, to \$4.5 billion a year.
- Since it was launched in April 2000, Canadian Heritage's Exchanges Canada program has enabled more than 50,000 Canadian youth to meet face-to-face, establish connections with one another, and gain a better appreciation of the Canadian experience.
- Canada—the first officially multicultural country in the world—is home to citizens of more than 200 ethnic backgrounds. In 2003, June 27 was added to our existing days of celebration as the Canadian Day of Multiculturalism.
- More than 13 million Canadians attend performances in dance, theatre, opera and music annually.
- The Virtual Museum of Canada (www.virtualmuseum.ca) links 1,000 Canadian museums online and welcomes about 240,000 visitors every month.
- Export sales of Canadian books grew 300% between 1997 and 2002. The demand for Canadian books has never been higher.
- Canada is home to the world's first indigenous television network, the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN).
- In 2001, almost 5.3 million Canadians claimed to have a mother tongue other than English or French—an increase of 12.5% since 1996.
- Since it was founded in 1939, the National Film Board has earned more than 4,000 national and international awards, including 10 Oscars, and 17 prizes at Cannes.
- More than 4 million Canadians belong to national sport organizations, national multi-sport/service organizations, and Canadian Sport Centres. They include 300,000 coaches and 120,000 officials.
- Canadian Heritage is investing more than \$172 million to strengthen and support Aboriginal languages and cultures across Canada over the next 11 years.