Both large and small countries can be under-populated and over-populated. On these pages we look at one very large country in terms of area, which has a relatively small population and another which has one of the largest and fastest growing populations in Africa. Canada is under-populated because it has an advanced industrialised economy and so many valuable natural resources that it could easily provide extra people with a high standard of living. Tanzania is an over-populated country, the information on these two pages will allow you to understand why and how Tanzania differs from Canada.

Case study

Canada – an under-populated country and Tanzania – an over-populated county

Canada is a huge country – the second largest in the world after Russia. Vast stretches of the nation are almost totally uninhabited (photo **C**). Significantly, though, GDP per capita for the country is high.

Table **A** summarises information about the population of Canada and Tanzania. Figure **B** looks at Canada's resources of which its greatest natural assets are its mineral resources such as oil and gas. Many of these are found in remote, wilderness areas.

Fantastic fact

Canada has a land area 14 325 times larger than Singapore, one of the smallest countries in the world, but its population is only 7.3 times bigger!

Topic link

Topic 3.1, pages 116–19 explain how GDP, the Quality of Life Index and the Human Development Index are calculated.

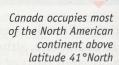### Topic link

This topic has links with Topic 3.2 pages 138–39

Fact	Canada	Tanzania
Area (km²)	9 984 670 (2)	947 300 (31)
Population (millions)	34.4 (37)	48.3 (28)
Average population density (people per km²)	3.4 (229)	46.0 (158)
Annual population growth rate (%)	0.8 (136)	2.8 (18)
Net Migration (per 1000 inhabitants)	5.7 (22)	−0.6 (138)
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	4.9 (183)	45.1 (49)
Fertility rate (average number of children per woman)	1.6 (178)	5.0 (18)
Life expectancy (years)	81.4 (12)	60.8 (190)
Literacy (% of population)	99 (25)	69.4 (164)
GDP per capita ($)	39 057 (22)	1600 (199)
GDP per capita annual growth rate (%)	3.0 (127)	6.9 (32)
Access to safe drinking water (%)	99.8 (40)	58.2 (185)
Quality of Life Index	7.6 (14)	4.5 (109)
Human Development Index	0.91 (11)	0.5 (152)
Population living in poverty (%)	9.4 (140)	80.0 (1=)
Value of exports ($ billion)	407 (10)	5.9 (109)
Value of imports ($ billion)	406 (12)	10.3 (98)

A Factfile for Canada and Tanzania – the figures in brackets indicate the world rankings of both countries

C Canada occupies most of the North American continent above latitude 41°North

B Canada's resources

Natural resources
- Longest coastline in the world – so fish are plentiful
- Huge coniferous forests in the north, producing large amounts of timber
- World's largest producer of zinc and uranium
- Major producer of gold, nickel, lead, aluminium

Farm produce
- Huge country, so has a range of climate types, which allows production of many different crops
- Major global exporter of wheat

Water resources
- More lakes than any other country, holding much of the world's fresh water reserves

Main industries
- Aircraft and car manufacturing
- Timber industries
- Oil refining
- Aluminium smelting

Support services
- Healthcare is paid for by the state

Energy resources
- Huge deposits of oil and natural gas
- A net exporter of energy

International migration
- Encourages 250 000 new residents every year – to increase the workforce
- Also welcomes 10% of the world's refugees

Trade
- One of the world's top ten trading nations – most of trade is with USA, UK and Japan
- The St Lawrence Seaway is a vital inland shipping route
- Major ports on both Atlantic and Pacific Ocean coasts

The figures in factfile **A** and photograph **C** clearly show that Canada is under-populated:

- The infant mortality rate is very low and life expectancy is high – this suggests that there is adequate medical care.
- Literacy rates are high – this shows that education facilities are well funded and effective.
- Unemployment rates are very low – which means that most people are able to find suitable paid work.
- The Quality of Life Index rating is high by global standards, showing that most people in Canada are generally content with their standard of living.

In many ways, Tanzania is similar to several other African countries. It has high youth unemployment and most of its families depend on agriculture for their survival; also, AIDS and under-nourishment mean that few people live beyond 65 years of age. Tanzania is certainly a country with great potential, but rapid population growth makes it very difficult to improve its people's standard of living.

Further research 🔍

Use the internet to create table **A** and figure **B** for your country. (If you live in Canada, investigate another country.) Use the information to decide whether your country is over-populated or under-populated.

Now Investigate ❗

1 a What evidence in table **A** and figure **B** proves that Canada is *under*-populated?

  b Give reasons for your answer to (a).

2 a Write full sentences to discuss the significance of at least six of the data comparisons in Table **A**.

  b Use the information in Table **A** to explain why Tanzania is over-populated. You could discuss this information under sub-headings such as Access to safe drinking water, Education and The economy.

3 Suggest reasons why rapid population growth makes it difficult to improve people's standard of living.