

New Brunswick's scenic beauty has earned it the name "Canada's picture province". It is situated on the Atlantic coast and covers some 73 500 square kilometres. Its early prosperity was derived from lumber and shipbuilding industries; today, its population of more than 700 000 carries out a variety of economic activities ranging from processing natural resources to manufacturing products for domestic and foreign markets.

#### *Cities and population*

Over 45 per cent of the population lives in the province's eight urban centres; 64 per cent has English as a first language, while 33 per cent has French. New Brunswick, with the highest proportion of francophones outside the province of Quebec, has a truly bilingual character.

The largest city is Saint John, with 86 000 inhabitants. Moncton, the second largest, has an estimated 56 000 and the provincial capital, Fredericton, has 45 000.

#### *Geography*

Europeans were first attracted to New Brunswick because of its magnificent forests. The terrain is more rugged in the north than in the south, but there are large forests throughout the province. New Brunswick is one of the most forested areas in the world. Trees cover 88

per cent of its land area, the highest ratio of any Canadian province. Approximately 70 per cent are softwoods such as spruce, balsam and fir; the rest are hardwoods, of which there are more than 25 varieties.

New Brunswick is so thickly forested that had it not been for the rivers which cut through the province it would have been impossible for the early settlers to penetrate the interior. The St. John River has been called "North America's Rhine" in view of its importance as an early trading route as well as its scenic beauty. For centuries, waterways such as the St. John River were used by the Micmac and Malicite Indians for transportation, an example followed by the Europeans.

#### *History*

For many years, New Brunswick was a place Europeans sailed by rather than landed at. Quebec was the main attraction for French fishermen, fur traders and settlers. But slowly this changed with the appearance of fishermen and traders along the coasts of *Acadie* or *Acadia*, as the region was then known. By 1750, *Acadia* had a respectable number of settlers, but was also the scene of intense Anglo-French rivalry.

In the constant conflict between England and France during the next 13 years, armies criss-crossed the area in their attempts to reinforce or