

Demography and Health

There were 25 390 Inuit in Canada in 1981 (the latest figure available), about a quarter of the world's Inuit population. The rest live in Greenland (Denmark) and Alaska (USA), and the eastern tip of Siberia (USSR). The Table shown indicates the distribution of Inuit in Canada in 1981.

About 90 per cent of Canada's Inuit reside in the Arctic, in about 53 small communities from the Mackenzie Delta in the west to Labrador in the east. Most were established as fur trade posts, a few as military air bases or warning stations, and a few as modern administrative centres, to which the Inuit gravitated during the 1950s and 1960s. All but nine have fewer than 1 000 residents, and in all but ten Inuit account for over 75 per cent of the population. Frobisher Bay was the only Canadian community with over 1 000 Inuit in 1981; it has recently been joined by Eskimo Point. The non-Inuit population of the Arctic region of the NWT (excluding the Mackenzie Delta communities of Inuvik and Aklavik) was a mere 2 330. The Inuit thus constitute 86 per cent of the population of that region.

Inuit residing in southern Canada are heavily concentrated in Ottawa, the national capital, where they are employed chiefly by federal government agencies and by national Inuit organizations.

Distribution of Inuit in Canada, 1981

Province or Territory	Number of Inuit	% of Inuit	Communities with over 75% Inuit	Communities with 20-75% Inuit
Northwest Territories	15 910	62.7	29	4
Arctic Quebec	4 575	18.0	11	2
Labrador	1 495	5.9	0	3
Rest of Canada	3 410	13.4	0	0
Total	25 390	100.0	40	9

Source: Robitaille & Choinière, Census of Canada