

DECADE OF THE
2011-2020
MÉTIS NATION

The Métis



THE MÉTIS PEOPLE

Prior to Canada's crystallization as a nation in west central North America, the Métis people emerged out of the relations of Indian women and European men. While the initial offspring of these Indian and European unions were individuals who possessed mixed ancestry, the gradual establishment of distinct Métis communities, outside of Indian and European cultures and settlements, as well as, the subsequent intermarriages between Métis women and Métis men, resulted in the genesis of a new Aboriginal people - the Métis.



Distinct Métis communities emerged, as an outgrowth of the fur trade, along part of the freighting waterways and Great Lakes of Ontario, throughout the Northwest and as far north as the McKenzie river.

The Métis people and their communities were connected through the highly mobile fur trade network, seasonal rounds, extensive kinship connections and a collective identity (i.e. common culture, language, way of life, etc.).

The Métis, as a distinct Aboriginal people, fundamentally shaped Canada's expansion westward through their on-going assertion of their collective identity and rights. From the Red River Resistance to the Battle of Batoche to other notable collective actions undertaken throughout the Métis Nation Homeland, the history and identity of the Métis people will forever be a part of Canada's existence.

Today, the Métis people are alive and well within Canada; however, we continue to push for the respectful recognition and reconciliation for our Aboriginal rights and existence within the Canadian federation.

THE MÉTIS NATION

The Métis people constitute a distinct Aboriginal nation largely based in western Canada.

The Métis Nation grounds its assertion of Aboriginal nationhood on well-recognized international principles.

It has a shared history, common culture (song, dance, dress, national symbols, etc.), unique language (Michif with various regional dialects), extensive kinship connections from Ontario westward, distinct way of life, traditional territory and a collective consciousness.

THE MÉTIS NATION'S HOMELAND

The Métis Nation's Homeland is based on the traditional territory upon which the Métis people have historically lived and relied upon. This territory roughly includes the 3 Prairie provinces (Manitoba,

Alberta, Saskatchewan), and extends into Ontario, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, as well as, the northern United States (i.e. North Dakota, Montana).

THE MÉTIS POPULATION IN CANADA

In September 2002, the Métis people adopted a national definition of Métis for citizenship in the Métis Nation. Based on this definition, it is estimated that there are 350,000 to 400,000 Métis Nation citizens in Canada. The Métis Nation is now in the process of uniformly implementing this definition across the Homeland, as well as, developing a consistent acceptance process.

Although the Canadian Census has never accurately reflected the Métis Nation's population, in 2006, the Métis population from Ontario westward was 389,785 or 34% of the Aboriginal population. Based on these statistics, 25% of the Métis population was aged 14 and under, well above the proportion of 17% in the non-Aboriginal population. Of the Métis population, more than 55% live in Urban centres.



THE MÉTIS NATION'S GOVERNMENTS IN CANADA

The Métis Nation is represented through democratically elected, province-wide governance structures from Ontario west to British Columbia; namely, Métis Nation of Ontario, Manitoba Metis Federation, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, Métis Nation of Alberta and Métis Nation British Columbia referred to as the “Governing Members” of the Métis Nation. These governance structures are the contemporary expression of the centuries-old struggle of the Métis Nation to be self-determining within the Canadian federation.

The Métis people mandate these governance structures through province-wide ballot box elections held at regular intervals for regional and provincial leadership. Further, Métis citizens and their communities are represented through and participate in these Métis governance structures by way of elected Locals or Community Councils, as well as, provincial assemblies held annually.

the Métis
Nation of
Ontario



www.metisnation.org

www.mmf.mb.ca



www.mn-s.ca



www.albertametis.com



www.mnbc.ca

THE MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL

For generations, the Métis Nation has struggled for recognition and justice in the Canadian federation. As a part of this history, beginning in the 1960s, the Métis Nation joined with First Nation and Inuit peoples, in pan-Aboriginal political organizations, to push forward their collective agendas.

In 1982, as a result of these united efforts, Aboriginal peoples achieved monumental success with the protection of their existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights in s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. In particular, this was a triumph for the Métis Nation, with the explicit recognition of the Métis as one of three distinct Aboriginal peoples within Canada.

Prior to the holding of the constitutionally guaranteed First Ministers Conference to further identify and define the rights of the Aboriginal peoples in Canada, it became apparent that the Métis Nation needed to be able to once again represent itself at a national level through its own voice – a Métis voice. The pan-Aboriginal structures of the Native Council of Canada (now known as the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples) and its affiliates did not allow the Métis Nation to

effectively represent itself. As a result, in March 1983, the Métis Nation withdrew from the Native Council of Canada to form the Métis National Council – its own Métis-specific national representative body.

Since 1983, the Métis National Council has represented the Métis Nation nationally and internationally. It receives its mandate and direction from the democratically elected leadership of the Métis Nation's governments from Ontario westward. Specifically, it reflects and moves forward on the desires and aspirations of these Métis governments at a national and international level.

Overall, the Métis National Council's central goal is to secure a healthy space for the Métis Nation's on-going existence within the Canadian federation. For more information on the MNC please visit our website at www.metisnation.ca.



Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation.



MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL

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