

There is an inherent imbalance in the Canada-U.S. relationship due to the size of the U.S. population and economy. While Canada has the second largest landmass of any country in the world, its population and gross domestic product are less than one-tenth that of the U.S. Ninety percent of Canada's population – in eight provinces – lives within 100 miles of our shared border, while only ten percent of the U.S. population – in thirteen states – does so. This represents roughly 30 million people in both cases. Canadians have far greater exposure to the United States than Americans do to Canada, both in terms of travel and in terms of familiarity with the other country's products, media and culture. The result is that the average Canadian is more affected by what happens in the United States than the average American is by what happens in Canada. Still, citizens of the two countries regard their neighbours to the north/south very much as equals, and as being very similar to themselves.

Our Shared Border

The Canada-United States border, established over two centuries ago, is much more than just a geographic line between our two countries. It is the place where our two separate sovereignties meet and work together. While both countries take pride in what makes each of us distinct, the border now unifies more than it separates the destiny of our two great countries. It is, increasingly, a place for achieving the pursuit of shared objectives, such as fostering the movement of goods, people and ideas and protecting our security in a globalized environment. It is a lens through which we perceive ourselves, as well as a membrane for containing our social structures.