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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this background paper is to provide the reader with a general demographic profile of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario.¹ It is an overview of some key population, cultural, social, and economic characteristics of Aboriginal peoples, based largely on data from the 2001 Canada Census. Where appropriate and available, comparisons are made with the non-Aboriginal population of Ontario.

This paper does not purport to be a definitive demographic profile of the Aboriginal peoples in Ontario. Rather, it acts as a very basic demographic primer.

Demographic information is important for policy and planning purposes. Part of the Ipperwash Inquiry's mandate was to make recommendations that will help to avoid violence in circumstances similar to Ipperwash. In this regard, the Inquiry report and recommendations will act as a planning tool for the federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nations governments. As well, the policy part of the Inquiry will include references to Aboriginal youth and demographics, where Aboriginal peoples live in Ontario, and the evolving social conditions and experiences of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario. This demographic profile will assist the reader in understanding these references.

As Figure 1 indicates, Aboriginal peoples represent a small proportion of the total Ontario population. However, there are more Aboriginal people in Ontario than in any other province in Canada, and the City of Toronto has one of the largest, if not the largest, Aboriginal population in the country.

Generally, Aboriginal peoples are younger, more mobile, experience more single-parent families, are less well educated, experience more unemployment, earn less, and are incarcerated in greater proportions than non-Aboriginal peoples. In Ontario, a large majority of Aboriginal peoples do not live on reserves (or First Nation communities, as reserves are often called).

This paper does not analyze trends. However, as the Community Well-Being Index (discussed near the end of this paper) indicates, it often takes a long time for fundamental change to occur. The Index shows that the well-being of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario improved, although not by much, between 1991 and 2001.

¹ The Ipperwash Inquiry was appointed by the Province of Ontario. Therefore, this paper describes the Aboriginal peoples who live within the borders of Ontario.

Figure 1: Demographic Snapshot of Aboriginal Peoples in Ontario

	Aboriginal Peoples	Non-Aboriginal Peoples	Comparison
Total population	188,314	11,097,235	Aboriginal population about 1.7% of population of Ontario
Percentage under 19 years	38.4%	26%	48% more Aboriginal people under 19 years
Percentage over 65 years	4.6%	13%	65% fewer Aboriginal people over 65 years
Percentage living off reserve	78%	NA	21.5% living on reserve
Percentage who were living at same address for at least one year	79.3%	86.2%	8% fewer Aboriginal people living at same address for at least one year
Percentage of lone-parent families	9%	4.9%	84% more Aboriginal lone-parent families
Percentage who graduated from high school	12%	14%	14% fewer Aboriginal people graduated from high school
Percentage who earned a university degree	5.5%	17.5%	68% fewer Aboriginal people earned a university degree
Percentage employed	55.1%	63.3%	13% fewer Aboriginal people employed
Percentage unemployed	14.7%	6%	145% more Aboriginal people unemployed
Average individual income	\$21,822	\$33,027	Aboriginal peoples' income \$11,205 less
Percentage considered low-income	50%	33.8%	48% more Aboriginal people considered low-income

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

I. THE CENSUS OF CANADA 2001

The 2001 Census of Canada (the Census) is the main source of information for the data presented in this paper.² Data from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs

² “On May 15, 2001, Statistics Canada conducted the Census of Population and the Census of Agriculture to develop a statistical portrait of Canada and its people. The census is a reliable source for describing the characteristics of Canada’s people, dwellings and agricultural operations. The Census of Population provides the population and dwelling counts not only for Canada but also for each province and territory, and for smaller geographic units such as cities or districts within cities. The census also provides information about Canada’s demographic, social and economic characteristics.” See

Canada and the First Nations and Inuit Health branch of Health Canada are also used where appropriate.

The Census process has problems, as discussed below, but it is the only process that tries to include all Aboriginal peoples in Canada. There are other sources for demographic data about Aboriginal peoples, each with its own limitations. These sources include the Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2001, data and reports produced by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and data and reports produced by Health Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health branch.

Statistics Canada identifies three problems with the Census data for Aboriginal peoples: sampling errors, “random rounding,” and incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and Indian settlements.³ These problems reduce the number of Aboriginal peoples reported in the Census.

Statistics Canada used four ways to identify Aboriginal peoples for the Census: “Aboriginal identity,” “Aboriginal origin,” “Member of an Indian Band or First Nation,” and “Registered or Treaty Indian.”⁴ Statistics Canada does not define the terms “Indian,” “Inuit,” or “Métis.”

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Info/About.cfm>. For a history of the census of Canada, see the Statistics Canada website at: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Info/history.cfm>

³ The following two definitions are from the 2001 Census Dictionary (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Census Operations Division, Ministry of Industry, revised 2004), available at:

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Reference/dict/appendices/92-378-XIE02002.pdf>.

Sampling errors: “Estimates obtained by weighting up responses collected on a sample basis are subject to error due to the fact that the distribution of characteristics within the sample will not usually be identical to the distribution of characteristics within the population from which the sample has been selected. The potential error introduced by sampling will vary according to the relative scarcity of the characteristics in the population. For large cell values, the potential error due to sampling, as a proportion of the cell value, will be relatively small. For small cell values, this potential error, as a proportion of the cell value, will be relatively large” (p. 294). Random rounding: “The figures shown in the tables have been subjected to a confidentiality procedure known as **random rounding** to prevent the possibility of associating statistical data with any identifiable individual. Under this method, all figures, including totals and margins, are randomly rounded either up or down to a multiple of ‘5’ and in some cases ‘10’”(p. 295). The following definition is from the 2001 Census at: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Info/indres.cfm>.

Incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and Indian settlements: “On some Indian reserves and Indian settlements in the 2001 Census, enumeration was not permitted or was interrupted before it could be completed. Moreover, for some Indian reserves and Indian settlements, the quality of the enumeration was considered inadequate. These geographic areas (a total of 30) are called incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and Indian settlements.”

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4. “Aboriginal identity” refers to those persons who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, i.e. North American Indian, Métis, or Inuit (Eskimo), and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada and/or who were members of an Indian Band or First Nation. “Aboriginal origin” refers to those persons who reported at least one Aboriginal origin to the ethnic origin question (North American Indian, Métis or Inuit). Ethnic origin refers to the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which the respondent’s ancestors belong.

“Member of an Indian Band or First Nation” refers to those persons who reported being a member of an Indian Band or a First Nation of Canada. “Registered or Treaty Indian” refers to those persons who reported they were registered under the *Indian Act* of Canada. Treaty Indians are persons who are registered under the *Indian Act* and can prove descent from a Band that signed a treaty.

This paper relies on the numbers from the “Aboriginal identity” category in the Census.⁵

II. DEFINITION OF “ABORIGINAL PEOPLES”

Aboriginal peoples are the descendents of the original inhabitants of North America.

In the *Constitution Act, 1982*, “aboriginal peoples of Canada” includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The *Constitution* does not define any of these terms.⁶

An Indian and Northern Affairs Canada publication identifies three categories of Indians in Canada: status (or registered) Indians, non-status Indians, and Treaty Indians.⁷ Collectively, Indians generally refer to themselves and are referred to as “First Nation peoples.”

The term “Inuit” refers to the Aboriginal peoples of the Canadian Arctic.⁸

There is no generally accepted definition of “Métis.” In *R. v. Powley*, the Supreme Court of Canada said that the Métis are people of mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry who developed their own customs, way of life, and recognizable group identify separate from their Indian or Inuit and European forebears.⁹

⁵ Although the numbers are consistently higher in the Aboriginal origin category, this paper relies on the Aboriginal identity category because people self-identify as Aboriginal for it.

⁶ *Constitution Act, 1982*, Schedule B, to the *Canada Act, 1982*, (U.K.) 1982 c. 11, s. 35(2).

⁷ “Words First An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada,” (Ottawa: Communications Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, September 2004), available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/index_e.html.

Status Indians. Status Indians are people who are entitled to have their names included on the Indian Register, an official list maintained by the federal government. Certain criteria determine who can be registered as a Status Indian. Only Status Indians are recognized as Indians under the *Indian Act*, which defines an Indian as “a person who, pursuant to this Act, is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian.” Status Indians are entitled to certain rights and benefits under the law.

Non-Status Indians. Non-Status Indians are people who consider themselves Indians or members of a First Nation but whom the Government of Canada does not recognize as Indians under the *Indian Act*, either because they are unable to prove their status or have lost their status rights. Many Indian people in Canada, especially women, lost their Indian status through discriminatory practices in the past. Non-Status Indians are not entitled to the same rights and benefits available to Status Indians.

Treaty Indian. A Status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown.

⁸ *Ibid.*, at http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/trmrslt_e.asp?term=18:

Inuit are the Aboriginal people of Arctic Canada. Inuit live primarily in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and northern parts of Labrador and Quebec. They have traditionally lived above the treeline in the area bordered by the Mackenzie Delta in the west, the Labrador coast in the east, the southern point of Hudson Bay in the south, and the High Arctic islands in the north. Inuit are not covered by the *Indian Act*.

However, in 1939 the Supreme Court interpreted the federal government’s power to make laws affecting “Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians” as extending to Inuit. The word “Inuit” means “the people” in Inuktitut, the Inuit language, and is the term by which Inuit refer to themselves.... The term “Eskimo,” applied to Inuit by European explorers, is no longer used in Canada.

⁹ *R. v. Powley* [2003] 2 S.C.R. 207, p.4. The Métis National Council defines the term “Métis” as follows: “Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from

This paper will use “Aboriginal peoples” to refer to First Nation peoples, the Inuit, and the Métis as a group.

III. CULTURAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES, AND LANGUAGE

It is important to keep in mind that “Aboriginal peoples” are not all the same. The country known as Canada was multicultural and multilingual long before European settlers arrived, and this diversity continues amongst Aboriginal peoples today.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples states the following about the term “Aboriginal”:

THE TERM ABORIGINAL obscures the distinctiveness of the First Peoples of Canada—Inuit, Métis and First Nations. With linguistic differences, for example, there are more than 50 distinct groupings among First Nations alone. Among Inuit, there are several dialects within Inuktitut, and the Métis people speak a variety of First Nations languages such as Cree, Ojibwa or Chipewyan, as well as Michif, which evolved out of their mixed ancestry.¹⁰

In Ontario, there are 13 distinct groups of First Nation peoples, each with their own languages, customs, and territories. These Nations are the Algonquin, Mississauga, Ojibway, Cree, Odawa, Pottowatomi, Delaware, and the Haudenosaunee (Mohawk, Onondaga, Onoyota’a:ka, Cayuga, Tuscarora, and Seneca).¹¹

Figure 2 is a map that shows the First Nation communities in Ontario.

other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation.” See <http://www.metisnation.ca/DEFINITION/home.html>.

¹⁰ *The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, Vol. 1, chapter 2, “From Time Immemorial: A Demographic Profile” (Ottawa: Canada Communication Group, 1996), available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sg3_e.html#9

¹¹ Chiefs of Ontario press release, “Education Manifesto, a Comprehensive Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction over Education,” dated August 23, 2005, available at: <http://www.aborinews.com/contenu/bulletin/bulletin.asp?cat=CommuniquésEn&id=1192>.

In Ontario, the predominant Aboriginal languages are Objibway, Oji-Cree, and Cree, with many different dialects, each associated with a particular First Nation and location.¹²

On the Census, 19,975 or about 10.6 percent of the total number of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario reported an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue.

IV. POPULATION

When the Census was conducted, there were about 188,315 Aboriginal people in Ontario.¹³ This does not include the 14,335 Aboriginal people that Statistics Canada estimates were not counted due to the problems with the Census discussed above.¹⁴ The Census reports that the non-Aboriginal population of Ontario was 11,097,235.

Statistics Canada projects that the Aboriginal population in Ontario will increase to about 267,700 between 2001 and 2017.¹⁵

Figure 3 shows that there was a 33.1 percent increase in the Aboriginal population in Ontario from the 1996 Census to the 2001 Census.¹⁶ The non-Aboriginal population in Ontario increased by about 5.7 percent during this same period of time.¹⁷

¹² “Selected Demographic and Cultural Characteristics (205), Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (6), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data” for Ontario, Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

¹³ “Aboriginal Identity Population, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001. This number is the “Aboriginal identify” population. The Census shows the “Aboriginal origins” population count for Ontario as 308,105. See “Aboriginal Origin (10), Age Groups (11B), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data” for Ontario, Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

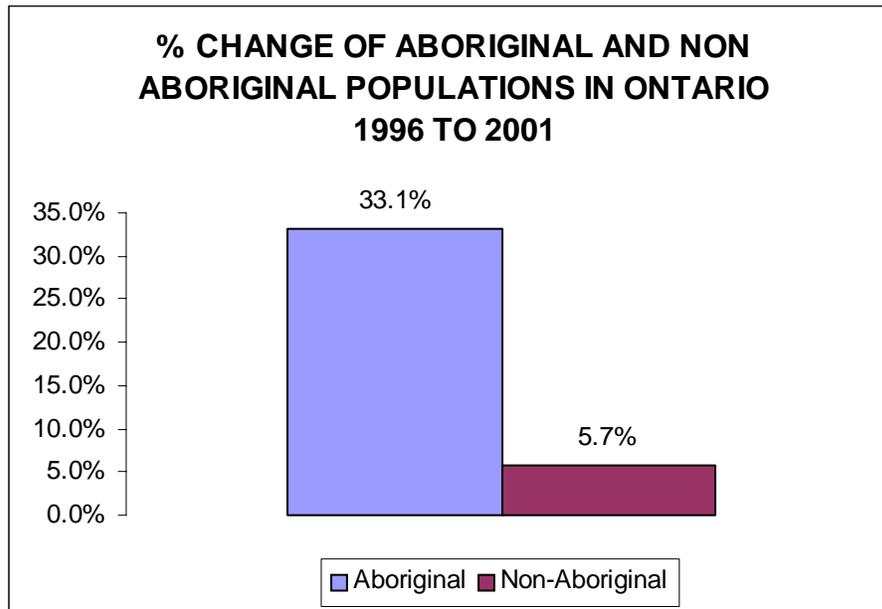
¹⁴ As mentioned in a previous section of this paper, one of the problems with the Census is that there were a number of “incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and Indian Settlements,” which resulted in the under-counting of First Nations people. In Ontario, there were 17 incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and Indian settlements, including the two most populated First Nations communities in Canada, Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mohawks of Akwesasne. Statistics Canada estimates that about 14,335 Aboriginal peoples in Ontario were not counted in the 2001 Census due to the incomplete enumeration problem. See “Incompletely Enumerated Indian Reserves and Indian Settlements,” “Appendix 1. Incompletely Enumerated Indian Reserves and Indian Settlements, 1996 and 1991 Population and Dwelling Counts,” available at <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Meta/appendix01.cfm>.

¹⁵ “Projections of Aboriginal populations, Canada, provinces and territories, 2001 to 2017” (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Ministry of Industry, 2005), available at: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/91-547-XIE/91-547-XIE2005001.pdf>.

¹⁶ “Aboriginal Identity Population, Percentage Change (1996–2001), for Canada, Provinces and Territories—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001. The percentage change from 1996 to 2001 in the First Nation or “North American Indian” population in Ontario was 16.6%, in the Métis identity population it was 124%, and in the Inuit population it was 19%.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Figure 3: Change in Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Populations in Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

What is the explanation for the 33.1 percent increase in the Aboriginal population in Ontario from the 1996 Census to the 2001 Census? It is more than just births, deaths, and migration that explain the large increase in Aboriginal populations. What is likely occurring is a process referred to as “ethnic mobility”:

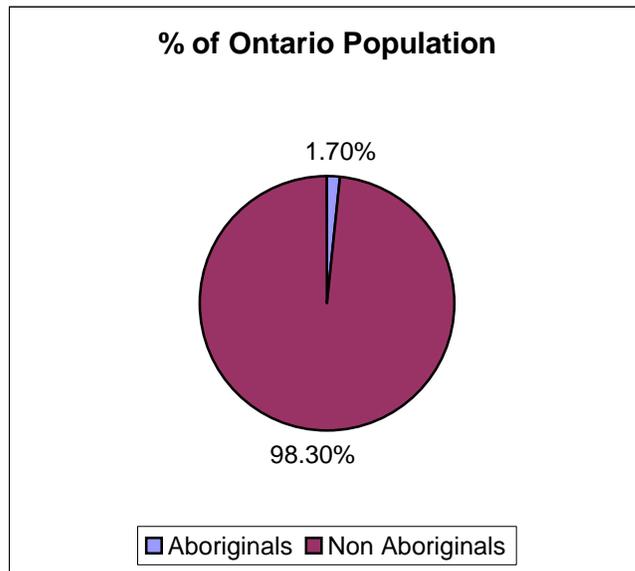
The phenomenon by which individuals and families experience changes in their ethnic affiliation is known as ethnic mobility. Ethnic mobility has long been a component of the demographic growth of Canada’s Aboriginal populations.¹⁸

Ontario has the largest Aboriginal population of all the provinces and territories in Canada. In 2001, one in five Aboriginal people in Canada lived in Ontario. However, as illustrated in Figure 4, as a percentage of the total, the Aboriginal population in Ontario is small, at just under 1.7 percent. As a comparison, the Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan was about 13.5 percent of the total population when the Census was conducted.¹⁹

¹⁸ Eric Guimond, “Fuzzy Definitions and Population Explosion: Changing Identities of Aboriginal Groups in Canada,” *Not Strangers in These Parts: Urban Aboriginal Peoples*, ed. David Newhouse and Evelyn Peters (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2003), p. 42.

¹⁹ “Aboriginal Identity Population, Percentage Distribution, for Canada, Provinces and Territories—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

Figure 4: Percentage of Ontario Population



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

Finally, it is important to note the likely impact of the 1985 amendments (Bill C-31) to the *Indian Act* on the registered Indian population.²⁰ While Bill C-31 initially resulted in a large increase in the registered or status Indian population, the amendments will likely result in a substantial decrease in this population in the future, as more registered Indians have children with partners who are not registered Indians:

After two generations, Bill C-31 inheritance rules (in concert with out-marriage) are expected to result in a rapid decline in the population entitled to registration. Those non-entitled to registration are expected to begin to outnumber those entitled to registration in about three generations. Projection trends suggest that sometime around the end of the fifth generation, no further children will be born with entitlement to Indian registration.²¹

A substantial decline in the registered Indian population could have major policy implications for the federal and First Nations governments, as well as a serious impact on the registered Indian population's cultural identity, economic entitlement, treaty rights, rights to reside on reserves, membership in First Nations communities, and so on.

²⁰ *Indian Act* R.S.C. 1985, c. I-5

²¹ Stewart Clatworthy, "Re-assessing the Population Impacts of Bill C-31," Summary (*Four Directions Project Consultants*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2001), available on the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs website at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/rpi/smm_e.html.

V. RESIDENCE

Aboriginal peoples live throughout Ontario, in urban areas, in rural areas, and on reserves or First Nations communities.²²

CITIES

According to the Census, about 61 percent of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario live in cities.²³

There are different estimates of how many Aboriginal peoples live in certain cities. For example, the Census states that there were 20,300 Aboriginal peoples living in Toronto at the time the Census was conducted.²⁴ Some of the other estimates for Toronto are as follows:

- The report entitled “Taking Responsibility for Homelessness: An Action Plan for Toronto” reports that there are over 40,000 Aboriginal peoples in Toronto;²⁵
- The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto website states that there are more than 60,000 people with Aboriginal ancestry in Toronto;²⁶
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada reports that the Aboriginal population of Toronto is between 60,000 and 80,000 people.²⁷

²² The following two definitions are from the 2001 Census Dictionary (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Census Operations Division, Ministry of Industry, Ottawa, revised 2004). An urban area is an “area with a population of at least 1,000 and no fewer than 400 persons per square kilometre.” “Rural areas include all territory lying outside urban areas. Taken together, urban and rural areas cover all of Canada.” The following definition is from “Words First An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada” (Ottawa: Communications Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, September 2004). See http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/trmrslt_e.asp?term=3. “First Nation community” is the term many First Nations now use, rather than “Indian reserve.”

²³ “Aboriginal Identity Population (3), Registered Indian Status (3), Age Groups (11B), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001. For additional information about Aboriginal peoples living in urban centres, see *Not Strangers in These Parts: Urban Aboriginal Peoples*, ed. David Newhouse and Evelyn Peters (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2003), available at: http://policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/AboriginalBook_e.pdf#search='not%20strangers%20in%20these%20parts'.

²⁴ “Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (11B) and Sex (3) for Population, for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

²⁵ Report of the Mayor’s Homelessness Action Plan Task Force (January 1999), “Taking Responsibility for Homelessness: An Action Plan for Toronto” (City of Toronto, Toronto: 1999), p. 64.

²⁶ The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto is a community-based non-profit organization that provides a gathering place to deliver programs and services for Native people while striving to reflect the traditional Native cultural perspective. See <http://www.ncct.on.ca/>.

²⁷ “Ontario First Nations Demographics” (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2002), available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/on/pppp_e.html.

DEFINITION OF “RESERVE” AND “BAND”

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada defines “reserve” and “band” as follows:

A reserve (or First Nation community) is an area of land, the legal title to which is held by the Crown, set apart for the use and benefit of an Indian band or First Nation. Some bands have more than one reserve. Many First Nations now prefer the term "First Nation community," and no longer use "reserve."...

A band is a body of Indians for whose collective use and benefit lands have been set apart or money is held by the Crown, or declared to be a band for the purposes of the Indian Act. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of one chief and several councillors. Community members choose the chief and councillors by election, or sometimes through custom. The members of a band generally share common values, traditions and practices rooted in their ancestral heritage. Today, many bands prefer to be known as First Nations (e.g., the Batchewana Band is now called the Batchewana First Nation).²⁸

In Ontario, there are 127 reserves or First Nation communities “officially recognized” by the federal government. The Chiefs of Ontario recognize 134 First Nations communities within Ontario.²⁹

According to the 2001 Census, about 40,490 Aboriginal people live in First Nations communities in Ontario. This represented about 21.5 percent of the Aboriginal population in the province.³⁰

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada also collects statistics about registered Indians. The registered Indian category does not include North America Indians who are not registered (also referred to as non-status Indians), Inuit, or Métis people. A report by Indian and Northern Affairs indicates that the total registered Indian population in Ontario in 2004 was 163,654, with 79,186 living on reserve and 82,852 living off reserve.³¹ The number of people living in First Nation communities in Ontario ranged from less than 100 to more than 10,000 people. The on-reserve population of 113 of the 127 officially recognized First Nation communities in Ontario was less than 1,000 people. Only 14 First

²⁸“Words First An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada,” Communications Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Communications Branch Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, September 2004. Available at http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/trmrslt_e.asp?term=31.

²⁹ Chiefs of Ontario. See <http://www.chiefs-of-ontario.org/>.

³⁰ “Aboriginal Identity Population (3), Registered Indian Status (3), Age Groups (11B), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

³¹ “Registered Indian Population by Sex and Type of Residence by Group, Responsibility Centre and Region 2004,” in Registered Indian Population by Sex and Residence (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2004), p.29 of the Detailed Tables section, available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/sts/rip/rip04_e.pdf.

Nation communities in Ontario had an on-reserve population of more than 1,000 people.³²

Of the 20 largest First Nation communities in Canada, 5 are in Ontario, including the two largest in the country, Six Nations of the Grand River, located near Brantford, and the Mohawks of Akwesasne, which straddles the borders of Quebec, Ontario, and New-York State, about 75 kilometres west of Montreal.³³

Generally speaking, only registered Indians who are members of the particular First Nation community have the right to live in that community, although there are some non-registered Indians and non-Aboriginal people who also live in First Nations communities.

Based on Figure 5, the following is a list of how many First Nation communities are considered to be urban, rural, remote, or accessible by air only. Ninety-five of the 127 First Nation communities in Ontario are located in rural or remote areas or are accessible by air only:

- **Urban** (within 50 km of major centre)—32 First Nation communities
- **Rural** (between 50 km and 350 km of major centre)—59 First Nation communities
- **Remote** (over 350km of major centre)—5 First Nation communities
- **Air Access**—31 First Nation communities

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 12 to 29, available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/sts/rip/rip04_e.pdf.

³³ *Ibid.* “The Twenty Largest Bands in Canada, December 31, 2004,” section, p. xi. The numbers in this table include the total number of First Nation members living on and off reserve.

Figure 5: Access Map



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, revised 2004.

NORTHERN ONTARIO

“Northern Ontario” encompasses about 89 percent of the landmass of the province but has only 7.4 percent of the total population of Ontario.³⁴

The following are some of the demographic and economic trends occurring in First Nation communities in Northern Ontario:

- Aboriginal communities had the highest population growth in the region;

³⁴ Chris Southcott, “Aboriginal Communities in Northern Ontario,” 2001 Census Research Paper Series: Report #11 (prepared for the Northern Ontario Local Training and Adjustment Boards, February 11, 2004), p. 3, available at <http://www.ntab.on.ca/files/aboriginalcommunities.pdf>.

- Aboriginal communities have a higher percentage of youth than the region as a whole;
- Youth out-migration from Aboriginal communities is lower than for Northern Ontario as a whole;
- The labour force participation rates and employment rates for Aboriginal communities are lower than for the region as a whole;
- The unemployment rates for Aboriginal communities are consistently higher than for the region as a whole;
- Youth in Northern Ontario’s Aboriginal communities have especially low rates of labour force involvement;
- The industrial structure and occupational structure of Aboriginal communities in Northern Ontario differs from that of the region and Ontario;
- Educational levels in Northern Ontario’s Aboriginal communities are lower than the averages for the region and for Ontario; and
- The average income of individuals in Aboriginal communities in Northern Ontario is lower than the regional and provincial average.³⁵

Almost all of the “air access”—only First Nation communities in Ontario are located in the North. Isolation is a challenge for these communities, as is access to quality health care, education, affordable and nutritional food, and employment opportunities.³⁶

VI. GENDER

In Ontario, just under 52 percent of the Aboriginal population is female.³⁷ This is similar to the non-Aboriginal population in Ontario, where about 51 percent is female.

VII. AGE

As the numbers in Figure 6 show, the Aboriginal population of Ontario is much younger than the non-Aboriginal population.

In 2001 in Ontario, there were many more Aboriginal children and youth, and fewer elderly people than in the non-Aboriginal population. According to the Census, about 38.4 percent of Aboriginal people were 19 years old or younger, about 57 percent were 20 to 64 years old, and about 4.6 percent were 65 years old and over.³⁸

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

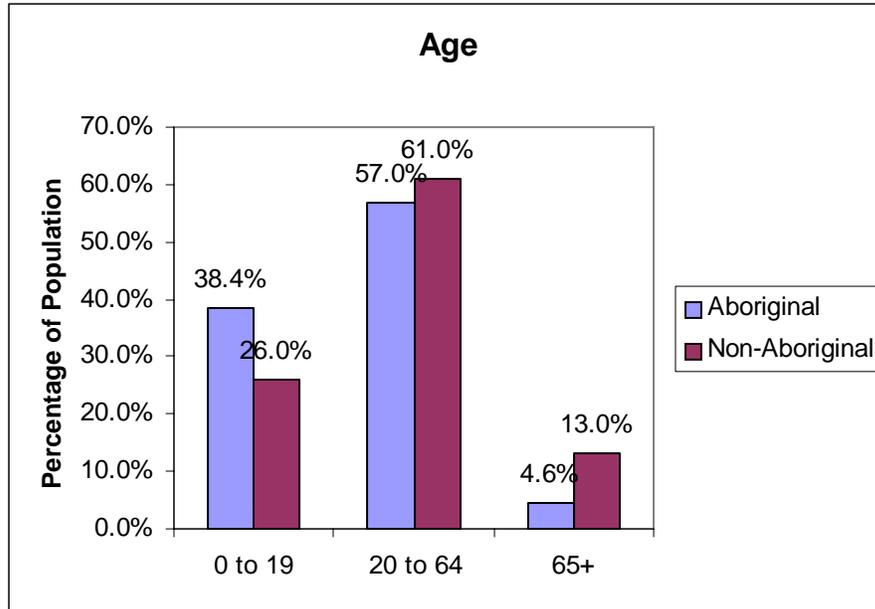
³⁶ Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) website: <http://www.nan.on.ca/main.aspx>.

³⁷ “Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (11B), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

About 26 percent of the non-Aboriginal population in Ontario were 19 years old or younger, 61 percent were 20 to 64 years old, and about 13 percent were 65 years old and over.³⁹

Figure 6: Age



Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

The Census reported the median age for the Aboriginal population in Ontario as 27.9 years, whereas the median age for the non-Aboriginal population was 37.1 years.⁴⁰

It is projected that by the year 2017, the median age for the Aboriginal population in Ontario will increase to 30.6 years, with considerably more Aboriginal people over 65 years of age than in 2001.⁴¹

VIII. MOBILITY

Mobility data give an indication of how frequently people move from one place to another.⁴²

³⁹ “Age and Sex, Percentage Distribution for Both Sexes, for Canada, Provinces and Territories—100% Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁴⁰ “Aboriginal Identity Population, Median Age, for Canada, Provinces and Territories—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁴¹ *Supra*, note 15, p. 84.

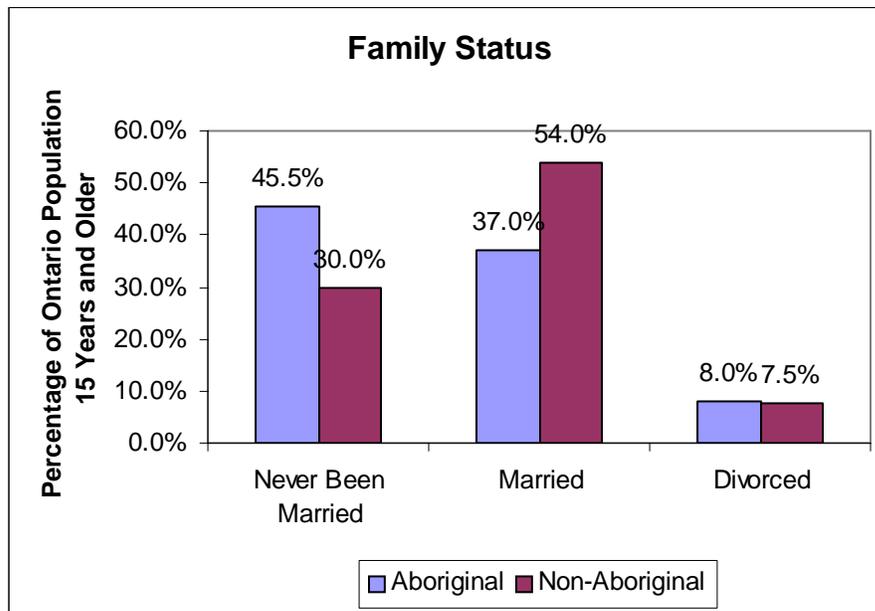
⁴² *Supra*, note 3. Information about mobility “indicates whether the person lived in the same residence on Census Day (May 15, 2001), as he or she did one year before (May 15, 2000).”

On Census Day (May 15, 2001) in Ontario, about 79.3 percent of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario had lived at the same address for at least one year, as compared to approximately 86.2 percent of the non-Aboriginal population.⁴³

IX. FAMILY STATUS

According to the Census, about 44.5 percent of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario aged 15 years and over had never been married. Approximately 37 percent were legally married and about 8 percent were divorced. For non-Aboriginal people in Ontario aged 15 years and over, about 30 percent had never been married, about 54 percent were legally married, and approximately 7.5 percent were divorced.⁴⁴ These numbers are reflected in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Family Status



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

Single parents head almost 9 percent of Aboriginal families in Ontario. This compares to about 4.9 percent of non-Aboriginal families.⁴⁵

⁴³ "Selected Demographic and Cultural Characteristics (205), Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (6), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data," Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁴⁴ Data for people who were separated and widowed were not included so the percentages set out in the paper do not add up to 100%. "Selected Demographic and Cultural Characteristics (205), Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (6), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data," Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

X. HEALTH

Although the health of Aboriginal peoples is gradually improving, it is generally still poorer than the health of non-Aboriginal peoples. For example, Aboriginal peoples still have a lower life expectancy, a higher infant mortality rate, higher suicide rates, and much higher rates of infectious diseases than non-Aboriginal peoples.

A Statistical Profile on the Health of First Nations in Canada for the Year 2000 (the Profile) is a national survey that contains a wealth of information about the health status of First Nation people.⁴⁶ Most of the data are for all of Canada, rather than for specific regions, such as Ontario. The following are highlights from the First Nations health statistics included in the Profile:

- Life expectancy at birth has improved among the First Nations population. In 2000, it rose to 68.9 years for males and 76.6 years for females. However, life expectancy for First Nations people is still 7.4 years less for males and 5.2 years less for females than non-First Nation people;
- In 2000, the First Nations birth rate was 23.4 births per 1,000 population, two times the comparable rate for other Canadians.
- The infant mortality rate amongst First Nation people has been steadily declining. In 1979, the First Nations infant mortality rate was 27.6 deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2000, the rate had declined to 6.4 deaths per 1,000 live births. This is still 16 percent higher than the rate for other Canadians.
- Circulatory diseases (23 percent of all deaths) and injury (22 percent) account for nearly half of all deaths among First Nation people. In contrast, circulatory diseases account for 37 percent of all deaths, followed by cancer (27 percent), for other Canadians. Motor vehicle accidents were a leading cause of death over all First Nations age groups.
- The most common cause of death for First Nations people aged 1 to 44 was injury and poisoning. Among children under 10, deaths were mostly unintentional (accidental).
- Suicide and self-injury were the leading causes of death for First Nation youth and adults up to age 44. In 2000, suicide accounted for 22 percent of all deaths in youth (aged 10 to 19 years) and 16 percent of all deaths in early adulthood (aged 20 to 44 years). This compares with 20.4 percent for other Canadian youth.
- In 2000, First Nations people experienced a disproportionate burden of many infectious diseases. These include pertussis (2.2 times higher), chlamydia (7 times higher), rubella (7 times higher), tuberculosis (6 times higher), and shigellosis (2.1 times higher).⁴⁷

⁴⁶ "A Statistical Profile on the Health of First Nations in Canada for the Year 2000," (Ottawa: Health Canada, First Nations & Inuit Health Branch, March 2003).

⁴⁷ Health Canada, First Nations & Inuit Health Branch. See http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnih-spni/pubs/gen/stats_profil_e.html.

This Profile discusses “non-medical determinants of health,” including education, housing, employment and income, traditional language and culture, and remoteness of communities.

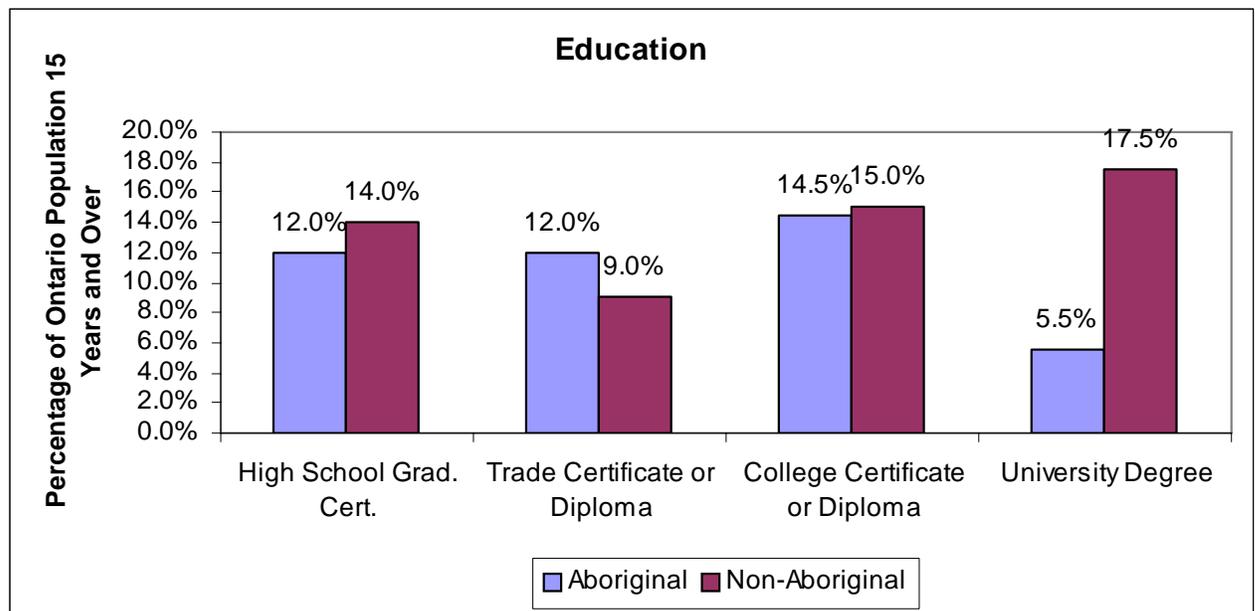
The Aboriginal Peoples Survey indicates that the most commonly reported chronic health conditions for Aboriginal peoples in Ontario over 15 years of age and living off reserve are: arthritis or rheumatism, high blood pressure, asthma, stomach problems, diabetes, and heart problems.⁴⁸

About 55.7 percent of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario 15 years of age and over and living off reserve said that they consider their health status to be excellent or very good.⁴⁹

I. EDUCATION

As indicated in Figure 8, Aboriginal peoples are generally less well educated than non-Aboriginal peoples. The largest difference is in the number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples who have a university degree.

Figure 8: Education



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁴⁸ Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2001—Initial findings: Well-being of the non-reserve Aboriginal population—Supporting Tables, Statistics Canada, table 2.4, p. 15. The 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) is a post-censal survey of adults and children who reported Aboriginal ancestry, Aboriginal identity, Registered Indian status and/or Band membership on the 2001 Census. This report presents the initial findings of the 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) and focuses on the well-being of the Aboriginal identity population living in non-reserve areas across Canada.

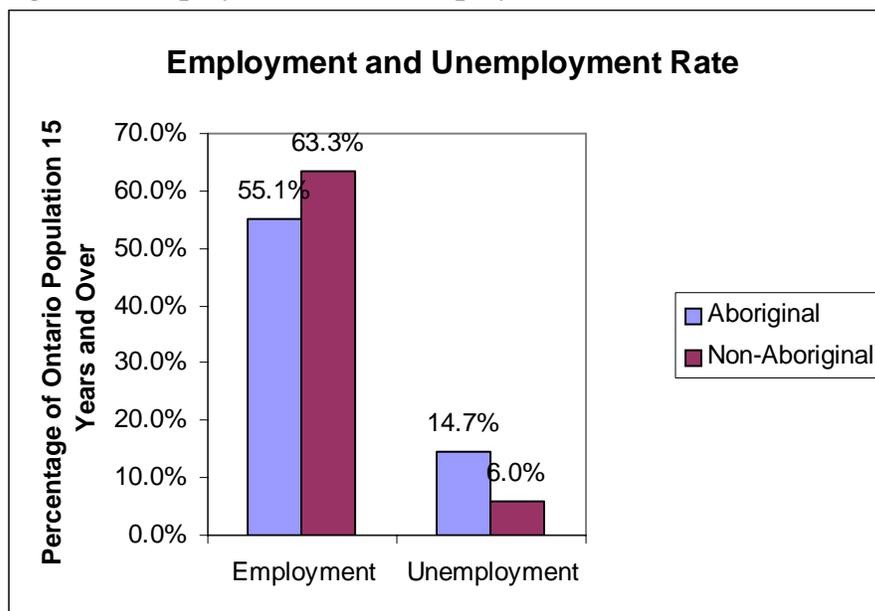
⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, table 1.4, p. 9.

The Census asked respondents to indicate their highest level of schooling. Of the 132,670 Aboriginal people in Ontario 15 years and over, about 12 percent said they had a high school graduation certificate only, about 12 percent had a trade certificate or diploma, about 14.5 percent had a college certificate or diploma, and about 5.5 percent had a university degree. About 14 percent of the non-Aboriginal population 15 years and over said they had a high school graduation certificate only, about 9 percent had a trade certificate or diploma, about 15 percent had a college certificate or diploma, and about 17.5 percent had a university degree.⁵⁰

XII. EMPLOYMENT

As shown in Figure 9, Aboriginal peoples have a lower employment rate and a higher unemployment rate than non-Aboriginal peoples.

Figure 9: Employment and Unemployment Rate



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

The Census indicates that the employment rate for Aboriginal peoples in Ontario 15 years and over was 55.1 percent and the unemployment rate was 14.7 percent. This compares to an employment rate for non-Aboriginal people 15 years and over of 63.3 percent and an unemployment rate of 6 percent.⁵¹

⁵⁰ “Selected Educational Characteristics (29), Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (5A), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population 15 Years and Over, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁵¹ “Selected Labour Force Characteristics (50), Aboriginal Origin (14), Age Groups (5A) and Sex (3) for Population 15 Years and Over, for Canada, Provinces, Territories and Census Metropolitan Areas, 2001 Census—20% Sample,” Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001. In the 2001 Census, the broad category of “labour force activity” includes the employed, the unemployed, and those not in the work force. The

XIII. INCOME

The average annual income of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario 15 years and over is about \$11,000 less than that of non-Aboriginal people.

The Census indicates that the average income for Aboriginal peoples in Ontario 15 years and over was \$21,822. The average income for non-Aboriginal people 15 years and over was \$33,027.⁵²

According to the Census, about 50% of Aboriginal peoples 15 years and over and 33.8% of non-Aboriginal people 15 years and over in Ontario were considered low income.⁵³

XIV. ONTARIO PRISON POPULATION

As mentioned above, Aboriginal peoples represent only 1.7 percent of Ontario's population. However, they represent about 9 percent of the inmates in prisons in the province. The province's rate of Aboriginal overrepresentation in correctional facilities is 5.3:

The fact that 9 percent of provincial inmates in Ontario are Aboriginal appears to pale in respect to the much higher figures in the western provinces where, in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Aboriginal people make up over half of the jail population. As was noted earlier, however, Aboriginal overrepresentation is really only understood when the proportion of Aboriginal people in jail is contrasted with the Aboriginal population of the province or territory as a whole. Viewed in that light, Ontario's rate of Aboriginal overrepresentation, 5.3, is greater than that of Manitoba (5.1) and only slightly less than Saskatchewan (5.7). If Aboriginal overrepresentation is a problem in the western provinces, then it is a problem in Ontario as well.⁵⁴

XV. THE COMMUNITY WELL-BEING (CWB) INDEX

The report entitled "The Community Well-Being (CWB) Index: Disparity in Well-Being Between First Nations and Other Canadian Communities Over Time" indicates that the

"labour force" category includes the employed and unemployed. The Census also includes the "participation rate," "employment rate," and "unemployment rate."

⁵² "Selected Income Characteristics (35A), Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (6), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census—20% Sample Data," Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001.

⁵³ "Selected Income Characteristics (35A), Aboriginal Identity (8), Age Groups (6), Sex (3) and Area of Residence (7) for Population, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2001 Census - 20% Sample Data"—Cat. No. 97F0011XCB2001046, Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001. Incidence of Low Income is the "percentage of economic families or unattached individuals who spend 20% more than average on food, shelter and clothing."

⁵⁴ Jonathan Rudin, "Aboriginal Peoples and the Criminal Justice System" (research paper prepared for the Ipperwash Inquiry, 2005), p. 15.

general well-being of First Nations communities in Ontario is slowly improving relative to other communities in Ontario.⁵⁵

The Community Well-Being (CWB) Index is another tool for assessing the well-being of First Nations communities. The CWB looks at four indicators of socio-economic well-being: education, labour force activity, income, and housing using data from the 1991, 1996, and 2001 Census.⁵⁶ Each of these four indicators is weighted equally to arrive at the CWB. The CWB scores fall between 0 and 1 (with 1 being the highest).

For First Nations communities in Ontario, the average CWB score in 2001 was 0.68, and for other communities in Ontario, the average CWB score was 0.84. A gap of 0.16 is considered to be large, but it has narrowed for First Nations in Ontario by 0.04 from 1991 to 2001.⁵⁷

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⁵⁵ Erin O'Sullivan and Mindy McHardy, "The Community Well-Being (CWB) Index: Disparity in Well-Being Between First Nations and Other Canadian Communities Over Time"(Ottawa: Strategic Research and Analysis Directorate, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, October 25, 2004), available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/ra/dwb/dwb_e.pdf

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* Education is measured by literacy standards (at least a Grade 9 education) and the attainment of at least a high school diploma (Part 2 of the CWB report, section 2.1, p. 1); Labour force activity is measured by labour force participation (labour force participants divided by the total population) and employment among labour force participants (employed persons divided by labour force participants) (Part 2 of the CWB report, section 2.2, p. 2.); income is defined as average total income (total income divided by total population) (Part 2 of the CWB report, section 2.3, p. 2); housing conditions are measured by housing quality (if major repairs are needed), and housing quantity (if the home is crowded, containing more than one person per room) (Part 2 of the CWB report, section 2.4, pp. 2 to 3).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Part 5, p. 15.

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