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***Highlights Of Aboriginal Conditions - 1981-  
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# Highlights of Aboriginal Conditions 1981-2001

## Part I Demographic Trends

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**HIGHLIGHTS OF  
ABORIGINAL CONDITIONS  
1981-200 1**

**PART I  
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

Prepared by

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Partie I - Tendances démographiques

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## I. KEY FINDINGS

Canada's aboriginal populations are growing rapidly. Most aboriginal groups will increase their proportion of the Canadian population by 2001, except non-status Indians.

The status Indian and Inuit populations have had, and will continue to have, higher growth rates than the Canadian population.

By 1991, 18 percent of all status Indians will be Bill C-31 registrants or their children. This proportion is expected to decline to 17 percent in 2001.

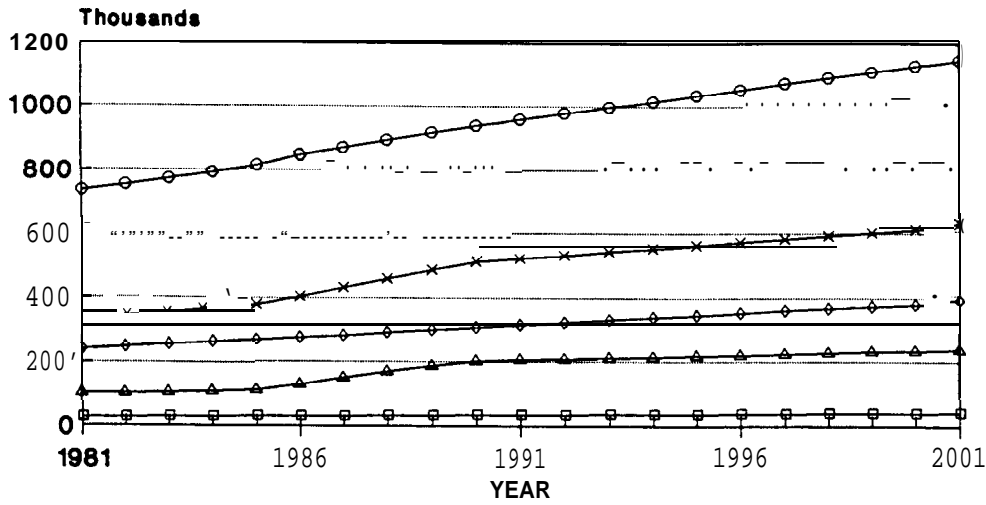
The status Indian population is and will continue to be younger than the Canadian population. It is, however, aging and will continue to do so through to 2001.

The population growth and aging patterns of the Inuit mirror those of status Indians.

### III. HIGHLIGHTS

FIGURE 1

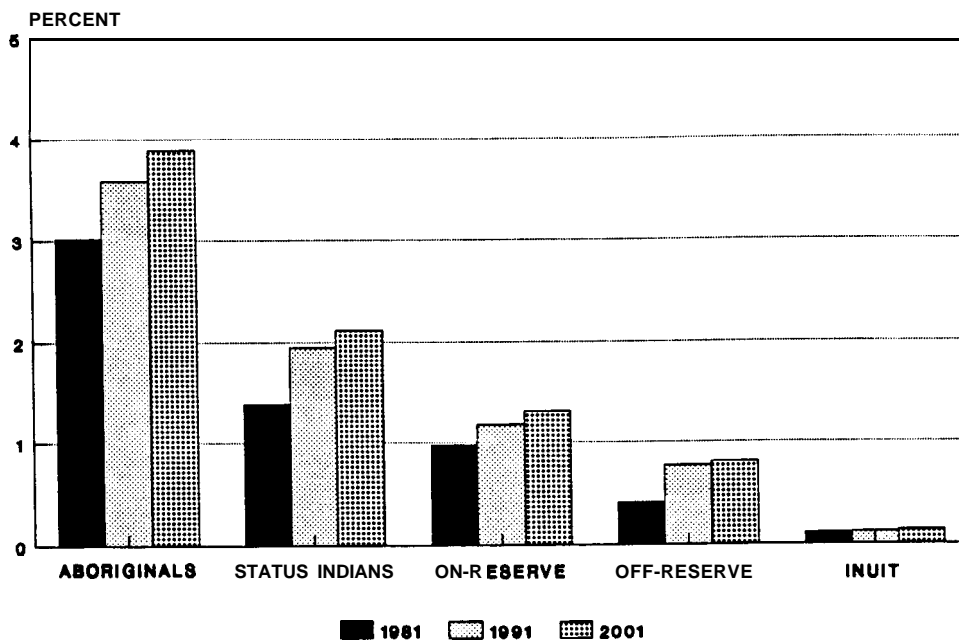
#### Canada's Aboriginal Populations 1981-2001



- By 1991, the estimated population of Canadians with aboriginal origins will increase nearly one-third, from 735,500 in 1981 to 958,500. In the long-term, a further one-fifth increase to 1,145,100 is projected by 2001.
- The total status Indian population will have grown by one-half by 1991 to 521,500, up from 336,900 in 1981. By 2001, the number of status Indians will increase another one-fifth to 622,900, almost double the 1981 figure.
- By 1991, the number of Indians on-reserve will have increased one-third to 316,300, up from 237,600 in 1981. In the long-term, the projections estimate a population of another one-fifth, to 385,500 in 2001.
- The number of Indians off-reserve will have more than doubled by 1991, from 99,300 in 1981 to 205,200. There will be little population growth between 1991 and 2001, when the off-reserve population is projected to be 237,400.
- The Inuit population has a projected growth to 1991 of nearly one-third, from 25,900 in 1981 to 33,400. By 2001, another one-fifth increase is projected, to 40,900, over one and a half times the 1981 figure.

FIGURE 2

**ABORIGINAL GROUPS :  
PROPORTION OF CANADIAN POPULATION  
1981, 1991, 2001**

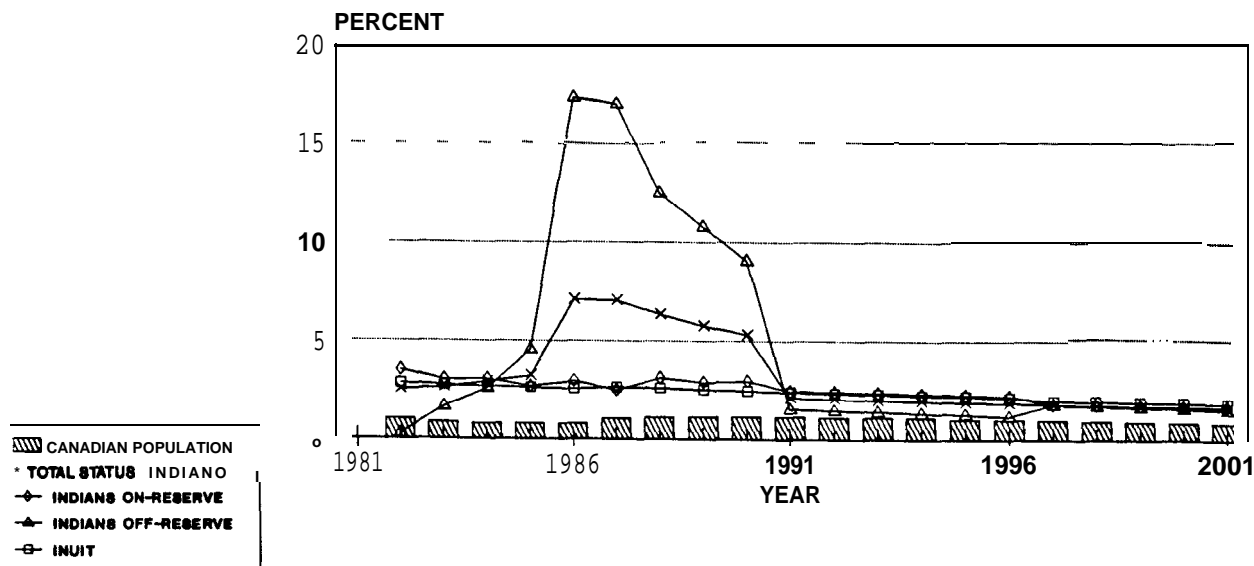


- Canada's aboriginal populations are growing rapidly. Most aboriginal groups will increase their proportion of the Canadian population by 2001, except non-status Indians.
- The percentage of all aboriginal peoples in the Canadian population will have increased by one-fifth in the short-term, from 3.0% in 1981 to 3.6% in 1991. The long-term increase will be more gradual, to 3.9% by 2001.
- The proportion of Canadians who are status Indians was 1.4% in 1981. This will have increased substantially by 1991, to **2.0%**. In the long-term, growth is expected to slow down and by 2001, status Indians will comprise 2.1% of the Canadian population.
- Growth in the proportion of Indians on-reserve is expected to be from 1.0% in 1981 to 1.2% in 1991 and 1.3% in 2001.
- The off-reserve Indian population will have doubled its share of the Canadian population by 1991, from 0.41% in 1981 to 0.77%. It will increase only marginally in the long-term, to 0.81% by 2001.
- population projections for the Inuit forecast that their percentage share of the Canadian population will not change substantially due to their small population size, from 0.11% in 1981 to 0.12% in 1991 and 0.14% in 2001.



FIGURE 3

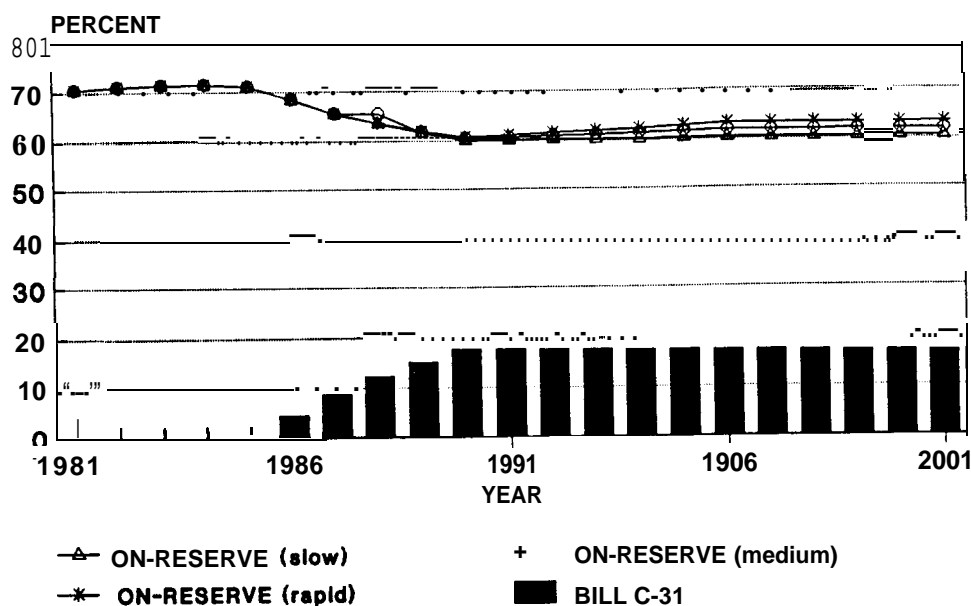
**Growth Rates of Status Indian, Inuit  
and Canadian Population - s  
1982 - 2001**



- The status Indian and Inuit populations have had, and will continue to have, higher growth rates than the Canadian population.
- High growth rates in the status Indian population between 1985 and 1990 are due to Bill C-31, with 91,000 new registrants entering the population in this period.
- The annual growth rate for status Indians peaked at 7.1% in both 1986 and 1987. The growth rate will drop sharply after Bill C-31 registration, to 2.1% in 1991 and it is expected to further decline to 1.6% by 2001.
- By 1991, the growth rate for the on-reserve Indian population will be slightly more than two-thirds of the 1982 rate, 2.4% Vs 3.5%. By 2001, the growth rate will likely decline to 1.7%, three-quarters of the 1991 rate.
- Due to Bill C-31, the off-reserve Indian population will have experienced the highest growth rates of any aboriginal group between 1985 and 1990, with a peak of 17.3% in 1986. Growth will then steadily decline to a low of 1.2% in 1996. From 1997 to 2001, the growth rate of Indians off-reserve is expected to be similar to those of other aboriginal groups.
- The Inuit population will also experience a declining growth rate, from 2.8% in 1982 to 2.4% in 1991 and 1.8% in 2001.
- By contrast, the Canadian population is expected to have an increasing growth rate to 1991 (from a low of .8% in 1986 to 1.1% in 1991), followed by a slow decline to .8% in 2001.

FIGURE 4

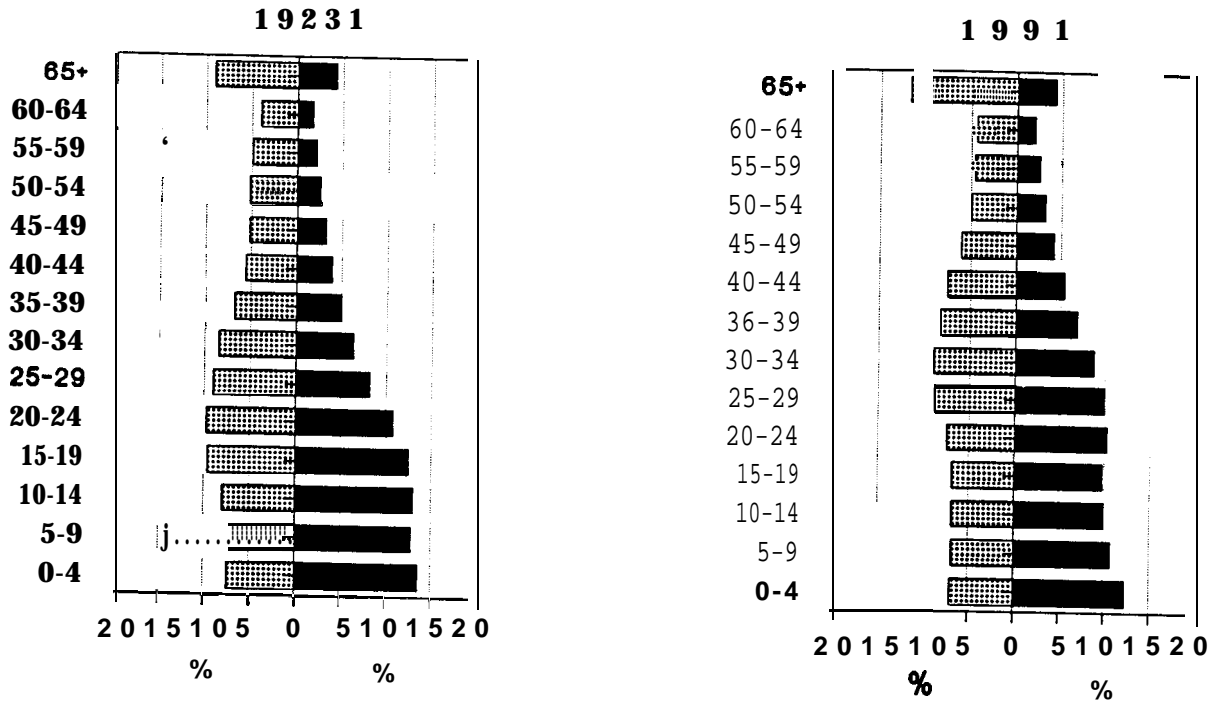
**Bill C-31 and On-Reserve  
Population Scenarios  
as a Percent of Total Status Indians  
1981-2001**



- By 1991, 18% of all status Indians will be Bill C-31 registrants or their children. This proportion is expected to decline to 17% in 2001.
- Bill C-31 will have a major impact on the division of Indians on and off-reserve. Most Bill C-31 registrants live off-reserve. Thus, as their proportion of the total status Indian population increases, the percent living on-reserve declines. The main impact is felt between 1985 and 1990.
- After 1990, a faster population growth is expected on-reserve than off-reserve. Despite the rapid expansion of the off-reserve population due to Bill c-31, there has not been a major change in the residence patterns of the non-Bill C-31 population. As well, approximately 18% of all Bill C-31 registrants are expected to migrate to reserves. Also, the natural growth rate of the on-reserve population is assumed to be higher.
- In the medium growth scenario, the proportion of status Indians who live on-reserve declines from 70.5% in 1981 to 60.7% in 1991. It then begins to slowly increase to 61.9% in 2001.
- The rapid and slow growth scenarios project similar declines in the on-reserve population, although the rapid growth scenario assumes that 63.3% of all Indians will live on-reserve by 2001 and the slow growth scenario assumes 60.4%.

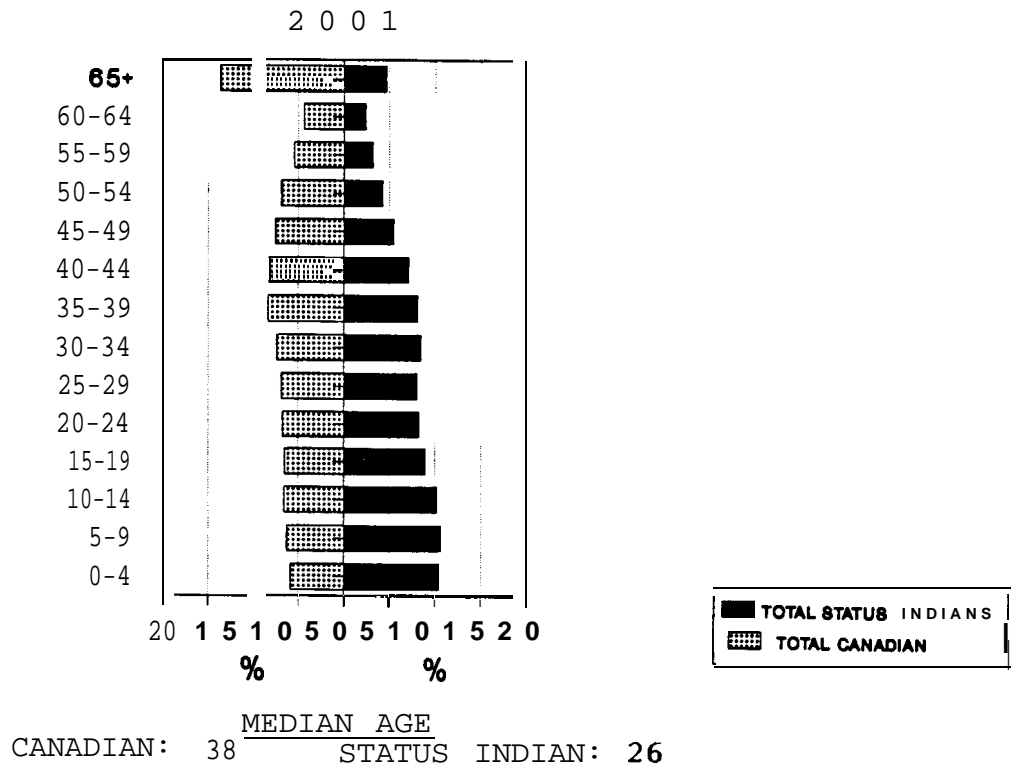
FIGURE 5A

**Age Structure of the Populations :  
Canada and Total Status Indians**



CANADIAN: 30  $\frac{\text{MEDIAN AGE}}{\text{STATUS INDIAN: 19}}$

CANADIAN: 33  $\frac{\text{MEDIAN AGE}}{\text{STATUS INDIAN: 23}}$



CANADIAN: 38  $\frac{\text{MEDIAN AGE}}{\text{STATUS INDIAN: 26}}$

FIGURE 5A

**Age Structure of the Populations:  
Canada and Total Status Indians**

- The status Indian population is and **will** continue to **be** younger than the Canadian population. It is, however, aging and will continue to do so through to 2001.
- In 1981, the median age of status Indians was 11 years less than that of the Canadian population, 19 **vs** 30. By 1991, it will be 10 years less than the Canadian median age, 23 vs 33. In the long-term, the median age for status Indians will be 12 years less than for all Canadians, 26 vs 38 **in** 2001.
- Both the status Indian and the Canadian populations are aging. However, the status Indian population is aging from youth into the working-aged group, while the Canadian population is aging into retirement. Nonetheless, the total number of Indians over age 65 will double between 1981 and 2001, from 14,300 to 29,000.
- The following chart summarizes the 1981 and 2001 percentage breakdowns of the population by age for both groups:

<u>Ages</u>	<u>Status Indians</u>		<u>Canada</u>	
	<u>1981</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>2001</u>
<b>0-14</b>	39%	31%	23%	19%
15-64	56%	64%	68%	68%
65+	4%	5%	<b>9%</b>	14%

- **One** consequence of the relative youthfulness of the status Indian population is that it has had and is expected to maintain a higher dependency ratio than the Canadian population. The dependency ratio expresses the relationship between the dependent population (under 15 and 65 and over) and the working-aged population (15-64) .
- While the dependency ratio for the Canadian **population** is expected to remain relatively the same, from .47 in 1981 to .48 in 2001, it will decline for the status Indian population, from .77 in 1981 to .56 in 2001.

FIGURE 5B

**Age structure of the Populations :  
Canada and Indians On-Reserve**

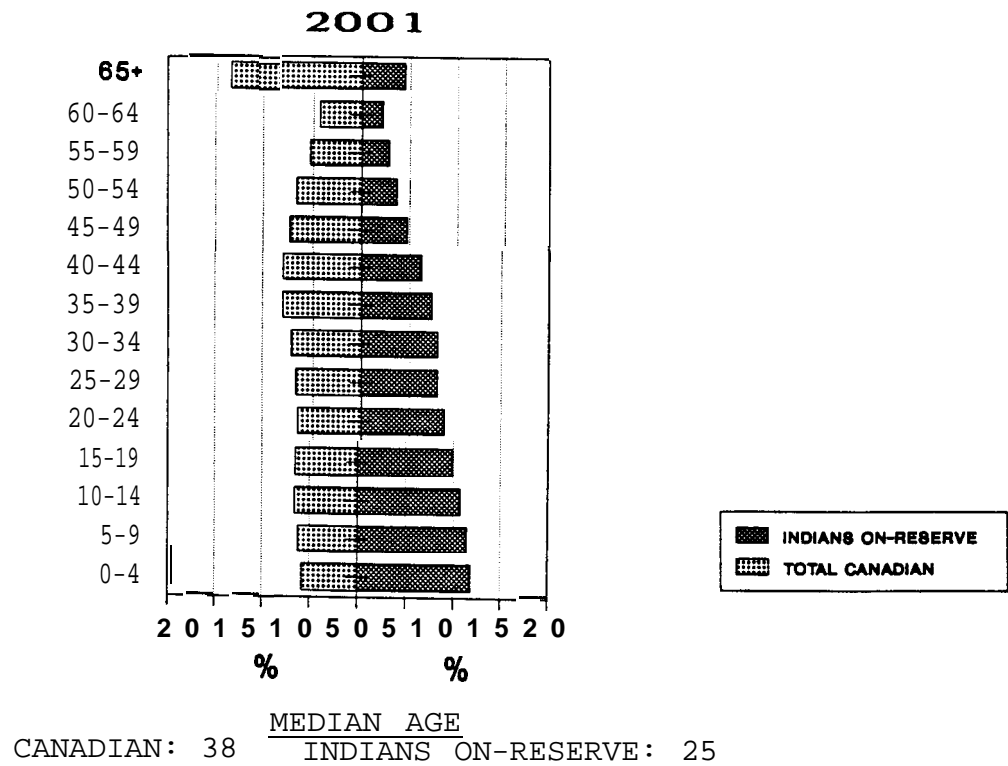
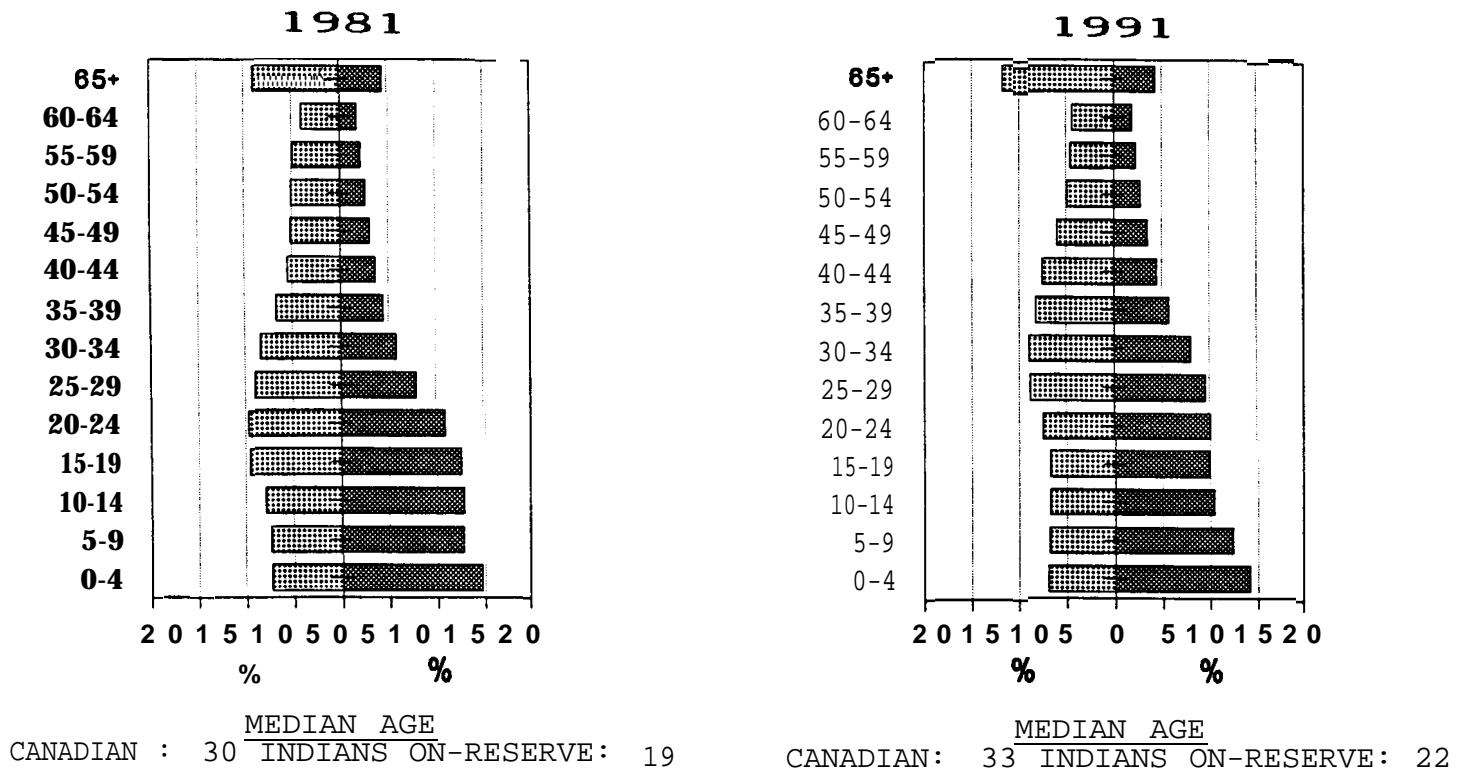


FIGURE 5B

**Age Structure of the Populations:  
Canada and Indians On-Reserve**

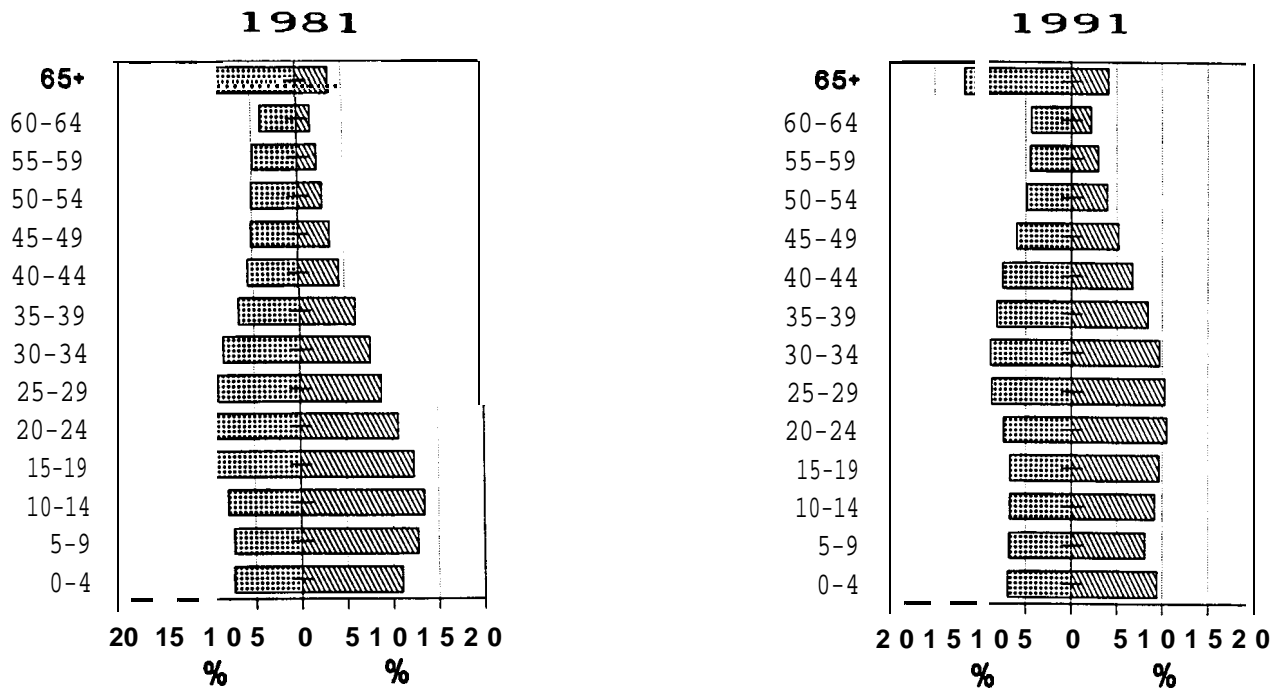
- The on-reserve Indian population is and will continue to be younger than the Canadian population. In 1981, the median age for Indians on-reserve was 11 years less than that of the Canadian population, 19 vs 30. It will also be 11 years less than the Canadian median age by 1991, 22 vs 33. By 2001, the median age for Indians on-reserve will be 13 years less than for Canadians, 25 vs 38.
- While both the Canadian and the on-reserve Indian populations are aging, Indians on-reserve are aging into the working-aged group-while Canadians are aging into retirement.
- The following chart summarizes the 1981 and 2001 percentage breakdowns of the population by age for both groups:

<u>Ages</u>	Indians On-reserve		Canada	
	1981	2001	1981	2001
0-14	40%	34%	23%	19%
15-64	55%	62%	68%	68%
65+	5%	5%	9%	14%

- Because Indians on-reserve are younger, the population has and is expected to maintain a higher dependency ratio than the Canadian population. The dependency ratio expresses the relationship between the dependent population (under 15 and 65 and over) and the working-aged population (15-64).
- While the dependency ratio for the Canadian population will remain relatively constant, .47 in 1981 and .48 in 2001, it will decline for the on-reserve population from .81 in 1981 to .63 in 2001.
- There will be no major differences between the age structures of the total status Indian and the on-reserve Indian populations in 1991. By 2001, however, the on-reserve population is projected to be younger. The percent of the population that is retirement-aged will be roughly equivalent between the two populations.

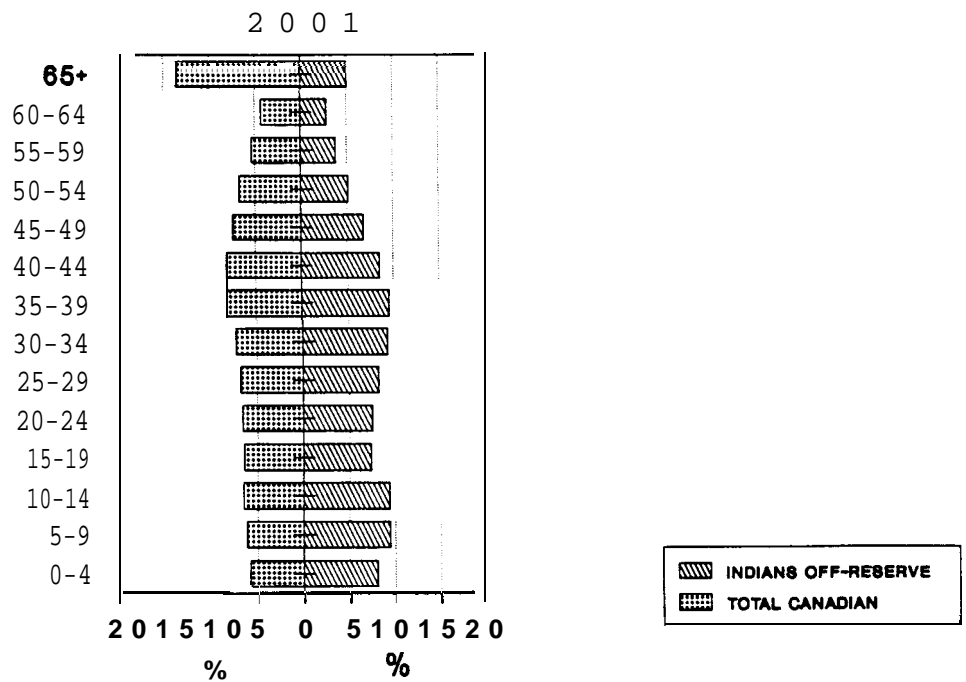
FIGURE 5C

**Age structure of the Populations :  
Canada and Indians Off-Reserve**



CANADIAN: 30 MEDIAN AGE INDIANS OFF-RESERVE: 20

CANADIAN: 33 MEDIAN AGE INDIANS OFF-RESERVE: 22



CANADIAN: 38 MEDIAN AGE INDIANS OFF-RESERVE: 25

FIGURE 5C

**Age Structure of the Populations :  
Canada and Indians Off-Reserve**

- The off-reserve Indian population is and will continue to be younger than the Canadian population. In 1981, the median age for Indians off-reserve was 10 years less than that of the Canadian population, 20 vs 30. It will be **11** years less than the Canadian median age by 1991, 22 vs 33. By 2001, the median age for Indians off-reserve will be 13 years less than for Canadians, 25 vs 38.
- While both the Canadian and the off-reserve Indian populations are aging, Indians off-reserve are aging into the working-aged group while Canadians are aging into retirement.
- The following chart summarizes the 1981 and 2001 percentage breakdowns of the population by age for both groups:

<u>Ages</u>	Indians Off-reserve		Canada	
	<u>1981</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>2001</u>
<b>0-14</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>27%</b>	23%	19%
15-64	59%	68%	68%	68%
65+	<b>4%</b>	5%	9%	14%

- Despite the fact that Indians off-reserve will continue to be younger, the population will have a similar dependency ratio to the Canadian population by 2001, due largely to the fact that both **groups** will have 68% of their population in the working-age-d **group**. The dependency ratio expresses the relationship between the dependent population (under 15 and 65 and over) and the working-aged population (15-64) .
- The dependency ratio for the Canadian population will remain relatively constant. .47 in 1981 and .48 in 2001. It was higher **for** the off-reserve Indian population in 1981, at .69 but it will drop to .46 by 2001.
- Both the total status Indian and the off-reserve **Indian** populations had roughly equivalent proportions of **their** populations in the retirement-aged group in 1981. This trend will continue in 2001. Indians off-reserve, however, have had and will continue to have a higher proportion of their population in the working-aged group.



FIGURE 5D

**Age Structure of the Populations :  
Canada and Inuit**

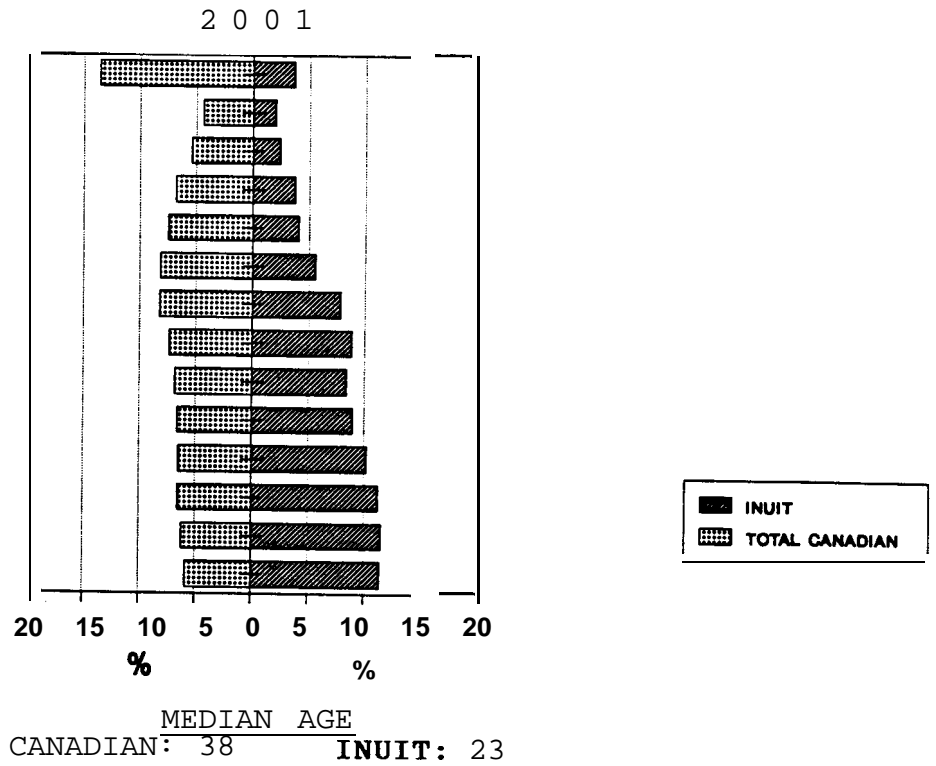
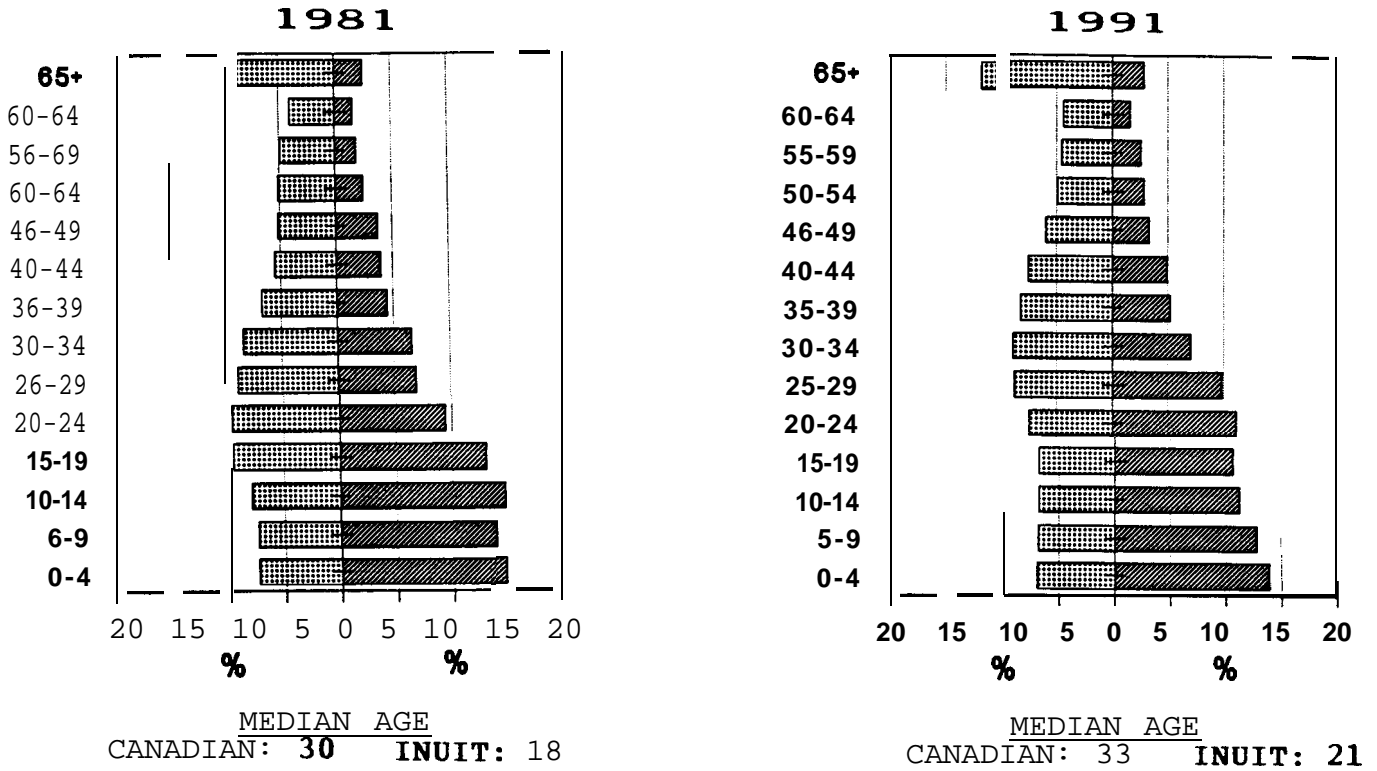


FIGURE 5D

**Age Structure of the Populations:  
Canada and Inuit**

- In 1981, the median age of the **Inuit** was 12 years less than that of the Canadian population, 18 vs 30. In 1991, there will still be a 12 year gap between the median ages of both groups, 21 for the **Inuit** and 33 for Canada. The gap will widen in the long-term to 15 years and by 2001, the median age for the Inuit will be 23, compared to 38 for all of Canada.
- The aging pattern for the **Inuit** mirrors that of status Indians. While both the **Inuit** and the Canadian populations are aging, the **Inuit** are aging into the working-aged group while the Canadian population is aging into retirement.
- The following chart summarizes the 1981 and 2001 percentage breakdowns of the population by age for both groups:

<u>Ages</u>	Inuit		Canada	
	1981	2001	1981	2001
<b>0-14</b>	43%	34%	23%	19%
15-64	54%	62%	68%	68%
65+	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	9%	14%

- As a result of the relative youthfulness of the **Inuit** population, the **Inuit** have and are expected to maintain a higher dependency ratio than the Canadian population. The dependency ratio expresses the relationship between the dependent population (under 15 and 65 and over) and the working-aged population (15-64).
- While the dependency ratio for the Canadian population will remain relatively constant between 1981 and 2001 at .47 Vs .48, it will decline for the **Inuit** population, from .84 in 1981 to .61 in 2001.



#### IV. IMPLICATIONS

As the foregoing shows, Canada's aboriginal population is in a period of rapid change. This transition will have a number of implications, particularly for status Indian policy, programs and activities which will provide a challenge to federal, provincial and band governments.

As the aboriginal population continues to grow relative to the general population, so to does its political and social influence.

The importance of status Indian concerns within Native issues will increase as the former's influence is strengthened by the influx of Bill C-31 registrants.

Unless specifically indicated, the following implications focus on the status Indian population.

While the overall percentage of Indians on-reserve will decrease, the number of people living on-reserve will increase significantly. As a result, there will be increasing demand for social services and economic development on-reserve.

The significant shift in the distribution of the Indian on and off-reserve population due to Bill c-31 provides a challenge to federal and provincial governments. The rising proportion of Indians off-reserve may lead to increased pressure on governments to provide on-reserve like services to off-reserve Indians.

There will be a dramatic increase in the number of Indians on-reserve in the education system not only through higher retention rates but due to a continuous increase in the school age population (5-21), with 21,000 more in this age group in the year 2001 than in 1991.

While the Canadian population is aging into the retirement-aged groups, the registered Indian population is aging into the working-aged groups. As a result, while the Canadian population in general will be demanding increased social services, such as geriatric health care and housing for the aged, the Indian population will need labour market oriented services, such as post-secondary education, training, employment opportunities and assistance for economic development.

As the Indian population ages and young people enter the workforce, heavy demands will be placed on Indian communities to provide suitable employment opportunities. By the year 2001, there will be 56,000 youth on-reserve of working-age (17-24), 5,000 more than in 1991. Finding work for Indian youth will become an increasing challenge. Failure will add to social assistance rolls.

The aging of the Indian population and increasing life expectancy will result in a doubling between 1991 and 2001 of elderly Indians with their own special care needs.

To better serve a growing aboriginal population in transition requires on-going monitoring of the long-term cost implications of these changes on programs. The corollary is that it be accompanied by a **modelling** capability which will allow the assessment of the impact of alternative policy and program options.

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## v . METHODOLOGICAL NOTES AND SOURCES

The aboriginal demographic highlights are based on population time series from 1981 to 2001.

### Aboriginal

The aboriginal population time series is the aggregate of the following three aboriginal populations time series :

- Registered Indians (including all Bill C-31 registrants)
- **Métis** and Non-status Indians
- **Inuit**

### Registered Indians

The registered Indian time series is based on the Population Projections of Registered Indians 1981-2011 (Adjusted Indian Register Data) prepared by the Demography Division of Statistics Canada for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Three scenarios have been used in this report. The slow growth scenario assumes constant mortality, rapidly declining fertility and 10 percent of all Bill c-31 registrants living on-reserve by 1996. The medium growth scenario assumes **declining mortality**, slowly declining fertility and 18 percent of all Bill C-31 registrants living on-reserve by 1996. The rapid growth scenario assumes declining mortality, constant fertility and 25 percent of all Bill c-31 registrants living on-reserve by 1996.

The time series is based on Indian Register data, adjusted for the late reporting of births and deaths. Because of the adjustments made to these data sets, figures for any one year may not match other numbers previously published by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development or Statistics Canada.

### **Métis** and Non-status Indians

The **Métis** and non-status Indian time series is based on 1986 Census data and estimates from 1982 to 2001 from Quantitative Analysis and **Socio-demographic** Research. The 1986 **Métis** and non-status Indian population estimate is derived from an estimate of the **total** aboriginal population from the 1986 Census, less the estimated 1986 status Indian and **Inuit** populations. The estimate assumes that between 1986 and 1990, 75 percent of the Bill c-31 registrants will be eligible for reinstatement and therefore would no longer be identified as non-status Indians. It assumes that the **Métis** and non-status Indian population will have the same annual growth rate as the registered Indian population under the medium growth scenario of the Population Projections of Registered Indians 1981-2011.

## Inuit

The **Inuit** time series is based on the 1981 Census and the medium growth scenario of the Projections of the Inuit Population 1981-2001 by Norbert **Robitaille** of the Department of Demography of the University of Montreal for **DIAND** in 1987.

The 1986 Census identified a total of 33,465 **Inuit**, consisting of 27,290 single-origin **Inuit** and 6,175 people with **Inuit** and non-aboriginal origins. In addition, it identified approximately 3,000 **Inuit** with other multiple origins, such as 1,275 people who identified themselves as having North American Indian, **Métis**, **Inuit** and non-aboriginal origins.

**VI . DATA TABLES**

TABLE 1A

**POPULATION GROWTH  
STATUS INDIANS  
TOTAL, ON AND OFF' RESERVE  
1981-2001**

YEAR	TOTAL STATUS INDIANS BOTH SEXES		ON-RESERVE INDIANS BOTH SEXES		OFF-RESERVE INDIANS BOTH SEXES	
	TOTAL POPULATION	GROWTH RATE	TOTAL POPULATION	GROWTH RATE	TOTAL POPULATION	GROWTH RATE
1981	336,900	--	237,600	--	99,300	--
1982	345,400	2.52	245,900	3.49	99,500	0.20
1983	354,400	2.61	253,300	3.01	101,100	1.61
1984	364,700	2.91	261,000	3.04	103,700	2.57
1985	376,400	3.21	268,000	2.68	108,400	4.53
1986	403,042	7.08	275,891	2.94	127,151	17.30
1987	431,439	7.05	282,671	2.46	148,768	17.00
1988	458,807	6.34	291,485	3.12	167,322	12.47
1989	485,186	5.75	299,869	2.88	185,317	10.75
1990	510,905	5.30	308,727	2.95	202,178	9.10
1991	521,461	2.07	316,273	2.44	205,188	1.49
1992	531,981	2.02	323,855	2.40	208,126	1.43
1993	542,426	1.96	331,457	2.35	210,970	1.37
1994	552,799	1.91	339,070	2.30	213,729	1.31
1995	563,082	1.86	346,711	2.25	216,371	1.24
1996	573,269	1.81	354,379	2.21	218,890	1.16
1997	583,356	1.76	360,599	1.76	222,757	1*77
1998	593,346	1.71	366,808	1.72	226,538	1.70
1999	603,271	1.67	373,027	1.70	230,245	1.64
2000	613,117	1.63	379,258	1.67	233,860	1.57
2001	622,901	1.60	385,514	1.65	237,387	1.51



TABLE 1B  
**POPULATION GROWTH  
 CANADA , ABORIGINAL > AND INUIT  
 1981-2001**

YEAR	TOTAL CANADA BOTH SEXES		TOTAL ABORIGINAL BOTH SEXES		TOTAL INUIT BOTH SEXES	
	TOTAL POPULATION	GROWTH RATE	TOTAL POPULATION	GROWTH RATE	TOTAL POPULATION	GROWTH RATE
1981	24,341,700	--	735,481	--	25,871	--
1982	24,583,100	0.99	753,467	2.45	26,598	2.81
1983	24,787,200	0.83	771,931	2.45	27,326	2.74
1984	24,978,200	0.77	792,126	2.62	28,051	2.65
1985	25,165,400	0.75	814,179	2.78	28,779	2.60
1986	25,353,000	0.75	845,381	3.83	29,506	2.53
1987	25,608,400	1.01	869,076	2.80	30,285	2.64
1988	25,887,100	1.09	892,269	2.67	31,063	2.57
1989	26,171,500	1.10	915,742	2.63	31,842	2.51
1990	26,460,600	1.10	939,048	2.55	32,620	2.44
1991	26,753,700	1.11	958,452	2.07	33,399	2.39
1992	27,045,200	1.09	977,818	2.02	34,173	2.32
1993	27,334,200	1.07	997,026	1.96	34,950	2.27
1994	27,628,400	1.08	1,016,104	1.91	35,724	2.21
1995	27,904,100	1.00	1,035,031	1.86	36,501	2.18
1996	28,179,900	0.99	1,053,787	1.81	37,275	2.12
1997	28,448,300	0.95	1,072,318	1.76	38,007	1.96
1998	28,708,900	0.92	1,090,706	1*71	38,739	1.93
1999	28,962,200	0.88	1,108,976	1.68	39,471	1.89
2000	29,208,800	0.85	1,127,107	1.63	40,203	1.85
2001	29,449,200	0.82	1,145,109	1.60	40,935	1.82

TABLE 2

**PERCENT OF CANADIAN POPULATION  
BY ABORIGINAL GROUP  
19231-2001**

YEAR	STATUS INDIAN	ON RESERVE	OFF RESERVE	INUIT	ABORIGINAL
1981	1.38	0.98	<b>0.41</b>	0.11	3.02
1982	1.41	1.00	<b>0.40</b>	0.11	3.06
1983	1.43	1.02	<b>0.41</b>	0.11	3.11
1984	1.46	1.04	<b>0.42</b>	0.11	3.17
1985	1.50	1.06	<b>0.43</b>	0.11	3.24
1986	1.59	1.09	<b>0.50</b>	0.12	3.33
1987	1.68	1.10	<b>0.58</b>	0.12	3.39
1988	1.77	1.13	<b>0.65</b>	0.12	3.45
1989	1.85	1.15	<b>0.71</b>	0.12	3.50
1990	1.93	1.17	<b>0.76</b>	0.12	3.55
1991	1.95	1.18	<b>0.77</b>	0.12	3.58
1992	1.97	<b>1.20</b>	<b>0.77</b>	0.13	3.62
1993	1.98	<b>1.21</b>	<b>0.77</b>	0.13	3.65
1994	2.00	1.23	<b>0.77</b>	0.13	3.68
1995	2.02	1.24	<b>0.78</b>	0.13	3.71
1996	2.03	1.26	<b>0.78</b>	0.13	3.74
1997	2.05	1.27	<b>0.78</b>	0.13	3.77
1998	2.07	1.28	<b>0.79</b>	0.13	3.80
1999	2.08	1.29	<b>0.79</b>	0.14	3.83
2000	2.10	<b>1.30</b>	<b>0.80</b>	0.14	3.86
2001	2.12	<b>1.31</b>	<b>0.81</b>	0.14	3.89

TABLE 3A  
**POPULATION BY AGE GROUP**  
**CANADA**  
**1981, 1991, 2001**

AGE	1981 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	1991 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	2001 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP
0-4	1,783,110	7.40	1,870,100	6.99	1,724,100	5.85
5-9	1,775,060	7.37	1,833,900	6.85	1,835,000	6.23
10-14	1,916,035	7.96	1,821,000	6.81	1,930,800	6.56
15-19	2,303,580	9.56	1,824,500	6.82	1,912,000	6.49
20-24	2,334,420	9.69	1,998,400	7.47	1,958,300	6.65
25-29	2,166,170	8.99	2,328,900	8.70	2,016,100	6.85
30-34	2,033,805	8.44	2,385,700	8.92	2,163,800	7.35
35-39	1,625,435	6.75	2,200,200	8.22	2,420,000	8.22
40-44	1,331,345	5.53	2,021,000	7.55	2,413,800	8.20
45-49	1,253,355	5.20	1,606,900	6.01	2,197,400	7.46
50-54	1,234,070	5.12	1,307,000	4.89	2,005,600	6.81
55-59	1,173,855	4.87	1,214,700	4.54	1,589,700	5.40
60-64	968,635	4.02	1,171,800	4.38	1,281,700	4.35
65+	2,184,610	9.07	3,169,500	11.85	4,000,800	13.59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,083,495</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>26,753,700</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>29,449,200</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 3B

**P O P U L A T I O N   B Y   A G E   G R O U P**  
**T O T A L   S T A T U S   I N D I A N S**  
**1 9 8 1 ,   1 9 9 1 ,   2 0 0 1**

AGE	1981 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	1991 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	2001 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP
0-4	45,737	13.58	64,068	12.29	64,700	10.39
5-9	43,087	12.79	55,779	10.70	66,124	10.62
10-14	43,833	13.01	51,701	9.91	63,555	10.20
15-19	42,068	12.49	50,971	9.77	55,401	8.89
20-24	36,329	<b>10.78</b>	53,455	10.25	51,010	8.19
25-29	27,453	8.15	51,584	9.89	50,002	8.03
30-34	21,311	6.33	45,435	8.71	52,397	8.41
35-35	16,689	4.95	35,555	6.82	50,526	8.11
40-44	13,114	3.89	28,000	5.37	44,266	7.11
45-49	10,902	3.24	21,896	4.20	34,226	5.49
50-54	8,949	2.66	<b>16,921</b>	3.24	26,416	4.24
55-59	7,337	2.18	13,473	2.58	20,090	3.23
60-64	5,720	1.70	10,431	2.00	14,989	2.41
65+	14,331	4.25	22,191	4.26	<b>29,199</b>	4.69
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>336,860</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>521,461</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>622,901</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 3C

**POPULATION BY AGE GROUP  
INDIANS ON-RESERVE  
1981, 1991, 2001**

AGE	1981 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	1991 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	2001 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP
0-4	34,829	14.66	44,817	14.17	45,765	11.87
5-9	30,436	12.81	39,244	12.41	43,804	11.36
10-14	30,539	12.85	33,000	10.43	41,439	10.75
15-19	29,863	12.57	31,180	9.86	38,140	9.89
20-24	25,770	10.85	32,060	10.14	33,378	8.66
25-29	18,702	7.87	30,501	9.64	30,603	7.94
30-34	13,820	5.82	25,533	8.07	30,570	7.93
35-39	10,704	4.51	18,242	5.77	28,243	7.33
40-44	8,713	3.67	14,218	4.50	24,187	6.27
45-49	7,495	3.15	11,246	3.56	18,229	4.73
50-54	6,350	2.67	8,927	2.82	14,280	3.70
55-59	5,258	2.21	7,427	2.35	11,048	2.87
60-64	4,292	1.81	6,058	1.92	8,399	2.18
<b>65+</b>	10,808	4.55	13,818	4.37	17,427	4.52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>237,579</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>316,273</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>385,514</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 3D

**POPULATION BY AGE GROUP  
INDIANS OFF-RESERVE  
1981, 1991, 2001**

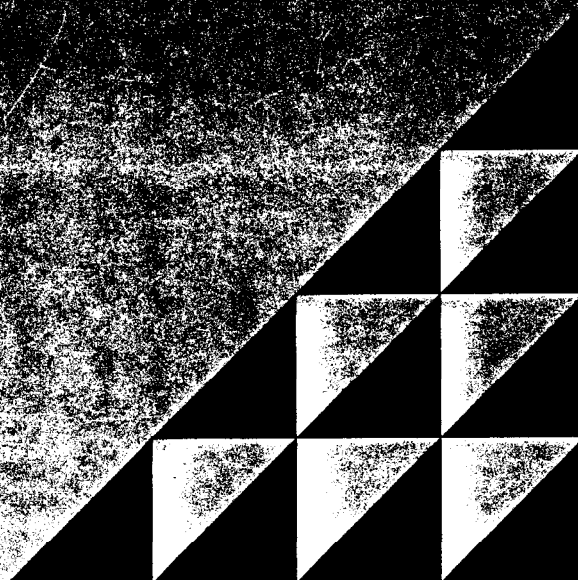
AGE	1981 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	1991 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	2001 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP
0-4	10,908	10.99	19,252	9.38	18,934	7.98
5-9	12,651	12.74	16,535	8.06	22,320	9.40
10-14	13,294	13.39	18,701	9.11	22,116	9.32
15-19	12,205	12.29	19,791	9.65	17,261	7.27
20-24	10,559	10.64	21,395	10.43	17,632	7.43
25-29	8,751	8.81	21,083	10.27	19,399	8.17
30-34	7,491	7.55	19,902	9.70	21,827	9.19
35-39	5,985	6.03	17,313	8.44	<b>22,282</b>	9.39
40-44	4,401	4.43	13,781	6.72	20,079	8.46
45-49	3,407	3.43	10,650	5.19	15,997	6.74
50-54	2,599	2.62	7,994	3.90	12,136	5.11
55-59	2,079	2.09	6,046	2.95	9,042	3.81
60-64	1,428	1.44	4,373	2.13	6,590	2.78
65+	3,523	3.55	8,373	4.08	11,772	4.96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99,281</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>205,188</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>237,387</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 3E  
**POPULATION BY AGE GROUP**  
**INUIT**  
**1981, 1991, 2001**

AGE	1981 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	:	1991 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP	:	2001 POPULATION	% TOTAL POP
0-4	3,785	14.63	:	4,649	13.92	:	4,692	<b>11.46</b>
5-9	3,599	13.91	:	4,255	12.74	:	4,741	<b>11.58</b>
10-14	3,814	14.74	:	3,747	11.22	:	4,609	<b>11.26</b>
15-19	3,378	13.06	:	3,543	10.61	:	4,193	<b>10.24</b>
20-24	2,435	9.41	:	3,724	11.15	:	3,659	<b>8.94</b>
25-29	1,792	6.93	:	3,283	9.83	:	3,442	<b>8.41</b>
30-34	1,704	6.59	:	2,369	7.09	:	3,614	<b>8.83</b>
35-39	1,163	4.50	:	1,743	5.22	:	3,190	<b>7.79</b>
40-44	1,028	3.97	:	1,646	4.93	:	2,284	<b>5.58</b>
45-49	973	3.76	:	1,111	3.33	:	1,664	<b>4.06</b>
50-54	645	2.49	:	958	2.87	:	1,537	<b>3.75</b>
55-59	486	1.88	:	864	2.59	:	994	<b>2.43</b>
60-64	422	1.63	:	546	1.63	:	821	<b>2.01</b>
65+	647	2.50	:	961	2.88	:	1,495	<b>3.65</b>
TOTAL	25,871	100.00	:	33,399	100.00	:	40,935	100.00

# Highlights of Aboriginal Conditions 1981-2001

## Part II Social Conditions







**HIGHLIGHTS OF  
ABORIGINAL CONDITIONS  
1951 - 2001**

**PART II  
SOCIAL CONDITIONS**

Prepared by

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Quantitative Analysis & Socio-demographic Research  
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Faits saillants des conditions des  
autochtones 1981-2001  
Partie 11. - Conditions sociales

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N. Janet Hagey  
Director  
Quantitative Analysis and  
Socio-demographic Research  
Finance and Professional Services  
Department of Indian Affairs  
and Northern Development

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## I. KEY FINDINGS

The health status of registered Indians has improved and continues to improve dramatically. However, life expectancy is considerably below the national average, indicating that Indians do not enjoy the same level of health as other Canadians.

The number of status Indian families and households is significantly increasing due to the impact of Bill C-31, particularly off-reserve.

Aboriginal families on average are larger than Canadian families. As well, the percent of lone parents amongst aboriginal families is significantly higher than amongst Canadian families.

While housing for aboriginal people has improved, a higher proportion of status Indians and Inuit live in crowded dwellings and in dwellings without central heating systems than do non-native Canadians.

More and more, aboriginal families in general and status Indian families in particular are relying on social assistance payments for income. The increases in the proportion of aboriginal people who rely on social assistance are much larger than the Canadian population.

## II. INTRODUCTION

Canada's aboriginal population has experienced major changes in its components and conditions in the 1980s. It is imperative for decision-makers to have a picture of the impact of the current changes and to have a view of expected long-term changes. This will assist them to better meet current challenges and those at the start of the next century.

This report is part II of a three part briefing prepared to support federal aboriginal policy. This part of the briefing consists of analytical highlights on the principal trends in the social conditions of Canada's aboriginal populations from 1981 to 2001 and their implications for federal policy, programs and activities. Part I highlights the trends in demographic characteristics and part III examines economic conditions.

This report compares the social conditions of the total status Indian population, Indians on-reserve, Indians off-reserve, **Inuit** and the total aboriginal population to the Canadian population and to the non-Indian population in comparable communities near reserves. The total aboriginal population includes status and non-status Indians, **Métis** and **Inuit**.

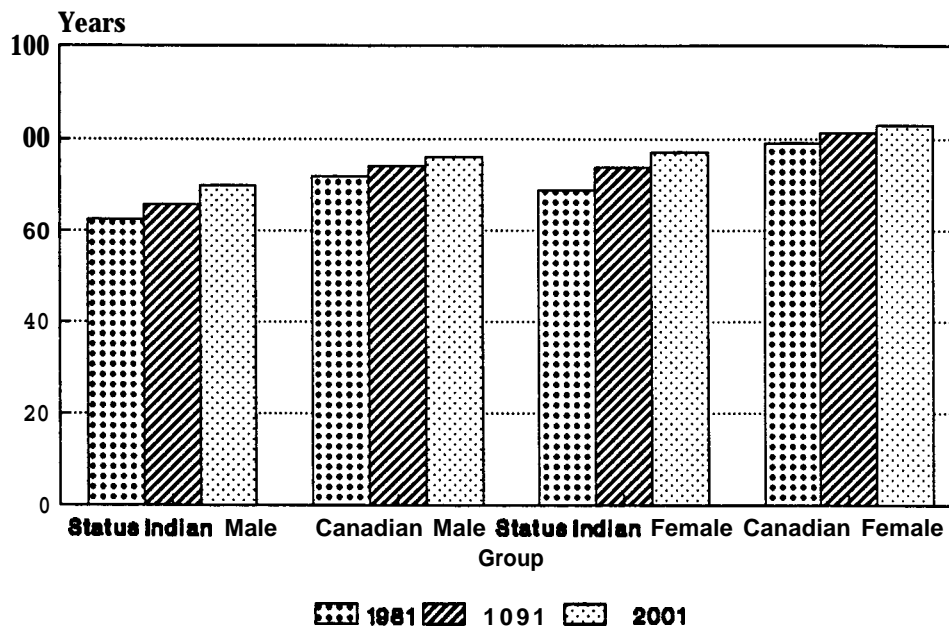
The report provides actual and projected data related to health, family, social assistance and living conditions. **It** is in no way an exhaustive **study of all variables in** these topics. Rather, it is designed to provide highlights of some of the important trends and conditions in each area. Variables were chosen for the accuracy of current data and historical comparability.

Regrettably, data were not always available for every aboriginal group. Details on the data sources and methodologies used are included in Section V, "Methodological Notes and Sources."

### III. HIGHLIGHTS

FIGURE 1A

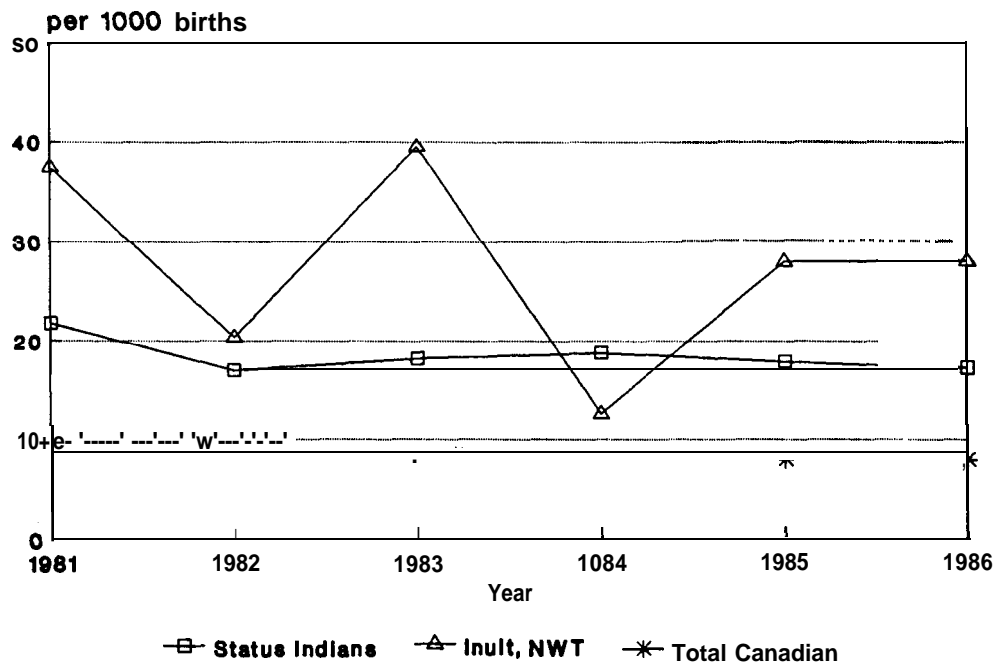
#### **Life Expectancy at Birth Status Indians and All Canadians 1981, 1991, 2001**



- Life expectancy at birth for status Indians is increasing and will continue to increase. Between 1981 and 2001, the life expectancy at birth for status Indians is expected to increase by 8 years for both sexes.
- Nonetheless, non-Indians live longer than status Indians. In 1981, the life expectancy at birth for status Indians was approximately 10 years less than that of the national population, the same as it had been 20 years earlier.
- While the life expectancy at birth will continue to increase for both status Indians and Canadians, there will still be a gap. The gap is narrowing, however. By 2001, it is projected that the life expectancy for status Indians will be 6 years less than that for Canadians, 70 vs 76 for men and 77 vs 83 for women.
- Nonetheless, the projected life expectancy for status Indians in 2001 will still be less than the 1981 Canadian figures for both sexes.

FIGURE 1B

**Infant Mortality per 1 000 Births  
Status Indians, Inuit and All Canadians  
1981-1986**

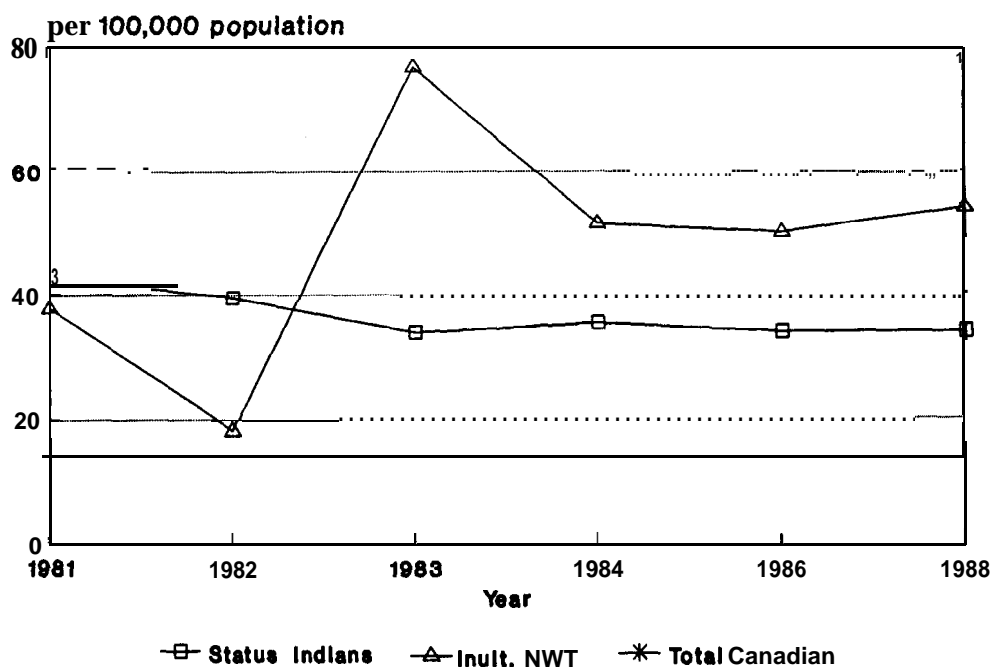


- One factor in the increased life expectancy of status Indians is the declining infant mortality rate.
- Over the past 20 years, infant mortality for status Indians has dropped dramatically while the national average has declined slowly but steadily.
- Nonetheless, infant mortality for status Indians was 22 per 1,000 in 1981, double the Canadian figure of 10 per 1,000. In 1986, infant mortality for status Indians was **still** twice that of the Canadian population, 17 per 1,000 for Indians compared to 8 per 1,000 for Canada.
- Infant mortality amongst the Inuit in the Northwest Territories is significantly higher than amongst both status Indians and Canada as a whole. The average annual rate between 1981 and 1986 was 28 per 1,000, one and two-thirds times the 1986 rate for status Indians and three and a half times the Canadian rate in the same year.
- The small size of the **Inuit** population in the Northwest Territories may contribute to the fluctuating infant mortality rates, as a small number of incidents would have a greater impact.



FIGURE 1C

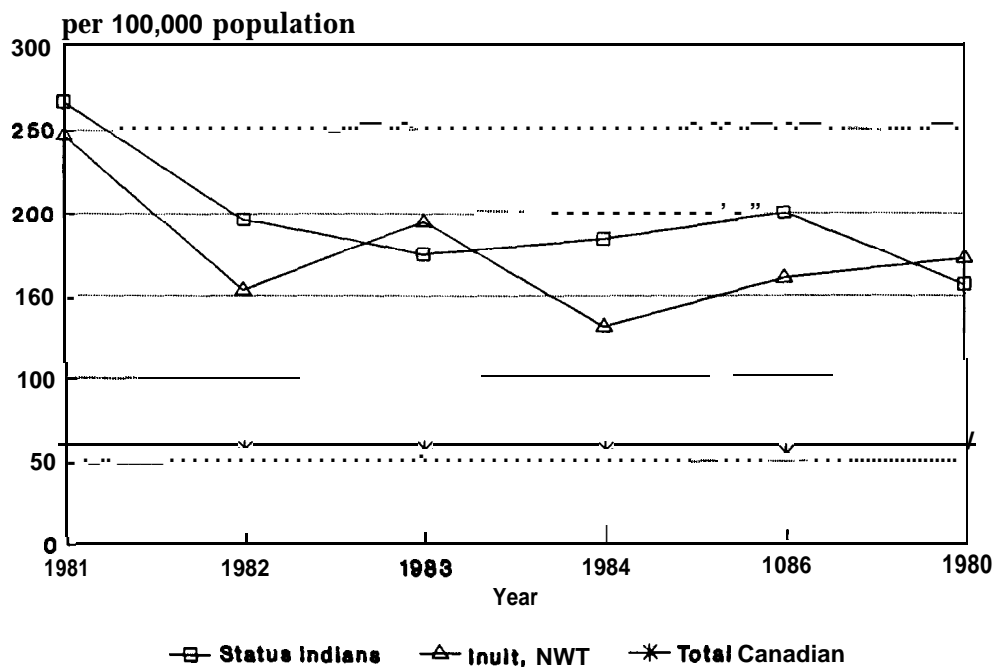
**Suicides per 100,000 Population  
Status Indians, Inuit and All Canadians  
1981-1986**



- One of the most disturbing sets of mortality data is the high suicide rate amongst aboriginal Canadians.
- Between 1981 and 1986, the suicide rate for status Indians decreased, from 43 to 34 per 100,000. It remained, however, over twice as high as the Canadian rate.
- The incidence of suicide amongst the Inuit appears to be increasing. In 1981, the rate was 38 per 100,000, lower than that for status Indians. Between 1981 and 1986, the average annual suicide rate was 48 per 100,000, almost one and a half times the rate for status Indians and over three times that of the Canadian population.
- The small size of the Inuit population in the Northwest Territories may contribute to the fluctuating suicide rates, as a small number of incidents would have a greater impact.
- By comparison, the suicide rate for the total Canadian population has remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 13 and 15 per 100,000 between 1981 and 1986.

FIGURE 1D

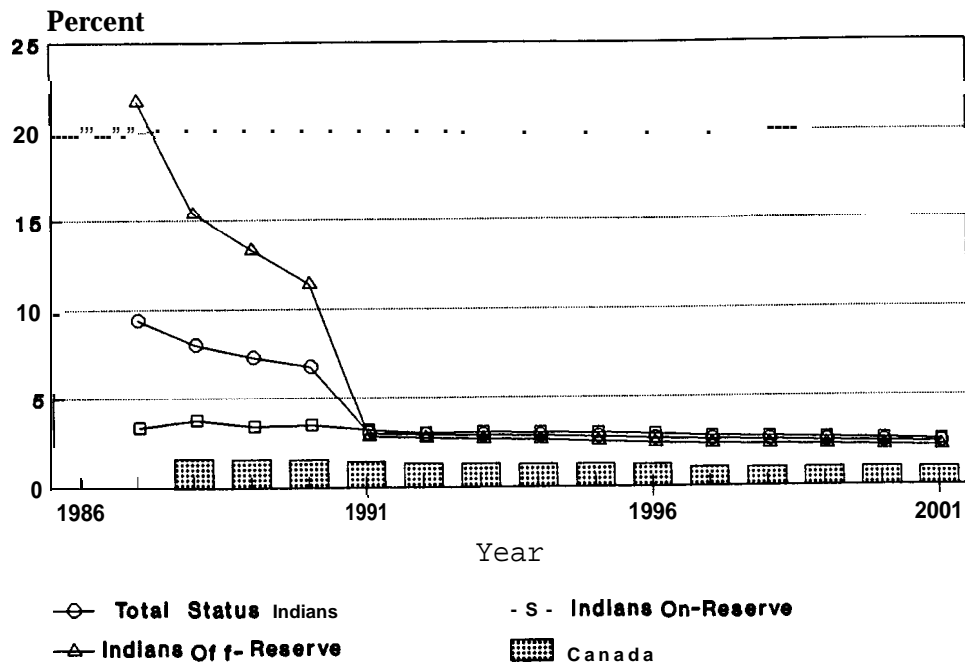
**Violent Deaths per 100,000 Population  
Status Indians, Inuit and All Canadians  
1976-1986**



- Violent deaths have historically been more common in aboriginal populations than in the Canadian population.
- In 1976, the overall rate of violent deaths for status Indians was more than three times the national average. In 1981, the rate of violent deaths for status Indians was 267 per 100,000, over four times the national rate of 64 per 100,000. Although there were fluctuations between 1981 and 1986, the status Indian rate of 157 per 100,000 in 1986 was just under three times the national rate of 54 per 100,000.
- The overall rate of violent deaths in the Inuit population is higher than the national average and historically has been lower than the status Indian average. In 1981, the number of violent deaths amongst the Inuit was 247 per 100,000, almost four times the national average but lower than the Indian figure. The average annual rate between 1981 and 1986 was 177 per 100,000, slightly higher than the status Indian rate in 1986 and three times the Canadian rate.
- The small size of the Inuit population in the Northwest Territories may contribute to the fluctuating rates of violent deaths, as a small number of incidents would have a greater impact.
- The overall rates of violent deaths among status Indians and Inuit may be so high because of the rural and remote nature of their communities. Conditions such as greater prevalence of firearms, substandard housing and heating systems, inadequate fire-fighting equipment, and limited access to medical assistance may contribute to the high rates of violent deaths.

FIGURE 2A

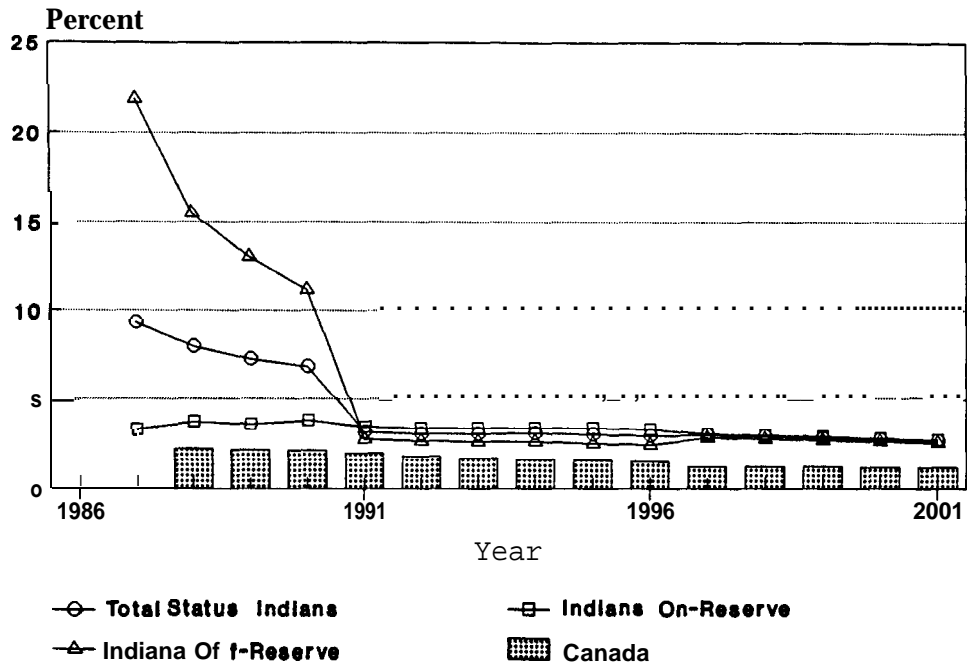
**Growth Rates of Families  
Status Indians and All Canadians  
1986 - 2001**



- In 1986, there were 82,200 status Indian families. By 1991, this will rise to 114,600 and it is projected that in 2001, there will be 148,500 status Indian families.
- Bill C-31 has had a significant impact on the growth rate for the number of status Indian families. At its peak in 1987, the growth rate of status Indian families was 9%, six times that of Canadian families.
- Even after the direct influence of Bill C-31 tapers off in 1991, the status Indian family growth rate is expected to be higher than that for Canadian families. By 2001, it is projected that the Indian family growth rate will be 2%, two times that of Canadian families.
- After 1991, the growth rate for the number of Indian families on-reserve is expected to be marginally higher than for Indian families off-reserve.
- Bill c-31 has had a larger impact on the growth rate of off-reserve families than that of on-reserve families. In 1987, the growth rate off-reserve was 22%, seven times the on-reserve rate of 3% and in 1990, the last year Bill c-31 will have had a major impact, it will be 11%, four times larger than the on-reserve rate of 3%.
- A family is defined as two or more people living in the 'dine dwelling who are husband and wife or common-law partners, with or without children, or a lone parent with at least one unmarried child.

FIGURE 2B

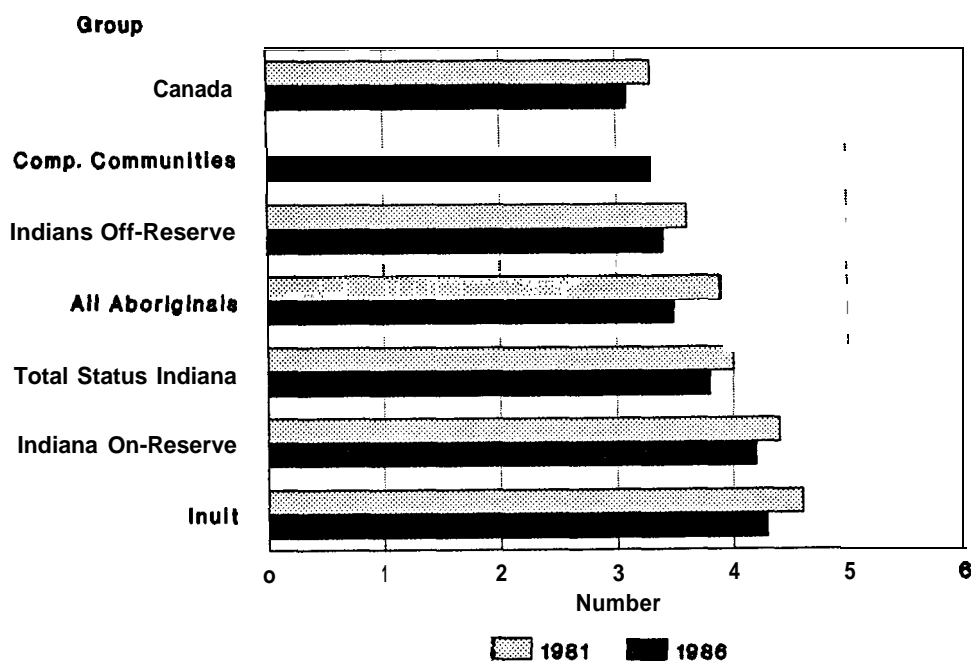
**Growth Rates of Households  
Status Indians and All Canadians  
1986-2001**



- Bill C-31 has also had a great impact on the **number** of households, particularly for Indians off-reserve.
- The growth rate for Indian households off-reserve was over seven times the on-reserve rate in 1987 at 21.9%. It will have declined by 1990, but at 11.2%, it will still be almost four times the on-reserve rate.
- The growth rate for Indian households on-reserve will have increased between 1987-1990, from 3.3% to 3.8%. After 1991, the rate will slowly decline to a projected figure of 2.7% in 2001.
- The growth in off-reserve households from 1991 to 2001 is projected to be lower than the on-reserve rate, declining slowly from 2.7% to 2.5%.
- Growth in the total number of status Indian households has been and will continue to be high, double the Canadian rate, although both are declining.
- A household is defined as a person or group of persons who occupy a private dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada. The number of private households equals the number of occupied private dwellings.

FIGURE 2C

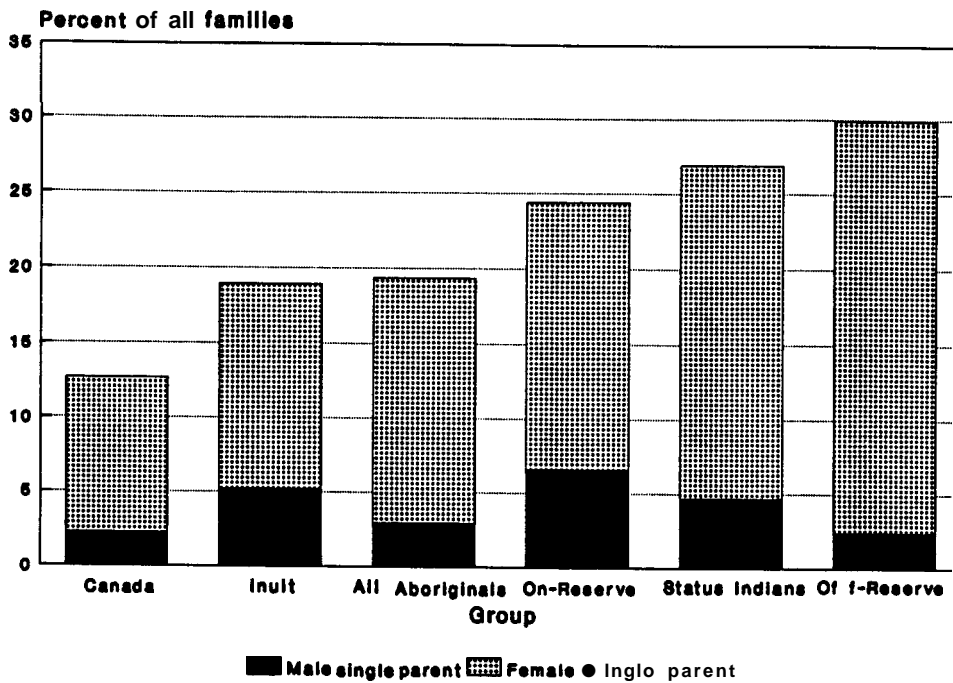
**Average Census Family Size  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**



- On average, aboriginal census families are larger than Canadian families, although the gap between status Indian and non-Indian family size has been narrowing since the 1960s.
- For all groups, average family sizes decreased slightly between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses. The largest decrease was in the size of aboriginal families, from 3.9 to 3.5 persons. This may be due to changes in the definition of an aboriginal person that were instituted in the 1986 Census. For further details on this and other limitations of Census data, see section V.
- The average status Indian census family is larger than the average Canadian family and Indian families on-reserve are larger than those off-reserve.
- In 1986, Indian families on-reserve had 4.2 persons on average, one person larger than the average Canadian family. By comparison, family size for Indian families off-reserve was 3.4 persons, almost identical to the national average.
- Inuit families are larger than all other families, both Indian and Canadian. In 1986, they had 4.3 persons, over one person larger on average than Canadian families.
- A census family is defined as two or more people living in the same dwelling who are husband and wife or common-law partners, with or without children, or a lone parent with at least one unmarried child.

FIGURE 2D

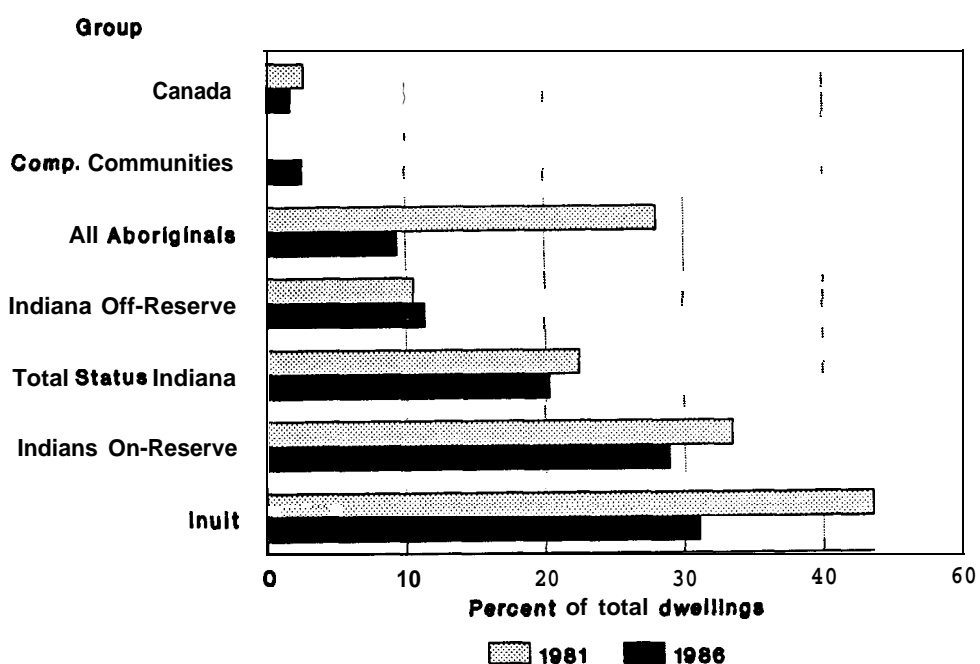
**Single Parent Families**  
**Aboriginal and All Canadians**  
**1986**



- The percent of lone parent families amongst status Indians was twice that amongst Canadian families in both 1981 and 1986.
- Lone parent families are more common amongst Indians off-reserve than amongst Indians on-reserve, **30%** of the off-reserve families are headed by single parents, compared to 24% of families on-reserve.
- Almost 60% of the 13,700 status Indian single parents that are women live off-reserve while **77%** of the 2,890 male status Indian single parents live on-reserve.
- While the percent of families that have only one parent in the **Inuit** population is higher than that in the Canadian population, it is considerably lower than for status Indians.
- In 1986, the percent of **Inuit** families that were headed by male single parents was twice that of Canadian families. However, the proportion of female single parents was only slightly larger for the **Inuit**, **14%** compared to **10%** for Canadian families.
- For all groups, one parent families headed by women are more common than those headed by men. Approximately five times more Canadian and status Indian single parents are women than are men. Lone parent families headed by women are three times more common amongst Indians on-reserve and the Inuit. For Indians off-reserve, nine times more single parent families are headed by women than by men.

FIGURE 3A

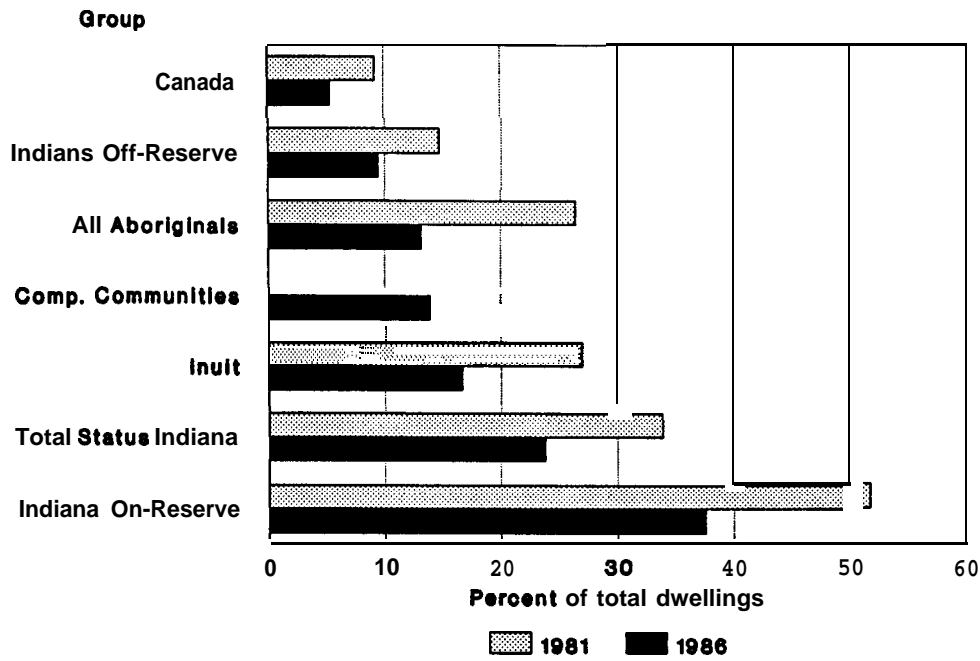
C r o w d e d D w e l l i n g s  
**Aboriginals and All Canadians**  
**1981, 1986**



- One important indicator of the quality of living conditions is the proportion of a population that live in crowded dwellings. A crowded dwelling is defined as any dwelling occupied by more than one person per room.
- The percent of Indian dwellings off-reserve that are crowded increased between 1981 and 1986, from 10.5% to 11.3%.
- For all other aboriginal groups and for Canada as a whole, the incidence of crowded dwelling declined. The most dramatic declines occurred in the aboriginal population, down two-thirds from 28.0% in 1981 to 9.4% in 1986 and the **Inuit** population, down one-fifth from 43.6% in 1981 to 31.1% in 1986. The decrease for all aboriginal may be due to changes in the definition of an aboriginal person that were instituted in the 1986 Census. For further details on this and other limitations of Census data, see section V.
- **Inuit** dwellings had the highest rate of crowding in both 1981 and 1986. Almost twice the percent of **Inuit** dwellings as status Indian dwellings were crowded in both years.
- Despite the declines in the percent of aboriginal dwellings that are crowded, the rates are still considerably higher than the Canadian figure and the gaps are increasing. In 1981, the percent of Indian dwellings on-reserve that are crowded was twelve times the Canadian rate. By 1986, it had risen to sixteen times the Canadian figure.
- In 1986, the percent of crowded Indian dwellings on-reserve was eleven times that in communities near reserves.

FIGURE 3B

**Dwellings without Central Heating  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

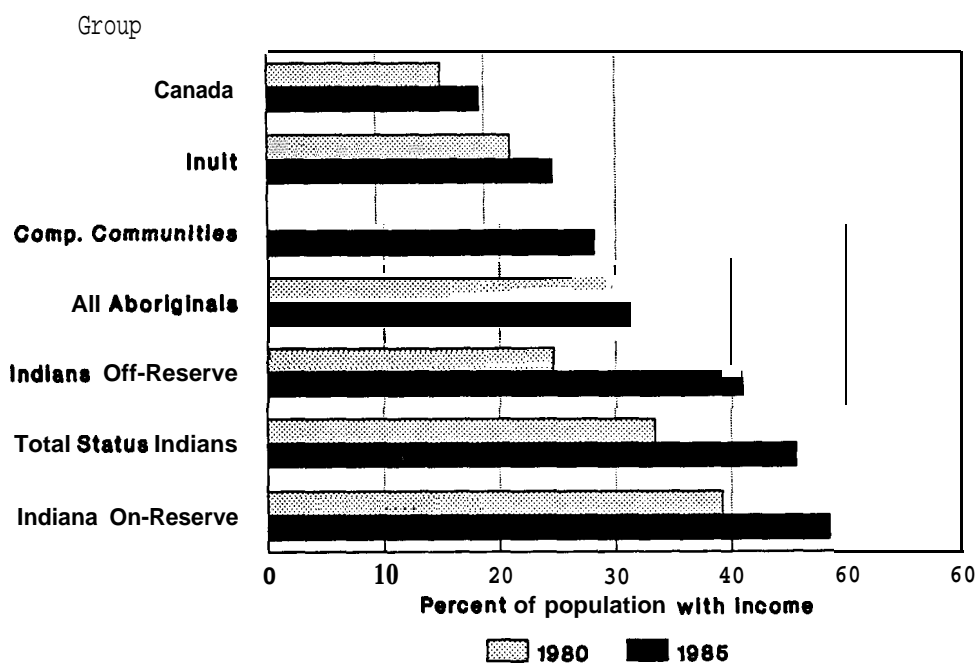


- One measure of the quality of living conditions is the number of dwellings with or without central heating systems. Central heating refers to a steam or hot water furnace, a forced hot air furnace or an installed electric heating system.
- While the percent of dwellings without central heating declined for all aboriginal groups between 1981 and 1986, it is still considerably higher than the figure for Canadian dwellings.
- The highest percent of dwellings without central heating is for Indians on-reserve. In 1986, the percent of dwellings on-reserve without central heating was 38%, seven times more than Canadian rate of 5% and one and a half times that of total status Indians at 24%.
- The percent of Indian dwellings off-reserve without central heating was 10% in 1986, one and a half times that of Canadian dwellings, but only 40% of the total status Indian figure.
- In 1981, the proportions of dwellings without central heating occupied by Inuit and all aboriginal people were relatively the same. In 1986, both figures dropped considerably, but the Inuit rate of 17% was three times the Canadian average while aboriginal rate of 13% was only two and a half times the Canadian rate. The decrease for all aboriginal may be due to changes in the definition of an aboriginal person that were instituted in the 1986 Census. For further details on this and other limitations of Census data, see section V.



FIGURE 4A

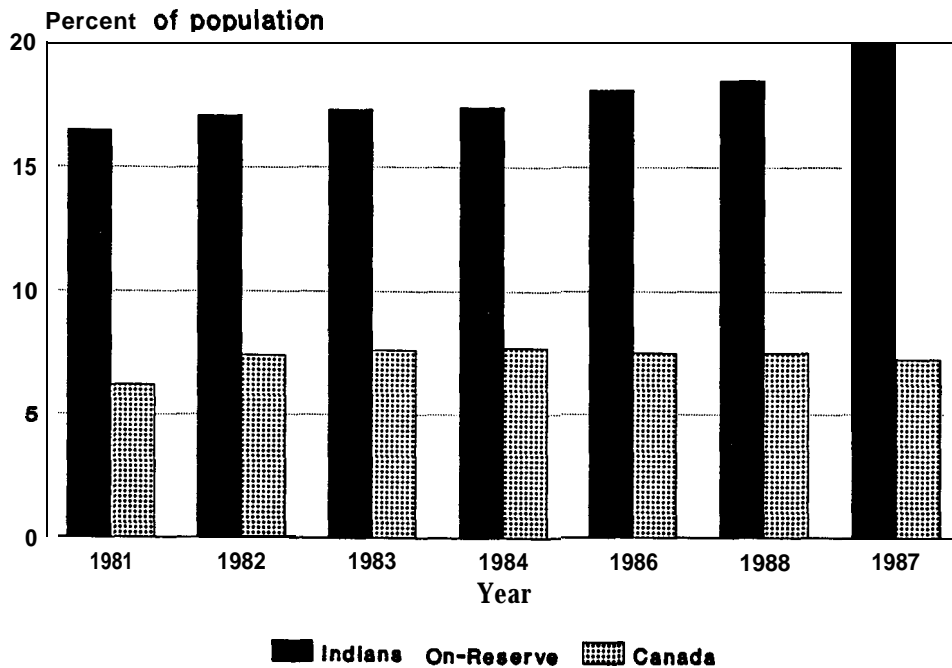
**Major Source of Income:  
Government Transfer Payments  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**



- Participation in social assistance programs provides one indicator of poverty amongst different population groups. One broad measure of dependence on social assistance is the percent of any population receiving most of their income from government transfer payments. Income from government transfer payments refers to all transfer payments received **from** federal, provincial, or municipal programs, for example family allowance, unemployment insurance benefits, and cash welfare.
- According to the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, between 1980 and 1985, every aboriginal group reported an increase in the percent of the population relying on government transfer payments as a major source of income. The **increase** was as high as sixteen percentage points for Indians off-reserve, from 25% in 1980 to 41% in 1985, and twelve percentage points for the total status Indian population, from 33% to 45%.
- These increases are dramatic when compared with the total Canadian population, which increased only four percentage points from 16% in 1980 to 20% in 1985.
- Comparable communities near reserves reported slightly more than half the rate for Indians on-reserve.

FIGURE 4B

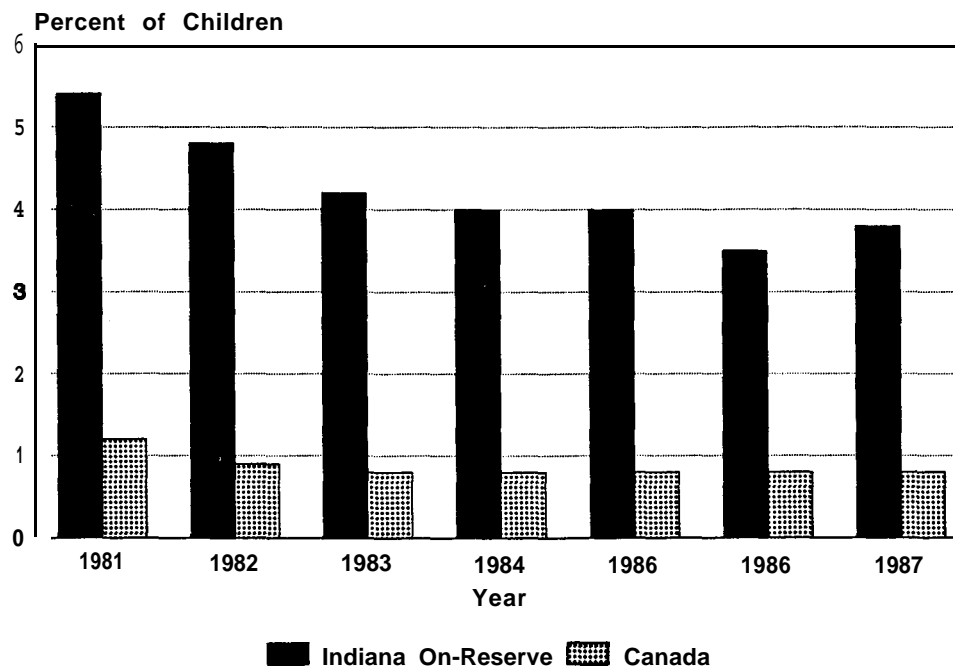
**Social Assistance Recipients  
Indians On-Reserve and All Canadians  
19731 - 1987**



- A more specific indicator of poverty is the number of people receiving social assistance.
- Overall, the average number of Indians on-reserve receiving social assistance per month in 1987 was 15,000 higher than in 1981.
- The ratio between social assistance recipients and dependents for Indians on-reserve remained relatively constant between 1981 and 1987, fluctuating between 2.2 and 2.3.
- Indicative of the tough economic times during the early 1980s, the percent of both Indians on-reserve and Canadians receiving social assistance increased between 1981 and 1984, from 16.5% to 17.4% for Indians on-reserve and from 6.2% to 7.7% for Canadians.
- While the percent of Canadians on social assistance began to drop in 1985, the percent of Indians on-reserve continued to rise.
- As a result, the percent of Indians on-reserve receiving social assistance was two and a half times the Canadian rate in both 1981 and 1987 but only slightly over two times larger in 1984 and 1985.

FIGURE 4C

**Children in Care  
Indians On-reserve and All Canadians  
1981-1987**



- The number of children under the age of 16 in the care of child welfare authorities is another phenomenon sometimes associated with financial need and other social problems. Children are taken into the care of welfare authorities to promote the well-being of families, prevent neglect and mistreatment, and to ensure the welfare of neglected and dependent children.
- Historically, both the number of status Indian children in care and the percent of the total status Indian child population in care has been dropping. In 1976, 6,247 Indian children on-reserve, or 6.5% of all children, were in care. By 1987, this figure dropped to 3,836 or 3.8% of all children on-reserve.
- Between 1981 and 1987, the number of Indian children on-reserve in care dropped by one-quarter, from 5,144 to 3,836.
- The number of Canadian children in care has also been declining, from 70,800 or 1.2% in 1981 to 47,400 to 0.8% in 1987.
- Despite the decreases in the number of status Indian children in care, the percent of children in care is still considerably higher for Indians on-reserve than for the rest of Canada. In 1987, the percent of status Indian children in care was five times that of Canadian children, 3.8% compared to 0.8%.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing paints a picture of aboriginal social conditions in a period of rapid change. While health and housing conditions have improved significantly over the past twenty years there remains a gap between the circumstances of Indian people and other Canadians.

Increasing life expectancy at birth and decreasing infant mortality for status Indians and Inuit show that their **health** status is improving, although not equivalent to that of the Canadian population. Similarly, while the suicide rate and the incidence of violent deaths among status Indians are decreasing, both are still much higher than national rates. Further improvements in the health of status Indians will **depend** on such factors as lowering lifestyle risks such as **drinking and driving**, the availability of adequate housing **and** infrastructure in **Indian** communities and environmental protection.

**Bill** C-31 is significantly increasing the number of Indian families, particularly off-reserve. **As a** result, there will be increased demand for social services that support Indian families off-reserve and continued pressure for more housing on-reserve for those families who wish to return to reserve. The growth in households on reserve is driven in part by the supply of housing available. The large proportion of crowded dwellings on reserve is another factor contributing to the continued high demand for **on-reserve** housing.

The increasing number of single parent families in all aboriginal **groups** will have an effect on the demand for services such as **social** assistance. The availability of labour force entrant support services such as child care and training to meet skill needs are crucial, particularly for Indian female single parents living off-reserve. The large number of single parents is likely a significant contributing factor for the large proportion of mature post secondary Indian students.

Recent changes in the application of child welfare programs across the country have decreased the number of Indian children in the care of welfare authorities. Nonetheless, the proportion of children in care is still considerably higher for Indians than for the rest of Canadians.

Aboriginal **people** in **general**, and **Indians** on-reserve in particular, rely on social assistance more than other Canadians. This **reliance** is growing. Increased economic development and specific job creation programs on-reserve should begin to reverse this trend.

## V. METHODOLOGICAL NOTES AND SOURCES

### Health

- sources:**
- **Medical Services Branch, Health and Welfare Canada**
  - Population Projections of Registered Indians, 1986-2011, Statistics Canada, 1989
  - Report on Health Conditions in the Northwest Territories
  - Vital Statistics, Statistics Canada Catalog #84-206.

**Methodology:** **Inuit** data are for the Northwest Territories only.

Data for Status Indians are only for the population served by the Department of Health and Welfare.

A medium growth scenario was used for the population projections. For registered Indians, this scenario assumed constant fertility, declining mortality and 18 percent of Bill C-31 registrants living on-reserve.

### Family

- Sources:**
- Family and Household Projections of Registered Indians, 1986-2011, Statistics Canada, 1989
  - INAC Customized Census Data, 1981 and 1986
  - National projections courtesy of Statistics Canada.

**Methodology:** Family and household projections for Canada are based on 1981 Census data. Projections based on 1986 Census data are not yet available.

Family and household projections for **registered** Indians combine a constant 1986 household and family maintainer proportion with the medium-growth population projections and 18 percent on-reserve proportion of the Bill **C-31** population.

Due to differences between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses related to population coverage and question formulation, comparisons between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses should be made with caution. Any apparent trends may not be completely valid, particularly for the on-reserve and total aboriginal populations.

For a more complete explanation of the comparability of the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, see the Methodology section of 1986 Census Highlights on Registered Indians: Annotated Tables (DIAND, 1989).

**Social Assistance**

- Sources:**
- Basic Departmental Data, DIAND, 1988
  - Health and Welfare **Canada**
  - INAC Customized Census Data, 1981 and 1986.

**Methodology:** **On-reserve** data from Basic Departmental Data does not include Newfoundland, the Northwest Territories or the Yukon. There were no reserves in Newfoundland until recently and social assistance is provided under special agreement with the federal government through the provincial government. Indians living in the Territories are given assistance on the same basis as other residents by the territorial governments.

Due to differences between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses related to population coverage and question formulation, comparisons between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses should be made with caution. Any apparent trends may not be completely valid, particularly for the on-reserve and total aboriginal populations. For a more complete explanation of the comparability of the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, see the Methodology section of 1986 Census Highlights on Registered Indians: Annotated Tables (DIAND, 1989).

**Living Conditions**

- Source:**
- INAC Customized Census Data, 1981 and 1986.

**Methodology:** Due to differences between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses related to population coverage and question formulation, comparisons between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses should be made with caution. Any apparent trends may not be completely valid, particularly for the on-reserve and total aboriginal populations. For a more complete explanation of the comparability of the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, see the Methodology section of 1986 Census Highlights on Registered Indians: Annotated Tables (DIAND, 1989).

VI . DATA TABLES

TABLE 1A

**Life Expectancy at Birth  
Status Indians and All Canadians  
1981, 1991, 2001**

(years)

Group	1981	1991	2001
Indian Male	62.4	65.7	69.8
Canadian Male	71.9	74.1	75.9
Indian Female	68.9	73.0	77.0
Canadian Female	79.0	81.2	83.0

TABLE 1B

**Infant Mortality per 1,000 Births  
Status Indians, Inuit and All Canadians  
1981-1986**

Year	Status Indians	Inuit NWT	Total Canadian
1981	21.8	37.5	9.6
1982	17.0	20.4	9.1
1983	18.2	39.5	8.5
<b>1984</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>
<b>1985</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>7.9</b>
1986	17.2	28.1	7.9



TABLE 1C

**Suicides per 100,000 Population  
Status Indians, Inuit and All Canadians  
1981-1986**

Year	Status Indians	Inuit NWT	Total Canadian
1981	42.9	38.0	14.0
1982	39.6	18.4	14.3
1983	34.0	76.9	15.1
<b>1984</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>13.7</b>
<b>1985</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>12.9</b>
<b>1986</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>14.5</b>

TABLE 1D

**Violent Deaths per 100,000 Population  
Status Indians, Inuit and All Canadians  
1981-1986**

Year	Status Indians	Inuit NWT	Total Canadian
====	====	====	====
1981	266.8	246.9	63.8
1982	196.4	153.6	57.5
1983	174.8	195.1	56.6
1984	184.0	131.7	55.7
1985	200.0	160.9	52.9
1986	157.0	172.6	54.3

TABLE 2A

**Growth Rates of Families  
Status Indians and All Canadians  
1986 - 2001**

(number of families and growth rates)

YEAR	STATUS INDIANS	GROWTH RATE	INDIANS ON-RESERVE	GROWTH RATE	INDIANS OFF-RESERVE	GROWTH RATE	CANADA TOTAL	GROWTH RATE
1986	82,230	--	55,230	--	27,010	--	--	--
1987	89,950	9.39	57,080	3.35	32,880	21.73	7,037,600	--
1988	97,150	8.00	59,210	3.73	37,940	15.39	7,149,600	1.59
1989	104,210	7.27	61,220	3.39	42,990	13.31	7,261,700	1.57
1990	111,220	6.73	63,340	3.46	47,890	11.40	7,372,800	1.53
1991	114,570	3.01	65,340	3.16	49,240	2.82	7,477,800	1.42
1992	117,890	2.90	67,300	3.00	50,580	2.72	7,575,400	1.31
1993	121,250	2.85	69,330	3.02	51,920	2.65	7,671,100	1.26
1994	124,670	2.82	71,400	2.99	53,270	2.60	7,765,100	1.23
1995	128,110	2.76	73,520	2.97	54,590	2.48	7,861,600	1.24
1996	131,510	2.65	75,630	2.87	55,890	2.38	7,955,200	1.19
1997	134,904	2.58	77,720	2.76	57,194	2.33	8,035,360	1.01
1998	138,298	2.52	79,810	2.69	58,498	2.28	8,115,520	1.00
1999	141,692	2.45	81,900	2.62	59,802	2.23	8,195,680	0.99
<b>2000</b>	145,086	2.40	83,990	2.55	61,106	2.18	8,275,840	0.98
<b>2001</b>	148,480	2.34	86,080	2.49	62,410	2.13	8,356,000	0.97

TABLE 2B

**Growth Rates of Households  
Status Indians and All Canadians  
1986 - 2001**

(number of households and growth rates)

YEAR	STATUS INDIANS	GROWTH RATE	INDIANS ON-RESERVE	GROWTH RATE	INDIANS OFF-RESERVE	GROWTH RATE	CANADA TOTAL	GROWTH RATE
1986	94,100	--	63,570	--	<b>30,530</b>	--	--	--
1987	102,860	9.31	65,650	3.27	<b>37,210</b>	21.88	9,611,300	--
1988	111,060	7.97	68,080	3.70	<b>42,980</b>	15.51	9,824,500	2.22
1989	119,110	7.25	70,520	3.58	<b>48,590</b>	13.05	10,036,000	2.15
1990	127,220	6.81	73,180	3.77	<b>54,040</b>	11.22	10,246,100	2.09
1991	131,210	3.14	75,690	3.43	<b>55,520</b>	2.74	10,444,700	1.94
1992	135,200	3.04	78,220	3.34	<b>56,990</b>	2.65	10,630,000	1.77
1993	139,310	3.04	80,840	3.35	<b>58,480</b>	2.61	10,806,500	1.66
1994	143,560	3.05	83,560	3.36	<b>60,000</b>	2.60	10,978,100	1.59
1995	147,850	2.99	86,350	3.34	<b>61,500</b>	2.50	11,149,300	1.56
1996	152,180	2.93	89,190	3.29	<b>62,980</b>	2.41	11,315,800	1.49
1997	156,674	2.95	91,904	3.04	<b>64,762</b>	2.83	11,454,160	1.22
1998	161,168	2.87	94,618	2.95	<b>66,544</b>	2.75	11,592,520	1.21
1999	165,662	2.79	97,332	2.87	<b>68,326</b>	2.68	11,730,880	1.19
2000	170,156	2.71	100,046	2.79	<b>70,108</b>	2.61	11,869,240	<b>1.18</b>
2001	174,650	2.64	102,760	2.71	<b>71,890</b>	2.54	12,007,600	1.17

TABLE 2C

**Average Census Family Size  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

GROUP	1981	1986
Canada	3.3	3.1
Comp. Communities	N/A	<b>3.3</b>
Total <b>Status Indians</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>
Indians On-Reserve	4.4	4.2
Indians Off-Reserve	3.6	3.4
<b>Inuit</b>	4.6	4.3
All Aboriginal	3.9	3.5

TABLE 2D

**Single Parent Families**  
**Aboriginal and All Canadians**  
**1986**

(percent of all families)

GROUP	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Canada	2.25	10.42	12.67
Total Status Indians	4.69	22.22	26.91
Indians On-Reserve	6.61	17.78	24.39
Indians Off-Reserve	2.40	27.52	29.92
<b>Inuit</b>	5.17	13.77	18.94
All Aboriginal	2.94	16.40	19.34

TABLE 3A

**Crowded Dwellings**  
**A b o r i g i n a l a n d A l l C a n a d i a n s**  
**1981, 1986**

(percent of total dwellings)

GROUP	1981	1986
Canada	2.7	1.8
Comp. Communities	n/a	<b>2.6</b>
Total Status Indians	22.4	20.3
Indians On-Reserve	33.4	28.9
Indians Off-Reserve	10.5	11.3
<b>Inuit</b>	43.6	31.1
All Aboriginal	28.0	9.4

TABLE 3B

**Dwellings without Central Heating  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

(percent of total dwellings)

GROUP	1981	1986
Canada	9.27	5.41
<b>Comp. Communities</b>	n/a	<b>13.92</b>
Total Status Indians	33.91	23.84
Indians On-reserve	51.71	37.53
Indians Off-reserve	14.70	9.45
<b>Inuit</b>	26.93	16.68
All Aboriginal	26.45	13.19



TABLE 4A

**Major Source of Income :  
Government Transfer Payments  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1980 , 1985**

(percent of population with income)

GROUP	1980	1985
<b>Canada</b>	16.00	19.58
Comp. Communities	N/A	28.18
Total Status Indians	33.40	45.60
Indians On-Reserve	39.19	48.40
Indians Off-Reserve	24.67	40.95
<b>Inuit</b>	22.37	26.36
All Aboriginal	29.14	31.23

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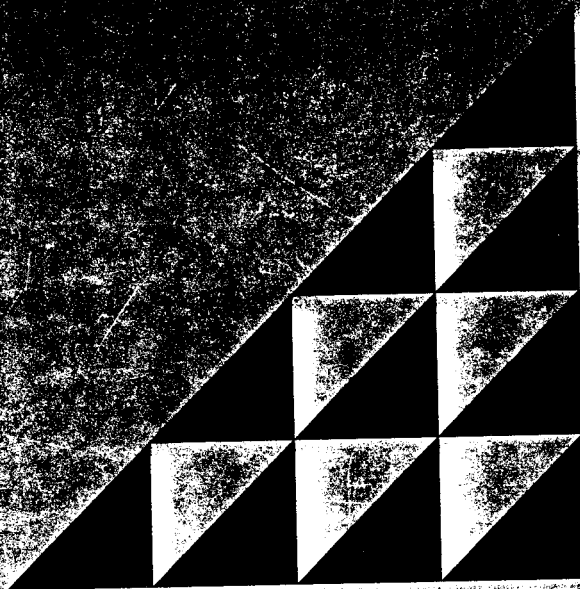
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# Highlights of Aboriginal Conditions 1981-2001

## Part III Economic Conditions





**HIGHLIGHTS OF  
ABORIGINAL CONDITIONS  
1981 - 2001**

**PART III  
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

Prepared by

N. Janet Hagey  
Gilles Larocque  
Catherine McBride

Quantitative Analysis & Socio-demographic Research  
Working Paper Series 89-3

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I hope that this Series will provide useful and timely information for those addressing the issues facing aboriginal people and that it will generate future related discussions and research.

N. Janet Hagey  
Director  
Quantitative Analysis and  
Socio-demographic Research  
Finance and Professional Services  
Department of Indian Affairs  
and Northern Development

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## I. KEY FINDINGS

Aboriginal people, particularly status Indians, continue to be among the most economically disadvantaged groups within Canada.

The level of educational attainment among aboriginal people is improving. Fewer Indians are functionally illiterate and the percent who are completing high school is increasing.

More and more Indian children on-reserve are attending band-operated schools.

Indian enrolment in post-secondary institutions is dramatically increasing.

A high proportion of the aboriginal population, particularly Indians on-reserve, does not participate in the **labour** force. Those that do are considerably more likely to be unemployed than other Canadians.

A large proportion of the aboriginal **popu**.ation has a low level of income. Many report no income at all.

Average aboriginal incomes are **slightly** more than half those of other Canadians. The disparity i-n average individual **incomes** between aboriginal people and other Canadians appears to have increased from 1980 to **1985**.

Slightly over half of all status Indian families earn under \$20,000 per year.

Employment is the major source of income for only half of all status Indians, both on and off-reserve, compared to 70 percent of all Canadians.



## II. INTRODUCTION

**Canada's** aboriginal population has experienced major changes in its components and conditions in the 1980s. It is imperative for decision-makers to have a picture of the impact of the current changes and to have a view of expected long-term changes. This will **assist** them to better meet current challenges and those at the start of the next century.

This report is part III of a three part briefing prepared to support federal aboriginal policy. This part of the briefing consists of analytical highlights of the principal trends in the economic conditions of Canada's aboriginal populations from 1981 to 2001 and their implications for federal policy, programs and activities. Part I highlights the trends in demographic characteristics and part II examines social conditions.

This report compares the economic conditions of the total status Indian population, Indians on-reserve, Indians off-reserve, **Inuit** and the total aboriginal population to the Canadian population and to the non-Indian population in comparison communities near reserves. The total aboriginal population includes status and non-status Indians, **Métis** and Inuit.

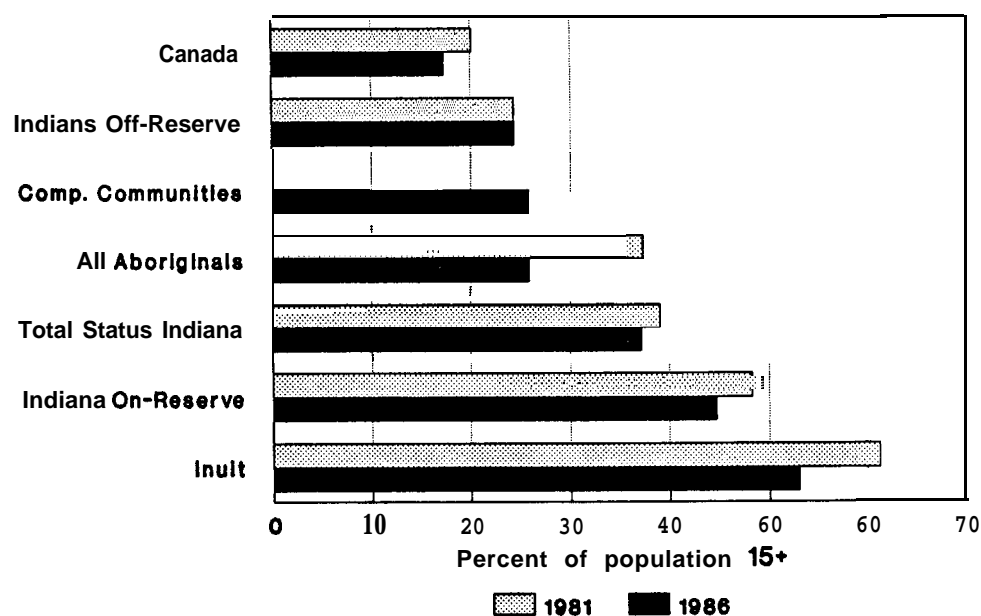
It provides actual and projected data related to education, employment and income. The report is in no way an exhaustive study of all variables in these topics. Rather, it is designed to provide brief highlights of some of the important trends and conditions in each area. Variables were chosen for the accuracy of current data and historical comparability and for the availability of new data not covered by previous reports in this area.

Because of the nature of some of the data used here, statistics are not available for every aboriginal group for every variable. Data from the 1981 and 1986 Censuses may not be comparable due to changes in the way data were collected in 1986. Details on the data sources and methodologies used for the time series are included in Section V, "Methodological Notes and Sources."

### III. HIGHLIGHTS

FIGURE 1A

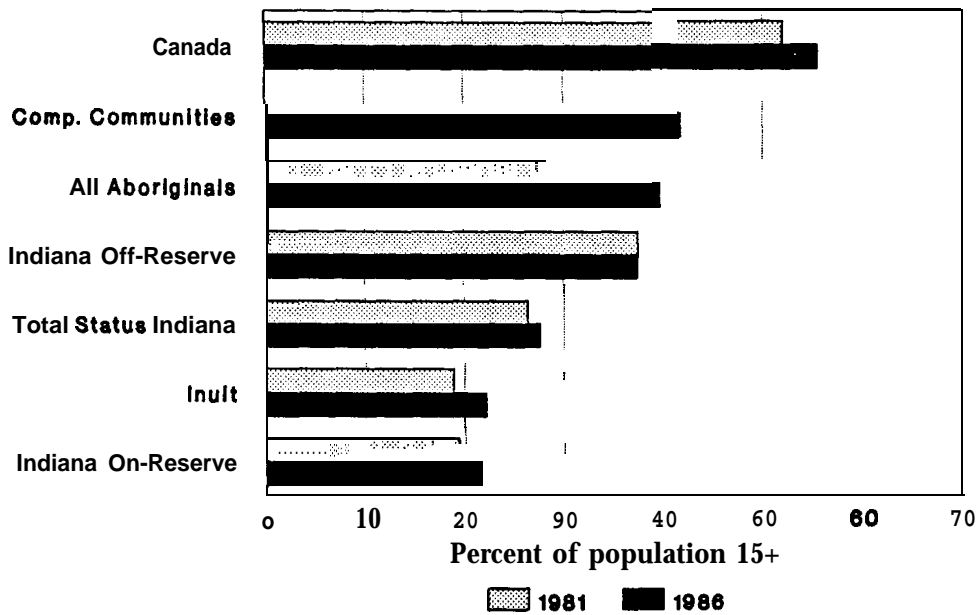
#### Less than Grade 9 Education Aboriginals and All Canadians 1981, 1986



- The rate of functional illiteracy is declining for aboriginal Canadians, although it is still considerably higher for aboriginal people than for other Canadians. Functional illiteracy can be measured by the percent of the population that have less than grade nine education.
- According to both the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, the proportion of the population with less than grade nine education declined for all groups except Indians off-reserve, which remained constant.
- According to the 1986 Census, 37% of all status Indians have less than grade nine education, two times the Canadian rate of 17%.
- Some 45% of Indians on-reserve are functionally illiterate, almost two times the rates for Indians off-reserve and for people living near reserves, 24% and 26% respectively.
- The Inuit have the highest proportion with less than grade nine education at 53%, one and a half times the rate for status Indians and three times that for all Canadians.

FIGURE 1B

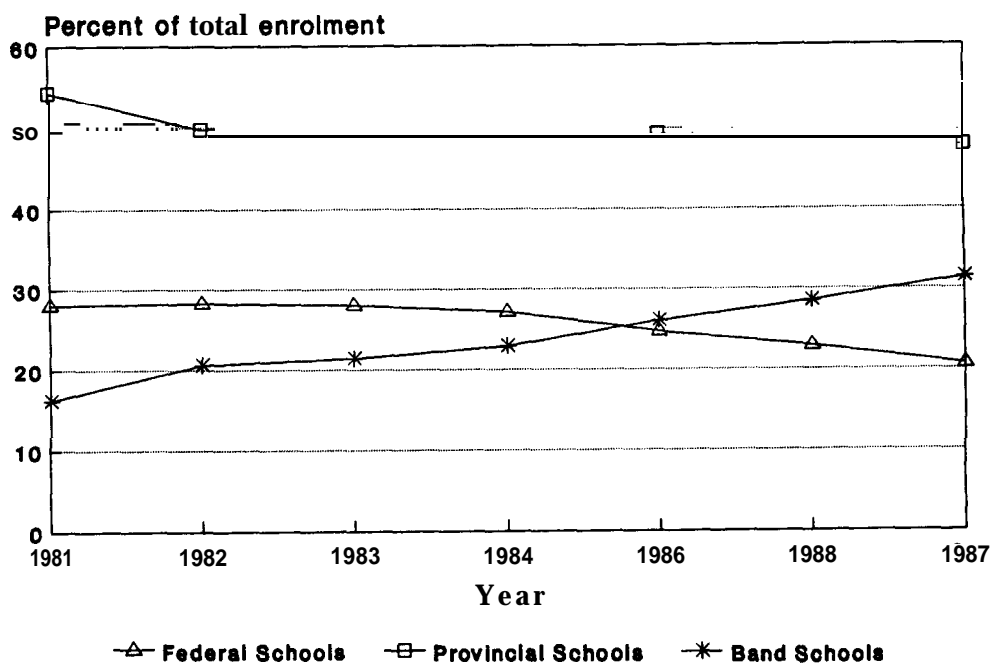
**At Least High School Education  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**



- Skilled employment and higher income depend on the level of education attained. Indians and other aboriginal people are becoming better educated, although fewer of them have completed high school compared to other Canadians.
- According to the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, the proportion of the population with at least high school education increased slightly for all aboriginal groups except Indians off-reserve, which remained the same.
- According to the 1986 Census, 28% of **all** status Indians have at least high school education, one-half the rate for all Canadians at **56%**.
- The percent of Indians on-reserve with high school education or over is 22%, two-thirds the rate for Indians off-reserve at 38% and one-half that of people living in communities near reserves at 42%.
- The Inuit have the lowest proportion of their population with at least high school education at 22%, four-fifths the rate of status Indians and two-fifths that of all Canadians.

FIGURE 1C

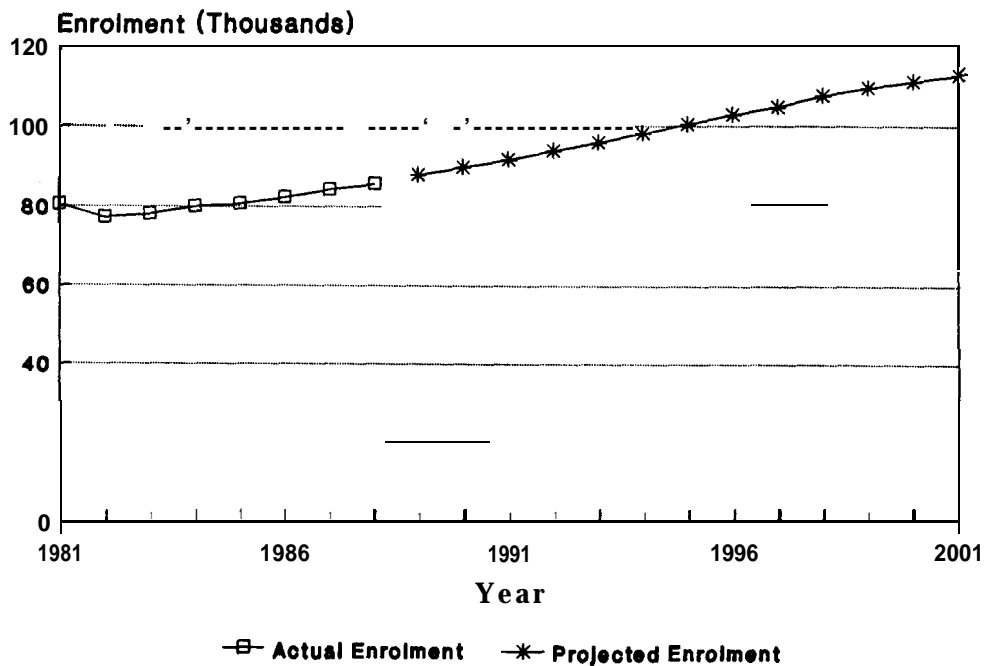
**Elementary and Secondary Enrolment  
By School Type  
Indians On-Reserve  
1981-1987**



- Indian bands are taking over more control in the education of Indian children on-reserve.
- The proportion of children **enroled** in band-operated schools is increasing while the proportion **enroled** in federal or provincial schools is decreasing. However, almost 70% of **enrolment** is still in federal or provincial schools.
- Between 1981 and 1987, the percent of children **on-reserve** enroled in band-operated schools doubled, from 16% to 31%.
- The percent **enroled** in federal schools in 1987 was three-quarters the 1981 rate, 21% compared to **28%**.
- The proportion of students enroled in provincial schools dropped between 1981 and 1987, from 54% to 48%.

FIGURE 1D

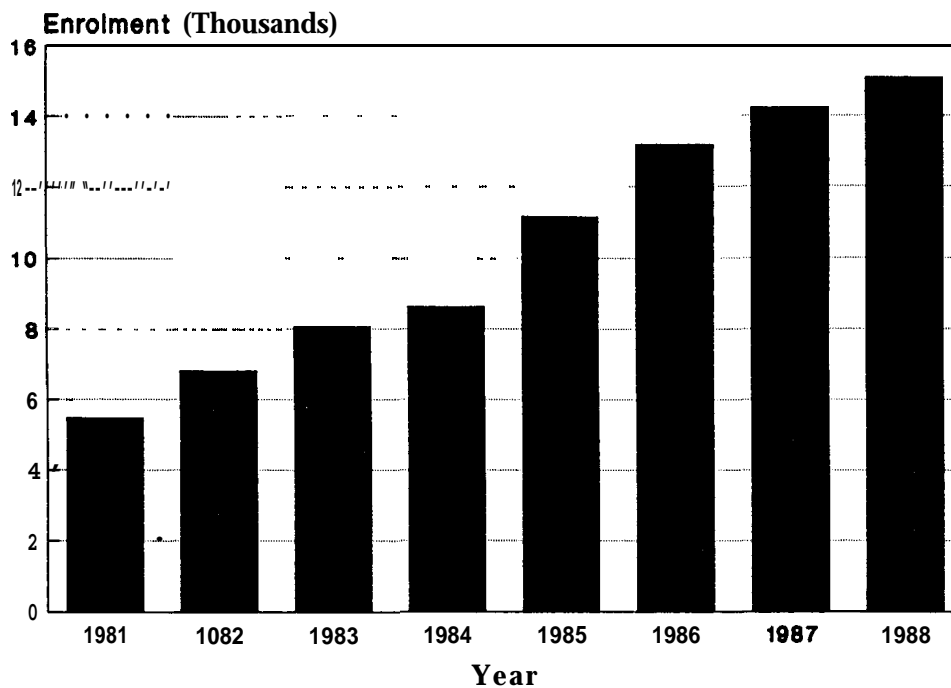
**Elementary and Secondary Enrolment  
Indians On-Reserve  
1981-2001**



- The number of children on-reserve **enroled** in elementary or secondary schools is growing and will continue to grow. In 1988, 85,600 on-reserve students were **enroled** in these schools.
- By 1991, enrolment will be 91,500, a 14 percent increase from the 1981 actual **enrolment** of 80,466.
- The projected **enrolment** in 2001 is estimated at 112,800, nearly one and a half times the 1981 figure.
- **Enrolment** is increasing not only due to the increase in the school-aged population, but also due to increases in the enrolment rate. The **enrolment** rate is calculated by determining the percent of all children on-reserve aged 4 to 18 who **are** attending school.
- By 2001, it is projected that **90%** of all Indian children on-reserve will be **enroled** in school, up six percentage points from the 1982 figure of 84%.
- Bill C-31 will have a limited impact on the number of on-reserve children **enroled** in elementary and secondary schools **as** most Bill C-31 registrants reside off-reserve.

FIGURE 1E

**Post-Secondary Enrolment  
Status Indians  
1981-1988**

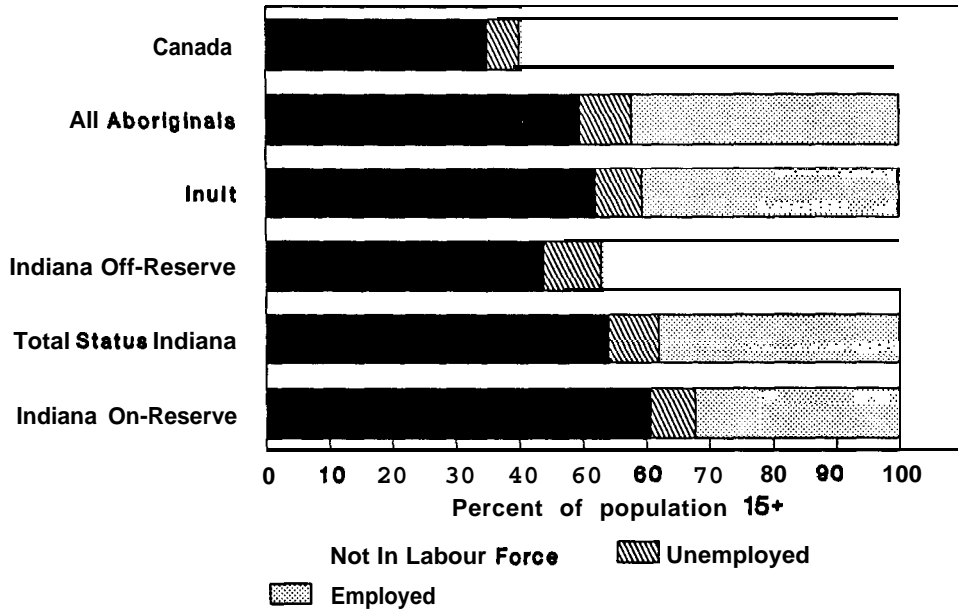


- The number of status Indians enrolled in post-secondary programs has increased dramatically. Between 1960 and 1981, it increased ninety-one times, from 60 students to 5,464.
- Between 1981 and 1988, post-secondary enrolment increased another two and two-thirds times to 15,084 students.
- The annual growth rate in the number of post-secondary students declined between 1981 and 1984. In 1985, enrolment grew by 30% of the 1984 level.
- Since 1985 the number of students has continued to increase although the growth rate has returned to pre-1985 levels.

FIGURE 2A

**Labour Force Activity  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

1981



1986

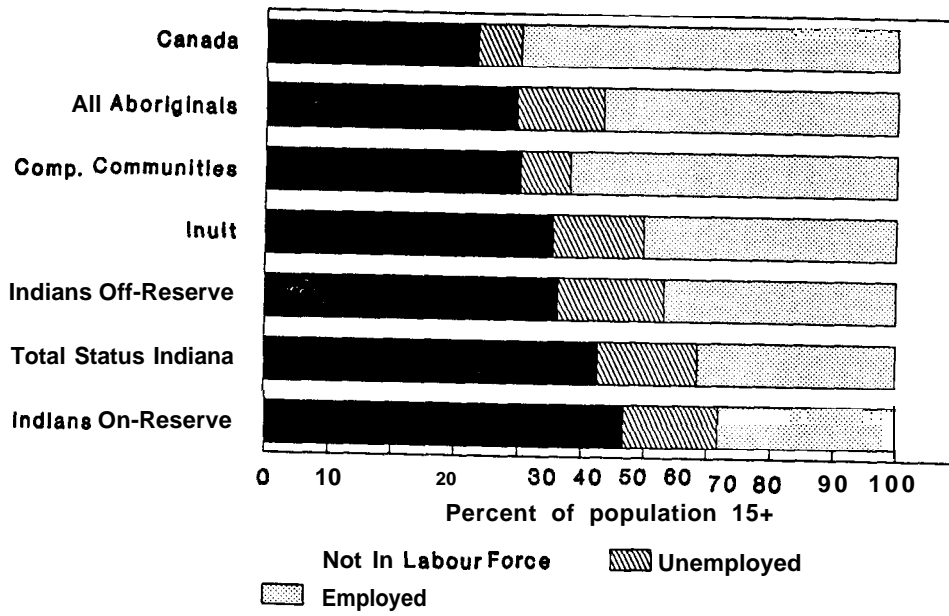


FIGURE 2A

**Labour Force Activity  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

- Aboriginal Canadians are more likely than other Canadians not to be in the labour force. Those that are in the **labour** force are twice as likely to be unemployed.
- According to the 1986 Census, for each aboriginal group, the proportion of the population over the age of 15 that is not in the labour force is higher than the Canadian rate of 34%. A person is not in the **labour** force if he or she is not employed and is not looking for work.
- Indians on-reserve have the highest proportion of their population not in the labour force, 57% or one and two-thirds times the Canadian rate.
- For each aboriginal group, the proportion of the population that is unemployed is higher than the Canadian figure of 7%. A person is considered unemployed if he or she is not working but is actively looking for a job.
- Indians off-reserve have the highest percent of unemployed people, 17% or two and a half times the Canadian figure.
- For each aboriginal group, the proportion of the population that is employed is lower than the Canadian rate of 60%.
- Indians on-reserve have the lowest employment rate of all aboriginal people, 28% or half the Canadian rate.
- Between 1981 and 1986, the percent of the population not in the labour force decreased for all groups, except Indians off-reserve which increased.
- Between the two Censuses, employment rates decreased marginally for the **Inuit** and all Canadians and greatly for status Indians (ten percentage points off-reserve and four percentage points on-reserve) .
- While more Indians and **Inuit** entered the **labour** force between 1981 and 1986, the percent of those unemployed doubled for both groups, from 7% to 14% for the **Inuit** and from 8% to 16% for status Indians. The percent of Canadians unemployed increased only slightly in the same period, from 5% to 7%.



FIGURE 2B

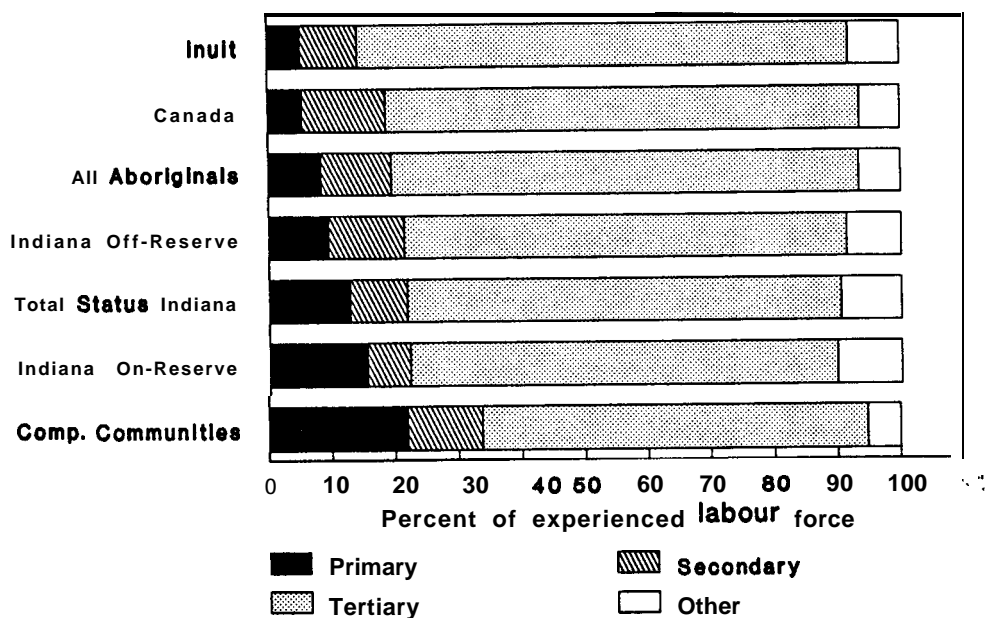
**Full-time Employment  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**



- Status Indians are slightly more likely to be employed full-time than are other Canadians, although for all groups more than 75% of the people who are employed work full-time.
- According to the 1986 Census, 80.1% of the status Indians who are employed work full-time, compared to 78.6% of all employed Canadians.
- Indians on-reserve have the highest proportion working full-time at 82.6%.
- The rate of full-time employment is lowest for the Inuit at 74.9%.
- Between 1981 and 1986, the percent of people working full-time decreased for all groups. This decrease was higher for non-native Canadians and Inuit than for status Indians.
- No specific definition is given for full-time employment because of the varying hours considered as full-time in different occupations and industries. As well, full-time employment does not reflect on the number of weeks worked and some full-time workers may not be employed for the full year.

FIGURE 2C

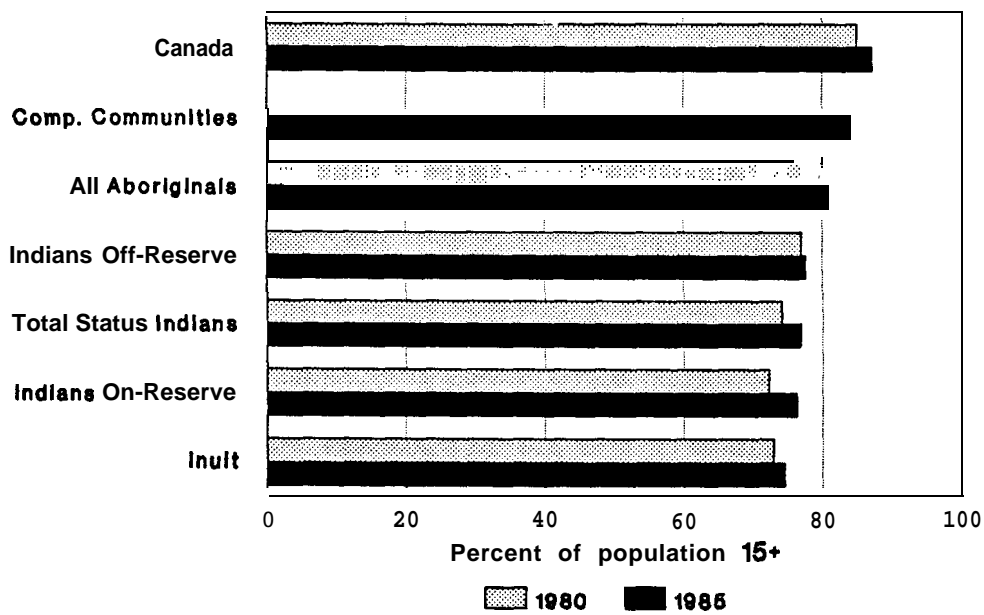
**Occupational Distribution  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1986**



- Most Canadians in all groups work in the tertiary sector, which includes occupations such as service, clerical and managerial positions, including social services, teaching and medical health occupations.
- According to the 1986 Census, a lower proportion of status Indians work in tertiary jobs than of other Canadians, 68.6% compared to 74.9%.
- The percent of Indians on-reserve working in tertiary jobs is 67.6%, lower than that of Indians off-reserve at 69.9% but higher than the population living near reserves at 61.1%.
- The Inuit have the highest proportion of their population employed in service jobs at 77.5%, which contributes to their high rate of part-time employment.
- A higher proportion of the Canadian population than of aboriginal populations have manufacturing or secondary sector jobs, although the percent. of Indians off-reserve is near the national figure, 11.9% compared to 13.2%.
- Of all aboriginal groups, Indians on-reserve have the highest proportion of their population working in primary industries at 15.5%. Although this figure is three times that of the total Canadian population at 5.5%, it is considerably lower than that of the population living near reserves at 22.0%.

FIGURE 3A

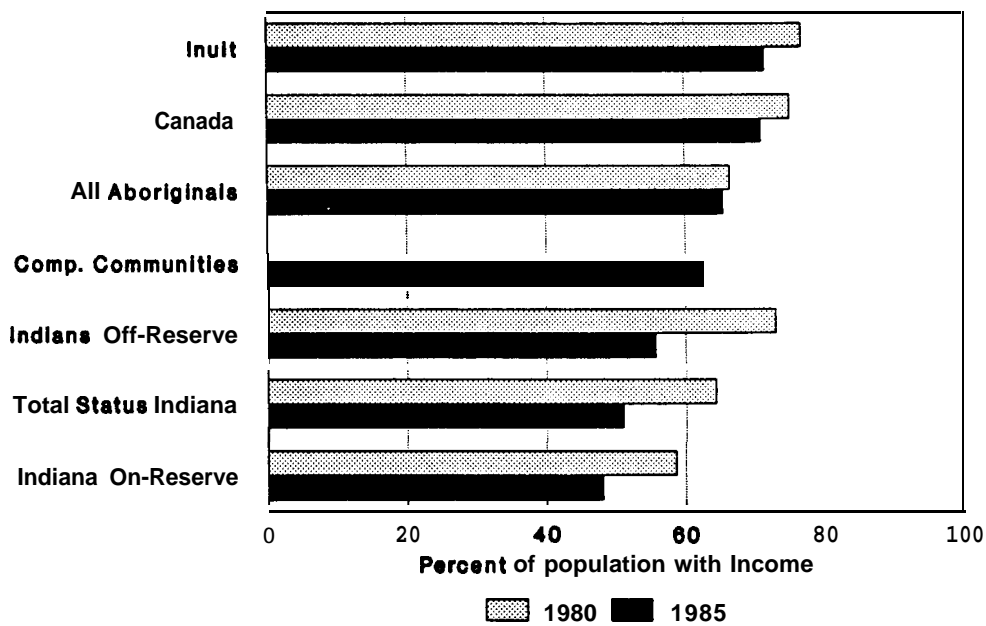
**Persons with Income  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**



- At least three-quarters of the population over fifteen in all groups receive income. However, approximately one-quarter of all status Indians and Inuit reported no income in the 1986 Census.
- According to the 1986 Census, the proportion of status Indians who received income in 1985 was ten percentage points less than that of all Canadians, 77% compared to 87%.
- The proportion of Indians on-reserve with income is eight percentage points lower than that of people living near reserves, 76% compared to 84%.
- The Inuit have the lowest proportion of their population with income at 75%, two percentage-points less than-status Indians and twelve percentage points less than all Canadians.
- For all groups, the percent of the population with income increased between 1980 and 1985.

FIGURE 3B

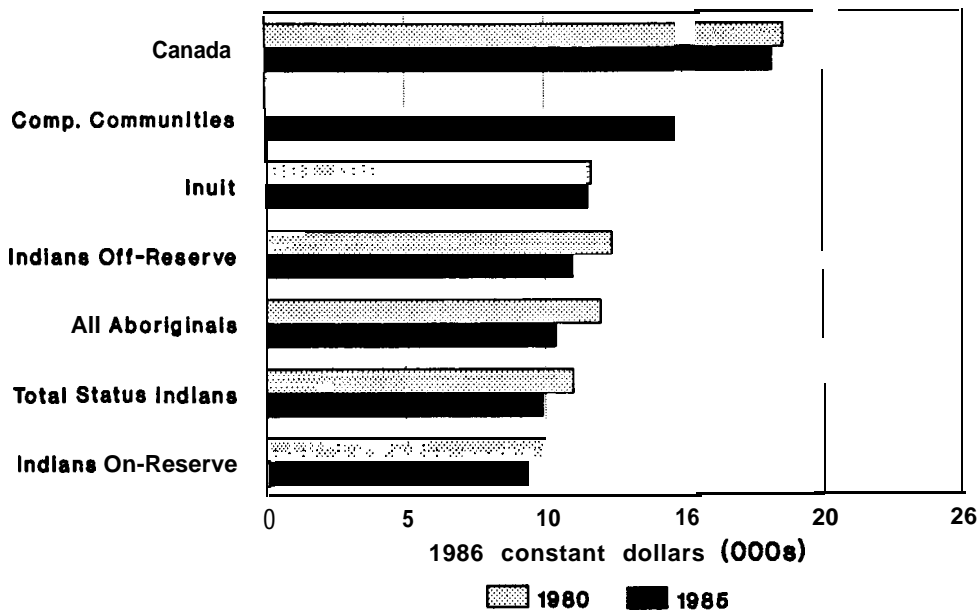
**Major Source of Income: Employment  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**



- For all groups, the percent of people with income who have employment as their major source of income dropped between 1980 and 1985. The Canadian figure dropped four percentage points while the proportion of status Indians dropped thirteen percentage points.
- According to the 1986 Census, 51% of all status Indians obtained most of their 1985 income from employment, nearly three-quarters the Canadian rate of 71%.
- A smaller proportion Indians on-reserve than off-reserve receive most of their income through employment., 48% compared to 56%. The proportion of Indians on-reserve is three-quarters that of people living near reserves at 63%.
- The Inuit had the highest proportion of all population groups earning income through employment at 72%, slightly higher than the Canadian rate and almost one and a half times that of status Indians.
- For a discussion on the proportion of the population that receives most of its income from government transfer payments, see Highlights on Aboriginal Conditions, Part II: Social Conditions.

FIGURE 3C

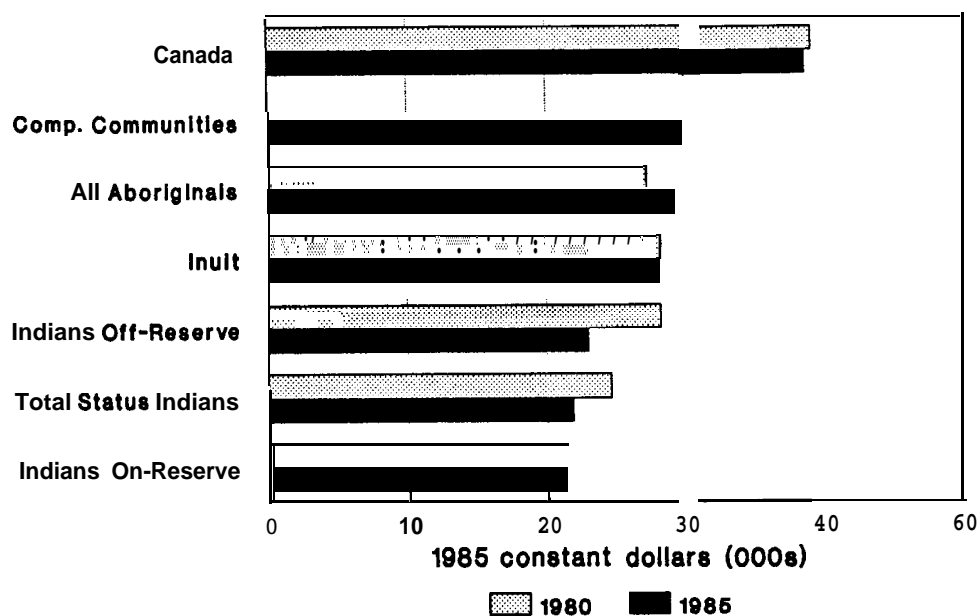
**Average Individual Income  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**



- According to the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, the average individual income of people in all groups, expressed in constant 1985 dollars, decreased between 1980 and 1985. The individual incomes of aboriginal people are still lower than those of other Canadians .
- The disparity between Canadian and Indian income increased between 1980 and 1985. Although real individual income dropped for all groups, the average individual income for status Indians was 59 percent of that for Canadians in 1980 and decreased to 54 percent in 1985.
- According to the 1986 Census, in 1985, Indians on-reserve had the lowest average individual income of all groups at \$9,300, one-half the Canadian average of \$18,200 and two-thirds that of people living near reserves at \$14,700.
- The **Inuit** have the highest average individual income of all aboriginal groups at \$11,600, one and one-fifth times that of status Indians but still only two-thirds the Canadian average.

FIGURE 3D

**Average Family Income  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**



- According to the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, average economic family income, expressed in constant 1985 dollars, dropped for every group except for all aboriginal families between 1980 and 1985. Nonetheless, aboriginal economic families in all groups have smaller incomes than other Canadian families.
- The disparity between the incomes of Canadian and status Indian families increased. In 1980, Indian economic families received 63 percent of the income of other Canadian families and this decreased to 56 percent in 1985.
- According to the 1986 Census, in 1985, status Indians had the lowest average family income at \$21,800, slightly more than one-half that of Canadian families at \$38,700.
- Indian families on-reserve receive on average \$20,900, slightly less than the average income of Indian families off-reserve at \$22,900 and over two-thirds the average income of families living near reserves at \$29,800.
- Inuit families have an average income of \$27,500, one and a quarter times that of status Indian families but nearly three-quarters the Canadian average.
- An economic family is defined as two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage or adoption.

FIGURE 3E

**Family Income by Income Group  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1985**

(percent of economic families)

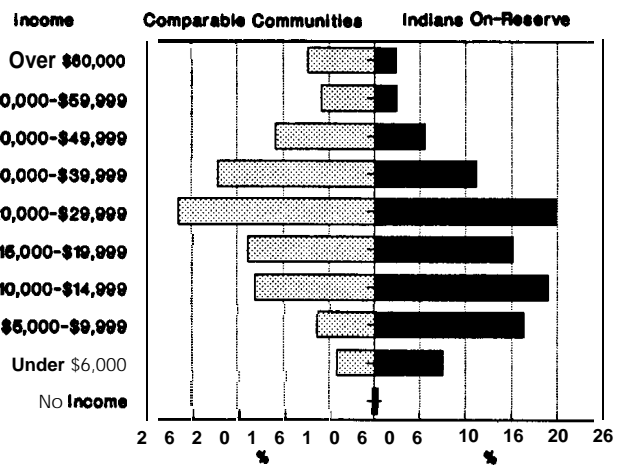
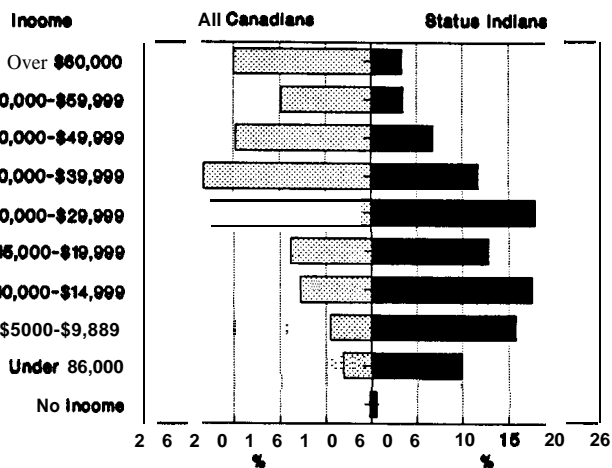
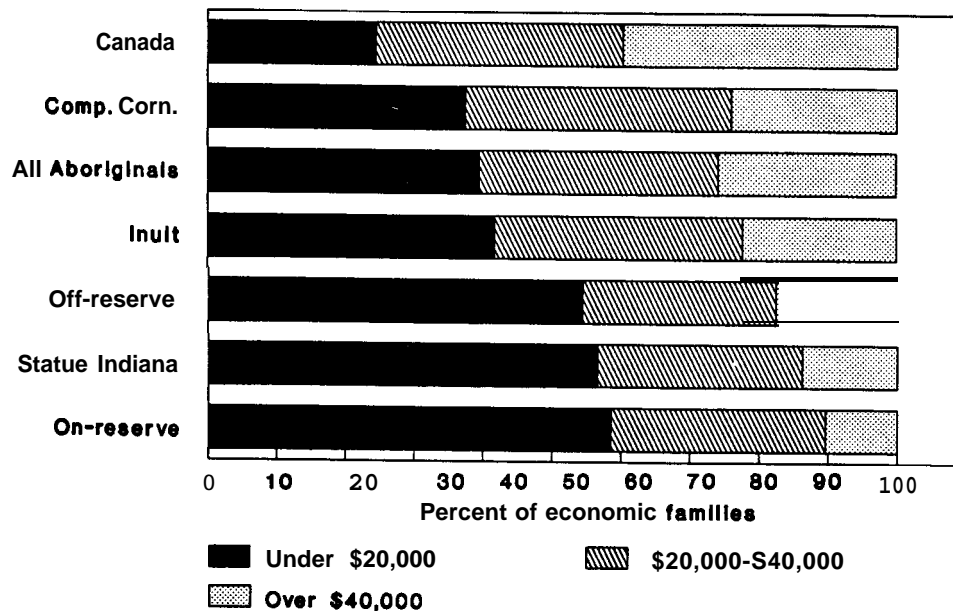


FIGURE 3E

**Family Income by Income Group  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1985**

- According to the 1986 Census, over half of all status Indian families reported incomes of less than \$20,000 in 1985.
- Aboriginal families are more likely to be in the lowest income groups than are other Canadian families. The proportion of economic families with incomes between **\$20,000 and \$40,000** a year is roughly similar for all groups, between **30%** for status Indians and **36%** for all Canadians.
- Four times as many status Indian families have incomes under **\$20,000** as over **\$40,000** per year, **57%** compared to **14%**. By comparison, almost twice as many of all Canadian families receive over \$40,000 than under \$20,000 per year, **40%** compared to **25%**.
- Indian families on-reserve are more likely than Indian families off-reserve to have incomes under **\$20,000**. **Almost twice as many** off-reserve families have incomes over **\$40,000**.
- While the **Inuit** have a higher proportion of their families with incomes over **\$40,000** than status Indians, still twice as many **Inuit families** receive under **\$20,000** a year than over **\$40,000**.



#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

**As the foregoing demonstrates,** Canada's aboriginal people, especially Indians on-reserve, experience relatively poor economic conditions compared to other Canadians. These conditions have a number of implications, particularly for status Indian policy, programs and activities which provide a challenge to federal, provincial and band governments.

The particularly disadvantaged situation of Indians on-reserve is largely due to the fact that Indian communities face significant limitations to sustained economic development. These barriers include the small size of most Indian bands, their often isolated location and lack of resources, discriminative practices and a population largely ill prepared for employment in a **wage economy**.

##### Education

**The educational attainment levels among successive generations of aboriginal people are improving.** These improvements are encouraging given the direct and positive relationships which exist between educational attainment, employment and income. However, the positive relationship between education and successful employment is less clear for groups such as aboriginal peoples, especially women, due to such factors as labour market segmentation and discrimination.

Indian educational attainment and enrolment rates are still relatively low compared to other Canadians. **Some** slight further increases of overall adult Indian educational levels are expected as a result of anticipated improvements in secondary and **post-secondary** graduation rates and the significant influx of the slightly better educated people re-instated as a result of Bill C-31.

Better education alone is not likely to be a sufficient driving force for labour market successes among aboriginal peoples. The dramatic improvements in educational achievements will be undermined if a young and more educated workforce cannot find meaningful and rewarding work.

### Employment

A high proportion of aboriginal people, **particularly** on-reserve Indians, do not participate in the **labour** force. This **likely** reflects in part a reliance on traditional pursuits, a lack of skills to function effectively in a wage economy as well as a shortage of suitable employment opportunities.

Differences in employment between Indians and other Canadians can be partially explained by the lower levels of educational attainment among status Indians. Low levels of literacy and work skills limit the ability of Indians to take advantage of the few employment opportunities which exist on or near reserves. The result is that Indians are likely to continue to experience lower levels of employment success, a tendency to be employed in unskilled jobs of shorter duration and lower earning power.

The high increase in the proportion of the unemployed among aboriginal people between 1981 and 1986 can be partially explained by a higher proportion of them entering the **labour** force but not holding **down jobs for extended periods of time and returning to the ranks of the unemployed**. More aboriginal people want to work but they are unable to find work.

It is unlikely that the significant on-reserve Indian employment in the tertiary occupations, particularly band government service, can continue to provide sufficient new employment opportunities to keep up with the projected growth in the working age population. Future private sector employment successes will significantly depend on initiatives tied to the further development of the natural resource based primary sector on-reserve, a sector which appears under exploited.

The lack of an adequately educated, trained and experienced Indian **labour** force stands as a major impediment to enhance economic development and self sufficiency within Indian communities.

### Income

Census data show that a large proportion of aboriginal people live in relative poverty by Canadian standards. However, for aboriginal people, the census income data do not always accurately reflect their "real" total level of income. This is particularly the case for registered Indians on-reserve who receive a wide variety of free or subsidized goods and services from the federal government, such as housing, which are not reported as income. Notwithstanding this reporting problem, on-reserve Indians are visibly one of the most disadvantaged groups in Canadian society.

---

**The significant and increasing disparity in average economic family income between aboriginal peoples and other Canadians coupled with the larger size of status Indian families means that the per capita income of Indians is substantially lower than that of other Canadians.**

Low aboriginal earned incomes have an impact not only on the level of expenditures on social support programs but also on the level of government revenues originating from aboriginal peoples other than on-reserve Indians.

In conclusion, while significant improvements have been made in the educational achievements of aboriginal peoples, much remains to be accomplished before they enjoy the equitable access to the **labour** market and same standard of living that other Canadians are accustomed to.

## METHODOLOGICAL NOTES AND SOURCES

- Sources:
- INAC Customized Census Data, 1981 and 1986.
  - Basic Departmental Data, DIAND, 1988.
  - Population Projections of Registered Indians 1986-2011, Statistics Canada, 1989.
  - on-reserve enrolment projections are derived from the Enrolment Projections Model developed by QASR.

Methodology: Due to differences between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses related to population coverage and question formulation, comparisons between the 1981 and 1986 Censuses should be made with caution. Any apparent trends may not be completely valid, particularly for the on-reserve and total aboriginal populations. For a more complete explanation of the comparability of the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, see the **Methodology** section of 1986 Census Highlights on Registered Indians: Annotated Tables (DIAND, 1989).

A medium growth scenario was used for the population projections of registered Indians. This scenario assumes constant fertility, declining mortality and 18 percent of Bill C-31 registrants living on-reserve.

VI . DATA TABLES

TABLE 1A

L e s s   t h a n   G r a d e   9   E d u c a t i o n  
**Aboriginals and All Canadians**  
 19231. 1986

(percent of population 15 and over)

GROUP	1981	1986
-----	-----	-----
Canada	20.1	17.3
Comp. Communities	N/A	25.8
Total Status Indians	39.1	37.2
Indians On-Reserve	48.3	44.7
Indians Off-Reserve	24.3	24.4
<b>Inuit</b>	61.3	53.0
All Aboriginal	37.3	25.9

TABLE 1B

**At Least High School Education  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

(percent of population 15 and over)

GROUP	1981	1986
Canada	52.1	55.6
Comp. Communities	N/A	41.9
Total Status Indians	26.4	27.6
Indians On-Reserve	19.4	21.7
Indians Off-Reserve	37.5	37.5
<b>Inuit</b>	<b>18.9</b>	22.2
All Aboriginal	28.3	39.7

TABLE 1C

**Elementary and Secondary Enrolment  
By School Type  
Indians On-Reserve  
1981-1987**

(percent of total enrolment)

YEAR	FEDERAL	PROVINCIAL	BAND
=====			
1981'	28.0	54.3	16.3
1982*	28.2	49.8	20.6
1983	28.0	50.6	21.4
1984	27.1	50.0	22.9
1985	24.7	49.3	26.0
1986	22.9	48.7	28.5
1987	20.6	48.1	31.4

\* Figures do not add up to 100 percent because a small number of private schools are included in the totals.

TABLE 1D

**Elementary and Secondary Enrolment  
Indians On-Reserve  
1981 - 2001**

(percent)

YEAR	POPULATION AGED 4-18	PROJECTED ENROLMENT <sup>1</sup>	ENROLMENT RATE	ENROLMENT GROWTH
1981*	91,545	80,466	87.90	--
1982	92,498	77,412	83.69	-3.80
1983	93,322	78,082	83.67	0.87
1984	93,944	80,121	85.29	2.61
1985	94,730	80,623	85.11	0.63
1986	95,935	82,271	85.76	2.04
1987	96,939	84,271	86.93	2.43
1988	99,034	85,600	86.43	1.58
1989	101,043	87,600	86.70	2.34
1990	103,501	89,500	86.47	2.17
1991	105,619	91,500	86.63	2.23
1992	108,058	93,600	86.62	2.30
1993	110,515	95,800	86.69	2.35
1994	113,051	98,200	86.86	2.51
1995	115,432	100,600	87.15	2.44
1996	117,859	102,900	87.31	2.29
1997	119,568	104,900	87.73	1.94
1998	121,225	107,700	88.84	2.67
1999	122,733	109,600	89.30	1.76
2000	123,966	111,300	89.78	1.55
2001	124,981	112,800	90.25	1.35

\* The high 1981 enrolment figure is a result of data collection problems that were corrected in 1982.

<sup>1</sup>Actual enrolment figures are used for 1981-1988; data for 1989-2001 are projected from the enrolment projections model developed by QASR.



TABLE IE

**Post-Secondary Enrolment  
Status Indians  
1981-1988**

( number )

YEAR	ENROLMENT	PERCENT INCREASE
1981	5,464	-
1982	6,810	24.6
1983	8,062	18.4
1984	8,617	7.4
1985	11,170	29.6
1986	13,196	18.1
1987	14,242	7.9
1988	15,084	5.9

TABLE 2A

**Labour Force Activity  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

(percent of population 15 and over)

1981

GROUP	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	NOT IN LABOUR FORCE
Canada	60.0	5.0	35.0
Comp. Communities	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Status Indians	38.0	7.9	54.1
Indians On-Reserve	32.3	7.1	60.6
Indians Off-Reserve	47.2	9.0	43.8
<b>Inuit</b>	40.6	7.4	52.0
All Aboriginal	42.3	8.1	49.6

1986

GROUP	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	NOT IN LABOUR FORCE
Canada	59.6	6.9	33.5
Comp. Communities	51.8	7.8	40.4
Total Status Indians	31.4	15.8	52.8
Indians On-Reserve	28.2	15.1	56.7
Indians Off-Reserve	36.8	16.8	46.4
<b>Inuit</b>	40.1	14.4	45.5
All Aboriginal	46.6	13.7	39.7

TABLE 2B

**Full-time Employment  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1981, 1986**

(percent of employed)

GROUP	1981	1986
=====	=====	=====
Canada	83.1	78.6
Comp. Communities	N/A	76.1
Total Status Indians	81.4	80.1
Indians On-Reserve	83.3	82.6
Indians Off-Reserve	79.3	76.6
Inuit	79.7	74.9
All Aboriginal	81.9	77.6

TABLE 2C

**Occupational Distribution  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1986**

(percent of experienced labour force)

GROUP	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TERTIARY
<b>Canada</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>74.9</b>
<b>Comp. Communities</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>61.1</b>
Total Status Indians	12.9	8.9	68.6
<b>Indians On-Reserve</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>67.6</b>
<b>Indians Off-Reserve</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>69.9</b>
<b>Inuit</b>	5.2	9.1	77.5
All Aboriginal	8.4	11.1	73.9

TABLE 3A

**Persons With Income**  
**Aboriginal and All Canadians**  
**1980. 1985**

(percent of population 15 and over)

GROUP	1980	1985
Canada	85.0	87.2
Comp. Communities	N/A	83.9
Total Status Indians	74.0	76.8
Indians On-Reserve	72.2	76.3
Indians Off-Reserve	76.9	77.6
Inuit	72.8	74.5
All Aboriginal	76.0	80.8

TABLE 3B

**Major Source of Income: Employment  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**

(percent of income earners)

GROUP	1980	1985
=====	=====	=====
<b>Canada</b>	<b>75.0</b>	<b>70.9</b>
<b>Comp. Communities</b>	N/A	62.7
Total Status Indians	64.2	50.9
Indians On-Reserve	58.6	48.1
Indians Off-Reserve	72.8	55.6
<b>Inuit</b>	76.7	71.5
All Aboriginal	66.4	65.4

TABLE 3C

**Average Individual Income**  
**Aboriginal and All Canadians**  
**1980, 1985**

(1985 constant dollars)

GROUP	1980	1985
<b>Canada</b>	<b>18,600</b>	<b>18,200</b>
<b>Comp. Communities</b>	N/A	14,700
Total Status Indians	11,000	9,900
Indians On-Reserve	10,000	9,300
Indians Off-Reserve	12,400	11,000
<b>Inuit</b>	<b>11,700</b>	11,600
All Aboriginal	12,000	10,400

TABLE 3D

**Average Family Income  
Aboriginals and All Canadians  
1980, 1985**

(1985 constant dollars)

GROUP	1980	1985
Canada	39,100	<b>38,700</b>
Comp . Communities	N/A	<b>29,800</b>
Total Status Indians	24,600	<b>21,800</b>
Indians On-Reserve	21,400	<b>20,900</b>
Indians Off-Reserve	28,200	<b>22,900</b>
<b>Inuit</b>	28,200	<b>27,800</b>
All Aboriginal	27,200	<b>29,300</b>



TABLE 3E (1)

**Family Income by Income Group  
Status Indians  
1985**

(percent of economic families)

INCOME BRACKET	STATUS INDIANS	INDIANS ON-RESERVE	INDIANS OFF-RESERVE
No Income	0.57	0.45	0.70
Under \$5,000	9.99	7.53	12.85
<b>\$5,000-\$9,999</b>	<b>15.79</b>	<b>16.38</b>	<b>15.12</b>
<b>\$10,000-\$14,999</b>	<b>17.54</b>	<b>19.02</b>	<b>15.83</b>
<b>\$15,000-\$19,999</b>	<b>12.78</b>	<b>15.19</b>	<b>10.01</b>
<b>\$20,000-\$29,999</b>	<b>17.92</b>	<b>19.91</b>	<b>15.61</b>
<b>\$30,000-\$39,999</b>	<b>11.73</b>	<b>11.16</b>	<b>12.36</b>
<b>\$40,000-\$49,999</b>	<b>6.81</b>	<b>5.54</b>	<b>8.32</b>
<b>\$50,000-\$59,999</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>2.45</b>	<b>4.66</b>
<b>\$60,000 and over</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>2.39</b>	<b>4.54</b>

TABLE 3E (2)

**Family Income by Income Group  
Aboriginal and All Canadians  
1985**

(percent of economic families)

INCOME BRACKET	INUIT	ALL ABORIGINAL	CANADA	COMP . COMMUNITIES
No Income	0.41	0.27	0.24	0.21
Under \$5,000	6.56	6.80	3.06	4.14
\$5,000-\$9,999	11.74	10.18	4.47	6.31
<b>\$10,000-\$14,999</b>	<b>11.46</b>	<b>12.16</b>	<b>7.78</b>	<b>13.07</b>
<b>\$15,000-\$19,999</b>	<b>11.67</b>	<b>10.21</b>	<b>8.88</b>	<b>13.80</b>
<b>\$20,000-\$29,999</b>	<b>19.61</b>	<b>18.20</b>	<b>17.64</b>	<b>21.45</b>
<b>\$30,000-\$39,999</b>	<b>16.37</b>	<b>16.44</b>	<b>18.29</b>	<b>17.10</b>
<b>\$40,000-\$49,999</b>	<b>9.46</b>	<b>11.43</b>	<b>14.77</b>	<b>10.83</b>
<b>\$50,000-\$59,999</b>	<b>5.87</b>	<b>6.91</b>	<b>9.84</b>	<b>5.83</b>
<b>\$60,000 and over</b>	<b>6.84</b>	<b>7.35</b>	<b>15.02</b>	<b>7.27</b>

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