

Indigenous Peoples



Indigenous peoples is a collective name for the first people in North America and their descendants. In Canada, 2.8% of the population is Indigenous.

There are three groups of Indigenous peoples that the Canadian Constitution recognizes.

- **First Nation**
- **Inuit**
- **Métis**

These are three distinct and diverse groups. They each have their own history, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

First Nations

In Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada recognizes 630 First Nations communities. These communities have people from more than 50 Nations and you can hear over 50 different Indigenous languages. The government of Canada recognizes more and more First Nations communities every year. For example, the government recognized Binche Whut'en as a First Nations community in British Columbia in March 2019.

Inuit

Inuit are the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic. The word Inuit means the people in the Inuit language of Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

Metis

In the 2011 National Household Survey, 418,380 Canadians self-identified as Métis. 75,345 of these were from Manitoba.

BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	Atlantic	Territories
64,525	90,850	50,230	75,345	77,825	35,465	20,565	3,585

■ <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013785/1529102490303>



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More than 1.67 million people in Canada identify themselves as Indigenous, according to the 2016 Census. In Canada, Indigenous peoples are:

- the fastest growing population – grew by 42.5% from 2006 to 2016
- the youngest population – about 44% were under the age of 25 in 2016

Manitoba is in the traditional territories of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Ojibway, and Oji-Cree First Nations, as well as the Métis nation.

Indigenous peoples live on reserves, in cities and in rural communities. A reserve is land that Indigenous peoples live on and use. Sometimes reserves are in small far-away communities and you can only go there by air year-round or by ice roads in the winter. Over 50% of Indigenous people in Canada live in cities.

Winnipeg (the capital city of Manitoba) has the largest Indigenous population of any city in Canada. Winnipeg is located in Treaty 1 territory.

The government and Indigenous people signed a treaty. A treaty is an agreement about land. When you talk about your location, it is important to show respect and acknowledge that Indigenous people were in Canada first. You should know the treaty territory where you live, work and visit.

All Canadians, not just Indigenous people, have rights and responsibilities because of the treaties. If you try to understand the history of the relationship between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people, it can help you to understand your own history and relationships.

■ Treaty Relations Commission:

<http://www.trcm.ca/>

■ Indigenous and Northern Relations:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/inr/index.html>