

31. America – population and settlements

Population of North America

Population density

= 1 of the most sparsely populated continents. 2/3 of the population = USA.

East coast + Great Lakes + California = traditionally densely populated

- *Population density*: USA (30 inh./km²), CAN (3 inh./km²), MEX (52 inh./km²).

Immigration and ethnicity

= for 400 yrs., slave trade (1619-1808) caused that many African people were forced to the USA to work on *plantations*.

= *multicultural society* (USA = the richest country in the world), comprising many nations from all over the world.

Canadians and *Americans* consisted mainly of European immigrants (UK, IRL, F, D, I), Asian immigrants (China – Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Vietnam). Native West Indians live nowadays their traditional lives in mountain reserves. N CAN = Inuit people.

Mexicans (Hispanic people) consist of old Aztecs and Spanish immigrants. Lot of Hispanics live also in the USA.

- *Structure of the US population*: WASP (69%), Black (13%), Hispanic (12%), Asian (3%), Native Americans (2%)

Languages and religion

English (USA + CAN), French (CAN), Spanish (MEX). Mainly *Christians* (Protestants, Roman Catholics).

Settlements

USA: Bos-Wash megalopolis, NYC, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chi-Pitts megalopolis, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Las Vegas, Seattle, Detroit, ...

CAN: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Ottawa, Quebec

MEX: Mexico City, Monterrey, Acapulco, Tijuana, Cancun

Society of the USA

- *federal government* (responsible for foreign policy, currency, health care, national parks)
- *state government* (responsible for education, communications, housing policy, state police)

= polarized => rich vs. poor people, but large middle class

Population of Latin America

= shaped by colonization, during the 20th century = big population boom

Population density

URB = 70-75% => problems with overpopulation (slums), Uruguay and Chile = >1/3 of population lives in the Capital.

Immigration and ethnicity

= immigrants from *Portugal* and *Spain* => languages (Brazil = Portugal, Central America + remaining countries of South America = Spanish). English, French, Dutch = Caribbean.

Many black Africans were brought here as slaves (plantations). *Native Indians* (>50% in Bolivia) and rainforest tribes, *African Mulatto* (e.g. Brazil), *Mestizo* (e.g. Ecuador, Guatemala).

Settlements

= Spanish influence (baroque) => *haciendas*, Roman Catholics. Largest cities: Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Caracas, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, ...

Keywords

multiculturality, hacienda, mulatto, mestizo, baroque, slums, colonization,