

FACTS ABOUT ABORIGINAL PERSONS IN CALGARY

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INTRODUCTION

This fact sheet provides an overview of Aboriginal persons who live in Calgary and the surrounding area. Information on population demographics and growth, language, families, education, labour force, income, housing and mobility, health and well-being, justice and human rights is included.

Unless otherwise noted, all information in this fact sheet refers to individuals who self-identified as Aboriginal¹—that is, North American Indian, or First Nations people, Métis or Inuit—and were living within the Calgary census metropolitan area² (CMA) at the time of the 2006 Census of Canada.

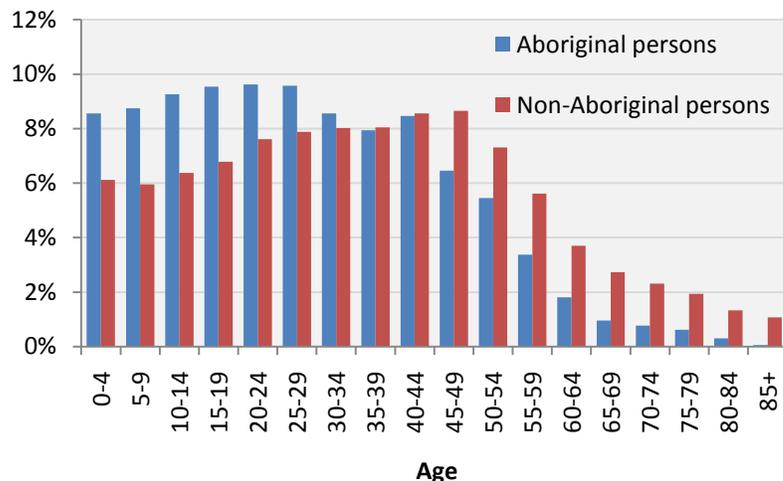
QUICK FACTS

- There were 26,575 Aboriginal persons living in Calgary in 2006, representing 2.5% of the city's population.
- Calgary's Aboriginal population is young (median age of 27) and rapidly growing.
- One-third of Aboriginal children under the age of 14 were living with a single-parent.
- The unemployment rate for the First Nations population (8%) is more than double the rate for the non-Aboriginal population.
- 38% of First Nations persons and 21% of Métis were living in poverty.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- There were 26,575 Aboriginal persons in Calgary CMA in 2006, 56% (14,770) were Métis and 41% (10,875) were First Nations. There were also 250 Inuit and 675 multiple responses and persons who were not included elsewhere. Aboriginal persons accounted for 2.5% of Calgary's total population.
- The Aboriginal population in Calgary—and throughout Canada—is growing. In the ten years between 1996 and 2006, Calgary's Aboriginal population increased by 75%. Within this time period, the Métis population grew explosively, increasing by 113%. The Inuit and First Nations population had growth rates of 32% and 46% respectively.
- Among First Nations persons, 9,010 reported being a Treaty Indian or registered Indian.
- The vast majority of Aboriginal persons lived in the city itself, while about 2,000 lived in the surrounding area.
- The Aboriginal population in Calgary CMA is relatively young compared to the non-Aboriginal population.
- Almost half (46%) were under 25 years old (versus 33% of non-Aboriginal persons) and only 3% were seniors (versus 9%).
- The median age for Aboriginal persons in Calgary was 27. This was 9 years lower than the median age of the non-Aboriginal population.

Age Distribution for Calgary CMA, 2006



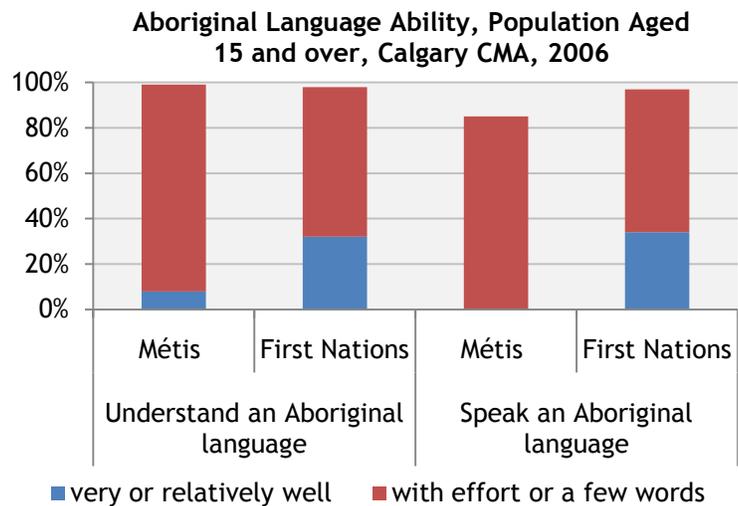
LANGUAGE

- English was the mother tongue for the vast majority (more than 90%) of Aboriginal persons in Calgary. The most widely spoken Aboriginal languages were Cree and Blackfoot, with 560 and 370 speakers respectively. Other Aboriginal languages spoken in Calgary include Chipewyan, Siouan languages (Dakota/Sioux), Dene, Inuktitut, Nisga'a and Ojibway.

Tansi *OKi*

Aboriginal Languages Spoken in Calgary CMA, 2006	
Language	Number of Speakers
Cree	560
Blackfoot	370
Siouan languages (Dakota/Sioux)	95
Inuktitut	75
Ojibway	65
Dene	25
Chipewyan	10
Nisga'a	10

- In Calgary, one-third of Métis and half of First Nations persons 15 years of age and over could speak or understand an Aboriginal language. However, among those with knowledge of these languages, most did not know the language well and could only speak or understand a few words³ (Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey).



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey

FAMILY

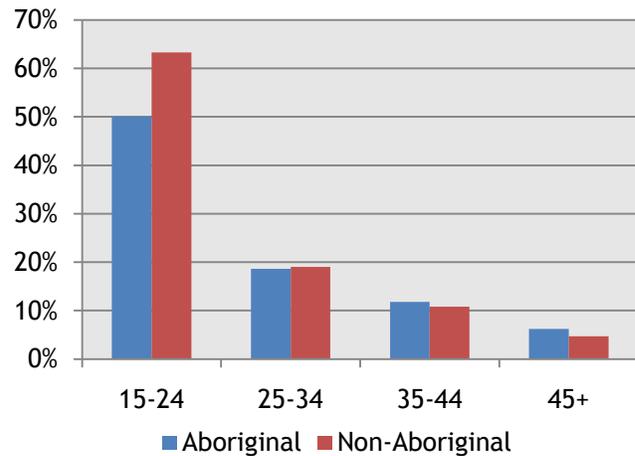
- Most Aboriginal persons in Calgary (79%) lived as part of a family⁴. Over 2,000 (8%) Aboriginal persons lived alone and almost one-third (250) of Aboriginal seniors lived by themselves.
- There was a higher prevalence of lone-parent families among the Aboriginal population than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, 33% of Aboriginal children 14 years of age and under lived with a lone-parent compared to 14% of non-Aboriginal children this age.
- Within the Aboriginal community, grandparents and extended family members play a large role in raising children. Among Aboriginal children in Calgary that were less than 15 years old, 7% lived with grandparents (compared to 1% of non-Aboriginal children of this age). Additionally, in Alberta (excluding reserves) grandparents were involved in raising 40% of Aboriginal children under six and 24% of these children had a least one aunt, uncle, cousin, and/or sibling involved in raising them (Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey).
- Aboriginal persons in Calgary were more than three times as likely as non-Aboriginal persons to use family or marriage counselling (13% vs 4%) or women's shelters (3.2% vs 0.3%) (City of Calgary, 2009 Signposts Survey).



EDUCATION

- Young Aboriginal persons were less likely to be attending school than their non-Aboriginal counterparts⁵. However, after the age of 25 Aboriginal persons had equal, if not higher, rates of school attendance.
- High school completion rates for Aboriginal persons have improved in recent years however they are still much lower than the rates for non-Aboriginal persons. In 2006, 77% of Aboriginal persons 25 years and older had completed high school, compared to 86% of non-Aboriginal persons.

School Attendance, Calgary CMA, 2006



- For Aboriginal men aged 15-34 in Alberta (excluding reserves), the most commonly reported reasons for not completing high school were 'wanted to/had to work' and 'bored with school'. For Aboriginal women in this age group, the main reasons were 'pregnancy/taking care of children' and 'bored with school' (Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey).



Photo credit: University of the Fraser Valley

- In 2006, more than half of Aboriginal persons between the ages of 25 and 64 had completed some type of post-secondary education. Aboriginal persons in this age group were more likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to have an apprenticeship or trades certificate and less likely to have a university degree.

Highest Level of Educational Attainment of People Aged 25-64, Calgary CMA, 2006

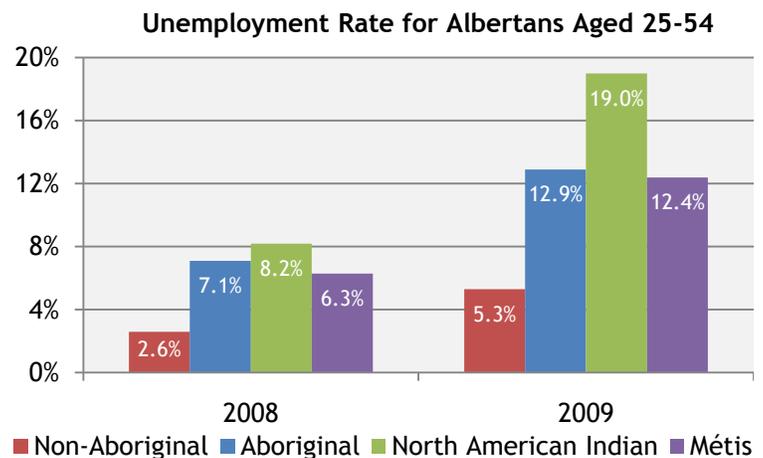
Level of Education	Aboriginal Population (%)		Non-Aboriginal Population (%)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	24.3	19.7	11.5	10.4
High school	24.9	23.8	20.8	23.7
Total postsecondary	50.9	56.4	67.7	66.0
Apprenticeship or trades	17.2	11.2	12.4	6.0
College	19.0	26.1	18.5	23.4
University certificate or diploma below bachelor	3.3	5.5	4.9	6.3
University degree (at bachelor's level or above)	11.5	13.6	31.8	30.3

LABOUR FORCE

- The majority of Aboriginal people in Calgary were employed and approximately 40% of those employed worked full-time year-round. The Métis population had rates of employment and unemployment that were similar to the rates for the non-Aboriginal population, while First Nations people were somewhat more likely to be unemployed.

Labour Force Statistics for Persons Aged 25-64, Calgary CMA, 2006		
	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
Total Aboriginal population	79.3%	5.6%
First Nations people	73.7%	7.8%
Métis	83.4%	4.4%
Non-Aboriginal population	85.4%	3.1%

- There is some indication that the recent economic downturn (beginning at the end of 2008) has resulted in a widening of the employment and unemployment rate gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Alberta. First Nations persons, those with less education (high school or less) and youth (aged 15-24) appear to be the most harshly affected (Source: Zietsma, Danielle. 2010. *Aboriginal People Living Off-reserve and the Labour Market*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 71-588-X. Aboriginal Labour Force Analysis Series, no.2).



- The most common industry of employment for Aboriginal persons was construction, followed by retail trade. In terms of occupations, more than one-quarter of Aboriginal persons were employed in sales and service occupations.

Distribution of Labour Force by Selected Industries, Calgary CMA, 2006		
Industry	Aboriginal Persons	Non-Aboriginal Persons
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Construction	13.8%	8.1%
Retail trade	11.8%	10.5%
Accommodation and food services	9.3%	6.5%
Health care and social assistance	8.8%	8.5%
Other	56.4%	33.6%

Distribution of Labour Force by Selected Occupations, Calgary CMA, 2006		
Occupation	Aboriginal Persons	Non-Aboriginal Persons
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Sales and Service	27.5%	22.5%
Trades, transport and equipment operators	23.0%	14.4%
Business, finance and administration	18.2%	20.3%
Other	68.8%	57.2%

INCOME

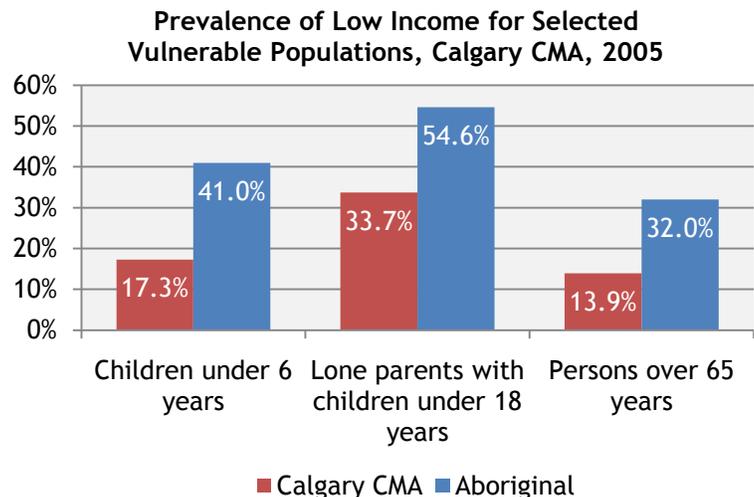
- Aboriginal persons in Calgary earned less than the non-Aboriginal population; however this gap has decreased over time. In 2005, Aboriginal persons who worked full-time earned 82% of what their non-Aboriginal counterparts earned. This was up from 76% in 2000.
- In 2005, the median income for an 'Aboriginal household'⁶ was \$59,936, which was 87% of the income for all households in Calgary CMA.



- There was greater gender equality in income among the Aboriginal population than the non-Aboriginal population.
- Aboriginal persons were much more likely than non-Aboriginal persons to be living in poverty. The prevalence of persons in Calgary living below the low-income cut-offs (LICO)⁷ was more than twice as high for the Aboriginal population with a rate of 28.5% compared to the rate of 13.0% for the non-Aboriginal population.

Prevalence of Low Income (before tax), Calgary CMA, 2005	
	LICO Rate
Total Aboriginal population	28.5%
First Nations population	38.3%
Métis	20.7%
Non-Aboriginal population	13.0%

- Aboriginal children, lone-parent families and seniors were particularly vulnerable to poverty.
- The income of Aboriginal families who were living in poverty was, on average, more than \$14,000 below the low-income cut-offs in 2005.



HOUSING & MOBILITY

- Aboriginal persons were more likely than non-Aboriginal persons to be renters and less likely to own their homes. Almost half (46%) of Aboriginal persons in Calgary were renters compared to one-quarter of non-Aboriginal persons.
- In Calgary, 11% of Aboriginal persons lived in homes that required major repairs⁸. While this was down from 14% in 2001, it was still more than twice the rate for the non-Aboriginal population at 5%.
- In 2006, nearly two-thirds (65%) of Aboriginal households in Calgary were living in acceptable housing⁹. Although this rate has increased by 9% since 1996, it is still lower than the rate of 72% for non-Aboriginal households.
- One-quarter of Aboriginal households in Calgary were living in housing that was unaffordable, 9% lived housing that required major repairs (adequacy standard) and 7% lived in crowded conditions (suitability standard). The rates of Aboriginal persons of living below the affordability and suitability standards have decreased by 5-6 percentage points between 1996 and 2006, however there has been little to no improvement in the rates of those living below the adequacy standard.
- Almost two-thirds of Aboriginal persons in Calgary had moved within the five years previous to the census, compared to approximately one-half of the non-Aboriginal population. Most (59%) Aboriginal persons who moved in this time period, moved between residences within the Calgary CMA.



Mobility Status ¹⁰ for Aboriginal Persons, Calgary CMA, 2006				
	2005-2006		2001-2006	
	#	%	#	%
Total	26,050	100.0	24,295	100.0
Non-movers	18,105	69.5	8,550	35.2
Movers	7,945	30.5	15,750	64.8
Non-migrants	5,380	20.7	9,340	38.4
Migrants	2,560	9.8	6,415	26.4
Internal migrants	2,470	9.5	6,225	25.6
Intra-provincial	1,090	4.2	2,600	10.7
Inter-provincial	1,375	5.3	3,625	14.9
External migrants	90	0.3	190	0.8

- In 2008, Aboriginal persons accounted for 15% of the homeless population (City of Calgary, Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary: 2008 May 14).

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Approximately 60% of Métis and First Nations persons in Calgary over the age of 15 reported being in excellent or very good health, with just over 10% reporting fair or poor health (Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey).
- Half of the Métis and First Nations population had one or more chronic health conditions; the most common being respiratory problems, arthritis/rheumatism, high blood pressure, heart problems or the effects of a stroke (Statistics Canada, 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey).
- Almost one in five (18%) of Aboriginal persons in Calgary had a disability/activity limitation¹¹. This was similar to the rate for the non-Aboriginal population.
- Suicide is a major concern in the Aboriginal community. One in six (17%) of Aboriginal persons who responded to a City of Calgary survey in 2009 had concerns that they—or someone in their household—was suicidal. This was almost twice the rate of concern among the non-Aboriginal survey respondents (9%) (City of Calgary, 2009 Signposts Survey).

JUSTICE

- Aboriginal persons are over-represented as both offenders and victims of crime.
- Between 2007 and 2008 Aboriginal persons accounted for 15% of the total federal offender population and 33% of the female offender population (Correctional Investigator of Canada, *Good Intentions, Disappointing Results: A Progress Report on Federal Aboriginal Corrections*, November 2009).

- Almost half of Aboriginal persons who responded to the 2009 Signposts survey, had concerns about themselves or someone in their household being a victim of crime.

Security Concerns, 2009 Signposts Survey, Calgary		
	Aboriginal Population	Non-Aboriginal Population
Being a victim of domestic violence	16%	12%
Being a victim of crime in your home or community	48%	40%

Source: City of Calgary, 2009 Signposts Survey

- 30% of urban Aboriginal persons in Canada have been a victim of crime in the past 10 years and 27% have been arrested (Environics Institute for Survey Research, *Urban Aboriginal People's Study*, 2009).

HUMAN RIGHTS

- Close to one in three (29%) Aboriginal persons in Calgary were concerned about themselves or someone in their household being discriminated against. This was significantly higher than the rate of 21% for non-Aboriginal persons (City of Calgary, Signposts Survey, 2009).
- Among urban Aboriginal persons in Canada, 70% felt that they have been teased or insulted because of their Aboriginal background (EnviroNics Institute for Survey Research, Urban Aboriginal People's Study, 2009).
- In 2009, only 24 human rights complaints were filed to the Alberta Human Rights Commission citing Aboriginal as a ground; seven of these were filed in southern Alberta. Complaints were filed in the areas of employment practices, good and services and tenancy (Communication with Alberta Human Rights Commission, May 2010).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct questions or requests for further information to:

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(403) 268-5122 / SocialResearch@calgary.ca

The information, analysis and opinions contained in this fact sheet are based on various sources believed to be reliable, but their accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Wherever possible, the most recent data available have been used.



NOTES

¹ “Aboriginal Identity” is defined by Statistics Canada as those persons reporting identification with at least one Aboriginal group (i.e. North American Indian, Métis, or Inuit) and/or those who did not report an Aboriginal identity, but indicated being a Registered or Treaty Indian, and/or a member of a Band or First Nation (Statistics Canada, *2006 Census Dictionary*).

² The Calgary CMA includes the city of Calgary as well as Chestermere, Cochrane, Airdrie, Beiseker, Crossfield, Irricana and the MD of Rocky View. Tsuu T’ina Nation is also part of the Calgary CMA, however it was not included in the 2006 Census of Canada.

³ The percentage of Métis who could speak an Aboriginal language very or relatively well is not included in the graph because this figure has been suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*.

⁴ In this context ‘family’ refers to a ‘census family’ which Statistics Canada defines as: “a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. ‘Children’ in a census family include grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) with no parents present” (Statistics Canada, *2006 Census Dictionary*).

⁵ Statistics Canada recommends that users of the attendance at school variable interpret the 2006 Census results with caution due to important variations with previous census and with the Labour Force Survey. It appears that the 2006 Census could have overestimated the school attendance for the population aged 45 years and over (Statistics Canada, *Education Reference Guide, 2006 Census*).

⁶ Statistics Canada defines an Aboriginal household as: 1) any single family household where at least one spouse, one common-law partner or a lone parent is considered part of the Aboriginal identity population or where at least 50% of the household members are considered to be part of the Aboriginal identity population 2) any multiple-family household where at least one of the families in the household is an Aboriginal household 3) any non-family household where at least 50% of the household members are considered to be part of the Aboriginal identity population (Statistics Canada, *2006 Aboriginal Population Profile, Definitions and Symbols*).

⁷ Low income cut-offs (LICO) were developed by Statistics Canada to represent income levels at which families or persons not in economic families spend 20% more than average of their before tax income on food, shelter and clothing (Statistics Canada, *2006 Census Dictionary*).

⁸ Examples of major repairs include: defective plumbing or electrical wire, or structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings (Statistics Canada, *2006 Census Dictionary*).

⁹ As defined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, ‘acceptable housing’ is housing that is adequate in condition, suitable in size and affordable. Adequate dwellings are those reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs, affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of before-tax household income and suitable dwellings have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to the National Occupancy Standard requirements (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Canadian Housing Observer, *Frequently Ask[sic] Questions*. http://cmhc.beyond2020.com/HiCOFAQs_EN.html).

¹⁰ *Non-migrants*: living at a new address within the same census subdivision (CSD); *Migrants*: living in a different CSD; *Internal migrants*: living in a different CSD within Canada; *Intra-provincial migrants*: living in the same province; *Inter-provincial migrants*: living in a different province; *External migrants*: moved to Canada from a different country (Statistics Canada, *2006 Census Dictionary*).

¹¹ A disability refers to difficulties with daily activities and the reduction in the amount or kind of activities due to physical or mental conditions or health problems that have lasted or are expected to last six months or more (Statistics Canada, *2006 Census Dictionary*).