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Métis and Non-Status Indians in Rural and Small City Canada 1996-2001



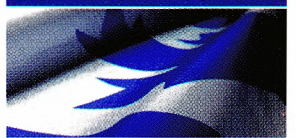
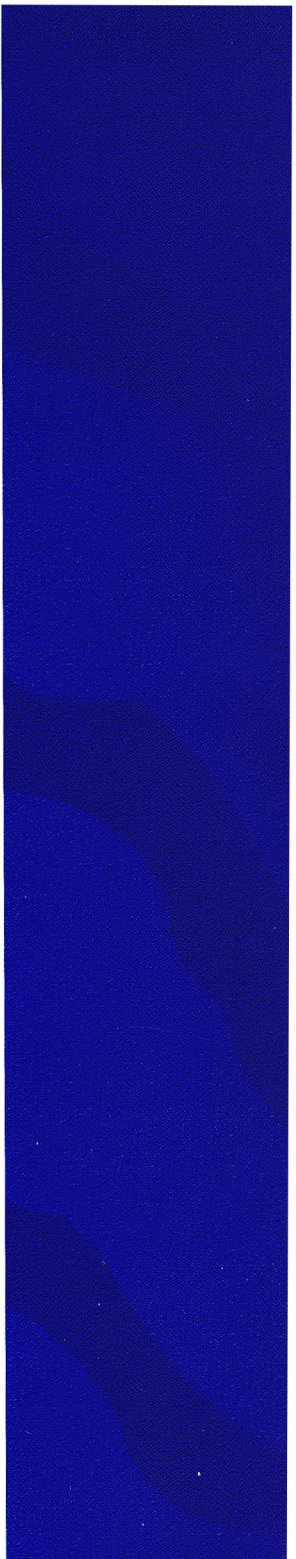
Strategic Research & Analysis Directorate
Direction générale de la recherche et de l'analyse



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**Métis and Non-Status Indians
in Rural and Small City Canada
1996-2001**



Erik Anderson,
In fulfillment of Statistics Canada's Data Interpretation Workshop
February 17, 2006

The views expressed in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Introduction

Métis and Non-Status Indian populations in Canada have increased at a rate that far exceeds that of the non-Aboriginal population. This is especially true in small cities between 1996 and 2001, as well as in rural areas, where the non-Aboriginal population experienced a decline. Government policies in recent years have emphasized the needs of a growing urban Aboriginal population. This emphasis has been partly in reaction to the bulk of federal Aboriginal spending targeted to First Nation reserves. The needs of Métis and Non-Status Indians in rural areas and small cities are also of concern, however, given their growing population in these areas and the socio-economic gaps with the non-Aboriginal population. These gaps are as great in rural and small cities as in large cities. This paper is intended to address a shortfall in the current knowledge of Métis and Non-Status Indian population increase and socio-economic status in rural and small city Canada.

The 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada are used to examine population growth by rural - urban geography and by province or region of Canada. Four variables from the Census are used to compare socio-economic well being of Métis, Non-Status Indians and Non-Aboriginals: education, employment, income and housing. An analysis of educational attainment of specific age cohorts from 1996 to 2001 is also made to attempt to draw some possible relationships between population increase through self-identification, or ethnic mobility, and socio-economic status.

Background

Aboriginal populations of Canada continue to lag behind the non-Aboriginal population on most socio-economic indicators of well-being (Siggner and Costa, 2005; STC, 2005; Hull, 2005; O'Sullivan and McHardy, 2004; Cooke et. al., 2004). This is true of all Aboriginal groups, including Métis and Non-Status Indians. Aboriginal federal policy, and mandate of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), has been to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal well-being. Discussions of closing the gap have

Aboriginal Definitions

Aboriginal Identity refers to those persons who reported on the Census identifying with at least one of the Aboriginal groups North American Indian, Métis or Inuit, or as a Registered or Treaty Indian, and/or with Band or First Nation membership.

Métis refers to those who only reported identifying as Métis, but not registered under the *Indian Act of Canada*.

Non-Status Indian refers to those who only reported identifying as North American Indian, but not registered under the *Indian Act of Canada*.

Status Indian refers to those who reported they were registered under the *Indian Act of Canada*.

Inuit refers to those who only reported identifying as Inuit, but not registered under the *Indian Act of Canada*.

Non-Aboriginal refers to all others who did not report identifying with any Aboriginal group as described under "Aboriginal Identity"

First Nation refers to an Indian Band as defined under the *Indian Act of Canada*. First Nations is also used as a synonym for Status or Registered Indians.

recently occurred at the federal minister's meeting in Kelowna, B.C., where some targets for education, housing and health were established for monitoring progress and accountability in these areas. Any discussion of closing the gap in well-being between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations would benefit from an understanding of their proportional rural-urban split.

Métis and Non-Status Indians have long advocated for a voice and seat for themselves at Aboriginal policy tables. Métis in particular have been successful in recent years both in the courts and through political channels in raising government and public awareness of the Métis rights agenda. A landmark Supreme Court decision, referred to as the Powley case, found in 2003 that the Métis defendants in Ontario had an Aboriginal right to hunt.

The Powley case has proven to be a turning point for the Métis relationship with the provinces and federal government. The title and role of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, created in 1992 to perform an advocacy function within the federal system, was recently moved from the Privy Council Office to INAC as part of the government's new Métis commitments.

Shortly thereafter the federal government signed a Métis Nation Framework Agreement with the Métis National Council and accord with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. These agreements reflect a new relationship based largely upon the notion of Aboriginal rights. The first order of business under the Métis Nation Framework Agreement is to address the implementation of the Powley decision. Much of the Métis rights agenda deals with harvesting rights, and there is therefore a particular interest for socio-economic profiles of the Métis population in rural areas and small cities.

Of all the socio-economic profiles of Aboriginal populations, few have focussed on the Métis population, and fewer still on the Non-Status Indian population. Those studies that have included a Métis and Non-Status Indian component have not focussed on rural areas. This is in contrast to recent studies that have compared First Nation well-being with other Canadians at the community level, including small cities, towns and rural reserves.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has developed a research tool, the First Nations Community Well-Being Index, to measure the well-being of First Nations and other Canadian communities over time (McHardy and O'Sullivan, 2004; O'Sullivan and

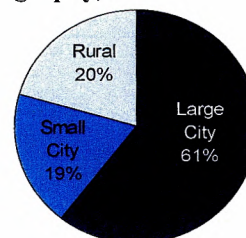
Geographic Definitions

Large Cities refers to Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) with a core population of at least 100,000, excluding rural fringes and urban reserves.

Small Cities refers to urban non-CMAs or Census Agglomerations (CAs) with an urban core of between 10,000 and 100,000, excluding rural fringes and urban reserves.

Rural Areas refers to all areas lying outside of urban areas, including rural fringes of CMAs and CAs.

Total Canadian Population by Geography, 2001



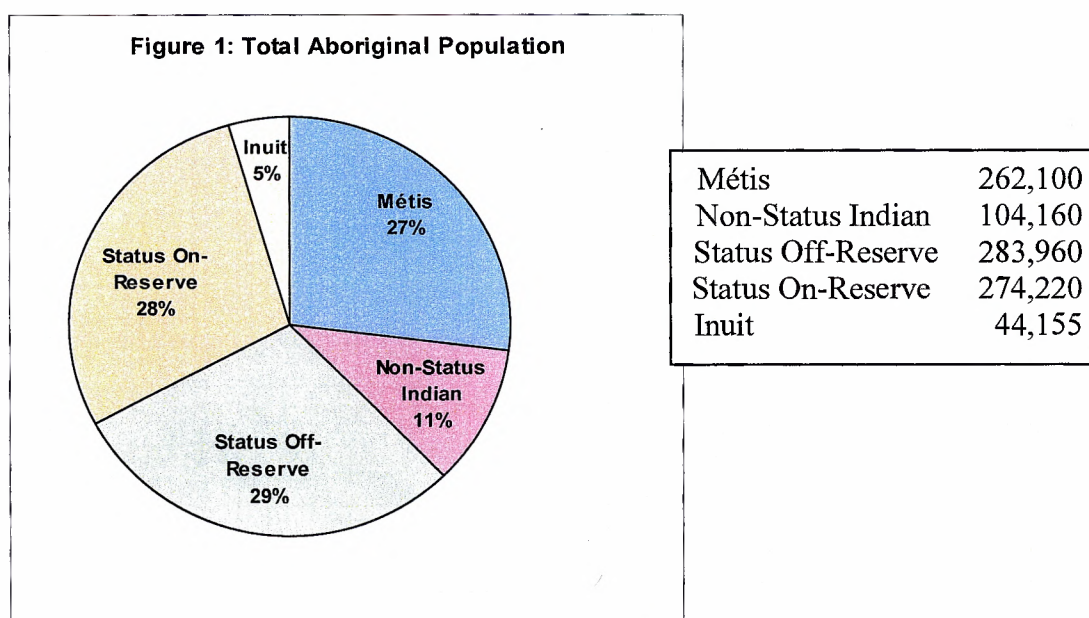
Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

McHardy, 2004). This is a composite index of well-being that uses census indicators of education, the labour force, income and housing to develop scores for all Canadian communities by census subdivision. This tool enables comparison of similarly situated First Nations and other Canadian communities. An Inuit Community Well-Being Index has also been developed (Senécal and O’Sullivan, 2005). Both First Nation and Inuit communities correspond well, for the most part, with census subdivisions. For Métis, however, a well-being index may not be possible using the INAC methodology. An understanding of Métis and Non-Status Indian socio-economic status by rural – urban geography may be the next best option to compare populations in similar situations in rural areas and small cities.

Population Characteristics, 2001

There are three groups defined as Aboriginal in the Canadian Constitution – Indian, Inuit and Métis. According to the 2001 Census, there are close to a million individuals (976,305) who identified themselves as Aboriginal (see definitions on page one). Of those, 262,100 indicated Métis identity as a single response, and 104,160 indicated North American Indian, but not a Registered Indian under the Indian Act. This latter group provides a Non-Status Indian count, meaning respondents have indicated on a separate question that they do not have status as an Indian under the *Indian Act*, but have nevertheless identified themselves as North American Indian.

The Métis count excludes those who indicated that they were registered under the *Indian Act*. Multiple Aboriginal Identity respondents were discounted, and the Status On-Reserve Population is slightly undercounted due to 30 First Nations out of over 600 refusing to participate in the Census in 2001.



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

A substantial portion of the Aboriginal population resides in rural areas, in contrast to the non-Aboriginal population, which resides mostly in large cities. First Nations, Métis and Inuit are also represented in different proportions in rural and urban areas. Each of these Aboriginal groups has a distinct culture, history and historical relationship with colonial and federal governments. Many of these differences are reflected in residential patterns, and for a variety of reasons that lie outside the scope of this paper, a greater proportion of the Métis population has come to reside in urban centres compared with the First Nation and Inuit populations.¹ The same is true for the Non-Status Indian population.

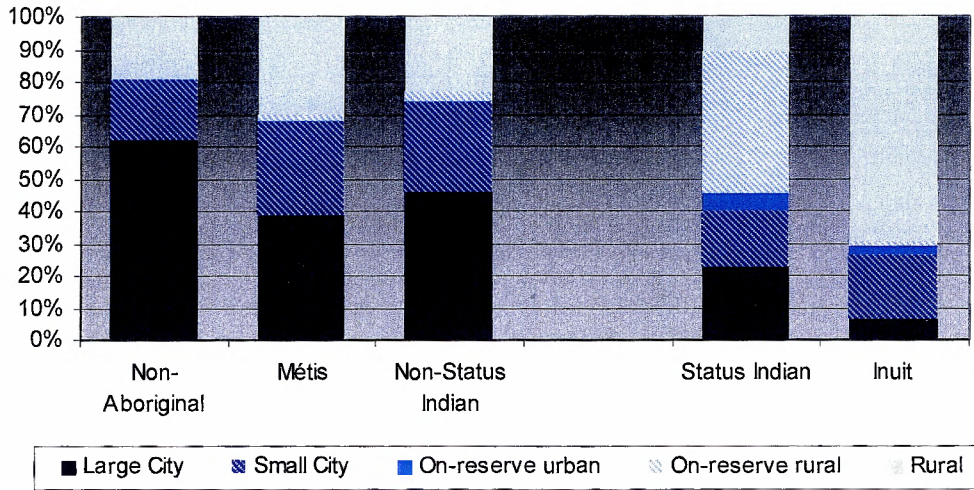
A substantial proportion of Métis and Non-Status Indians do reside in small cities and rural areas, however, and socio-economic analysis that compares more similarly situated communities or populations provides a more accurate picture of relative gaps. It may not be possible, or even desirable, to close the gap in well-being between those living in northern Manitoba and Toronto. There are different characteristics, and possibly different thresholds of well-being in rural areas, which may necessitate different policy targets for closing gaps in those areas.

Métis and Non-Status Indians are more heavily concentrated in rural areas and small cities than are non-Aboriginal Canadians (Figure 2). About 32% of Métis and 26% of Non-Status Indians reside in rural areas, including on First Nation reserves, compared to 20% of non-Aboriginals. For small cities, 29% of Métis and 27% of Non-Status Indians are resident, compared to 19% of non-Aboriginals. The on-reserve urban calculation was not further subdivided between large city on-reserve and small city on-reserve as the numbers of Métis and Non-Status Indians became very small, especially on reserves that are part of large cities. The Status Indian and Inuit populations are included for comparative purposes. Inuit, not surprisingly, have the largest rural population followed by Status Indians when rural reserves are included.

Métis and Non-Status Indians have very different residency patterns by region of Canada. Figure 3 shows the Métis population, relative to the Non-Status Indian population, to be largely concentrated in the Prairie Provinces, while the Non-Status Indian population is largely found in Ontario and British Columbia. There are, however, also large populations of Métis in Ontario and British Columbia, and it is here, along with the Atlantic Provinces, where Métis had the greatest gains in population from 1996 to 2001.

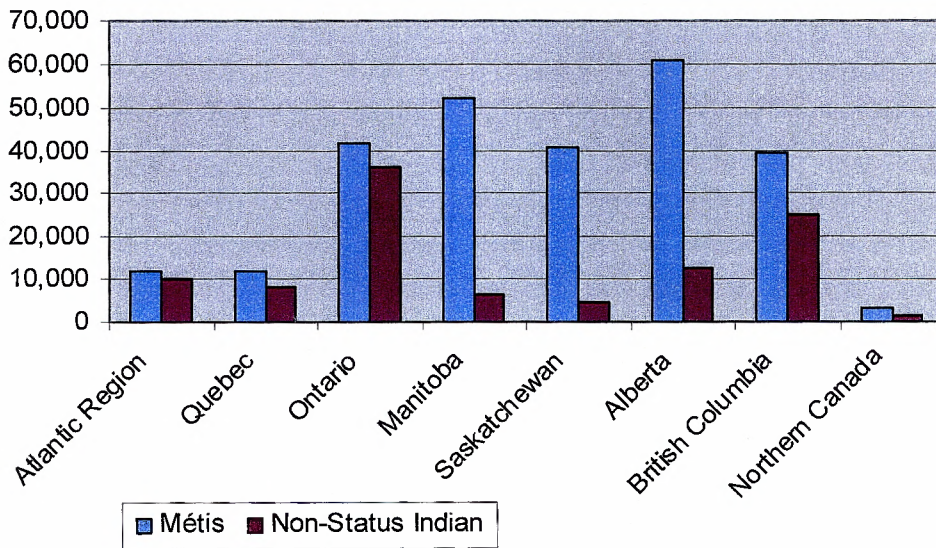
¹ When the federal government looked to open the Canadian west up to settlement in the late 1800s, many Métis took individual grants of land called scrip, which they later sold in order to move westward, rather than sign treaties and reside on reserve lands.

Figure 2: Métis and Non-Status Indian Proportion of Population in Rural Areas and Small Cities, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Figure 3: Métis and Non-Status Indian Population Distribution, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

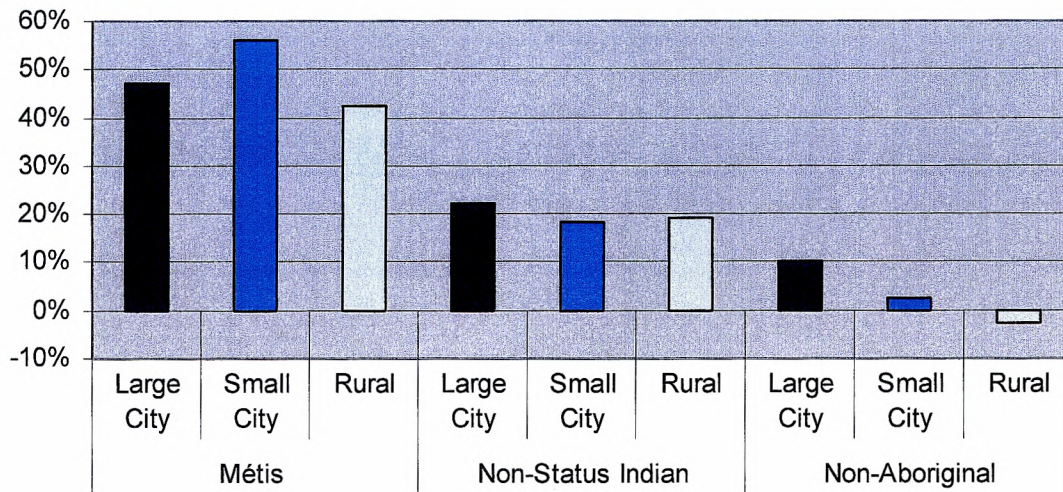
Population Increase and Ethnic Mobility

Métis and Non-Status Indian population increases are much greater than the non-Aboriginal population increase, and greater than could possibly be explained by natural increase from fertility or from migration (Clatworthy, 2005; Guimond, 2003a,b; Norris et. al., 2003). A large proportion of the Métis population increase in particular has been attributed to the demographic concept of ethnic mobility (Guimond, 2003a,b). Simply stated, ethnic mobility is the change in ethnic identification through self reporting. A large component of the Métis population increase from 1996 to 2001 is attributable to the choices that are increasingly made by individuals to identify as Métis on the Census.

Guimond (2003a,b) has emphasized the growth in urban areas attributable to ethnic mobility in his studies of Aboriginal population growth from 1971 to 1996. The current study shows, however, that from 1996 to 2001 substantial population increase has occurred in rural areas as well as in small cities and large cities for both Métis and Non-Status Indians. This is in contrast to the non-Aboriginal population where the greatest increase occurred in large cities. This increase in large cities can mostly be explained by migration from rural areas and immigration from outside the country. The Métis and Non-Status Indian populations, on the other hand, experienced a greater proportion of total migrants moving from urban to rural areas, than from rural to urban areas (Norris et. al., 2003; Norris and Clatworthy, 2003). This relatively small net migration from urban to rural areas, however, cannot account for the large population growth witnessed in rural areas by Métis and Non-Status Indians.

Figure 4 shows a dramatic difference in the percentage population change from 1996 to 2001 between Métis, Non-Status Indians and non-Aboriginals. The greatest percentage increase for the Métis is seen in small cities, followed by large cities and rural areas. The largest gap between the Métis and non-Aboriginal increases, however, are found in small cities at 54 percentage points, followed by rural areas at 45 and large cities at 37. The largest gap between Non-Status Indian and non-Aboriginal increases is in rural areas at 22 percentage points, followed by small cities at 16 and large cities at 12.

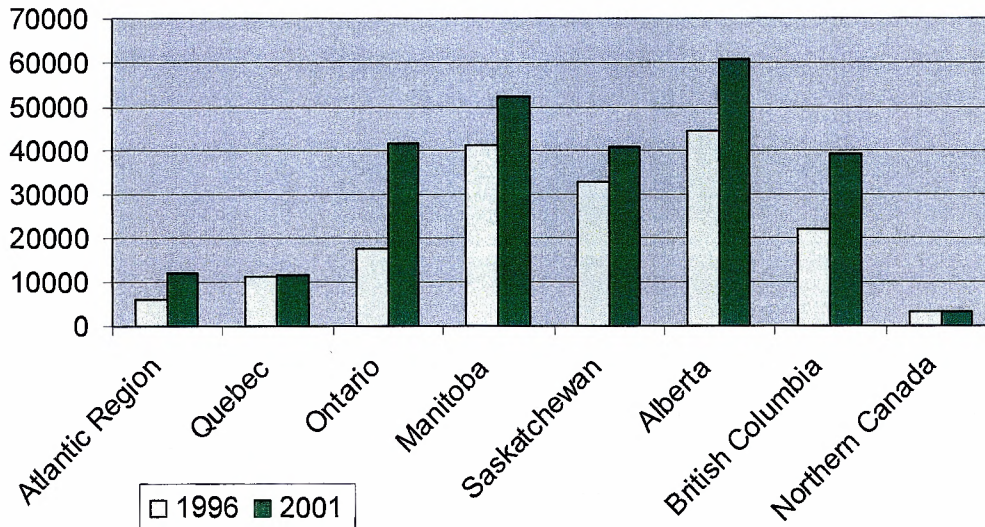
Figure 4: Percentage of Population Change, 1996-2001



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

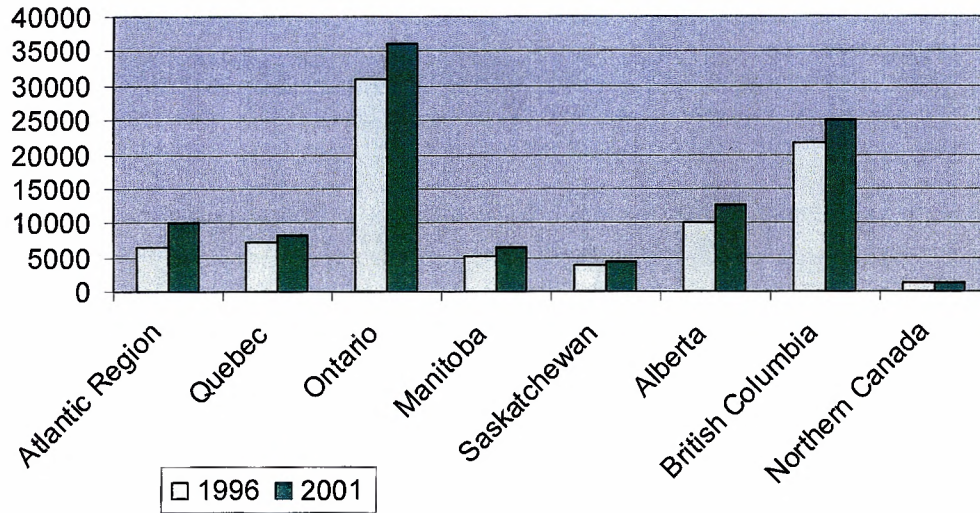
The growth in the Métis population from 1996 to 2001 varied considerably among regions (Figure 5). While the Métis population is largest in Alberta and Manitoba, by far the greatest proportional increases to the Métis population occurred in Ontario, the Atlantic region and British Columbia. There are fewer differences of note for the Non-Status Indian population, with the largest populations in Ontario and British Columbia, but the greatest proportional increase in the Atlantic region.

Figure 5: Métis Population Increase



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

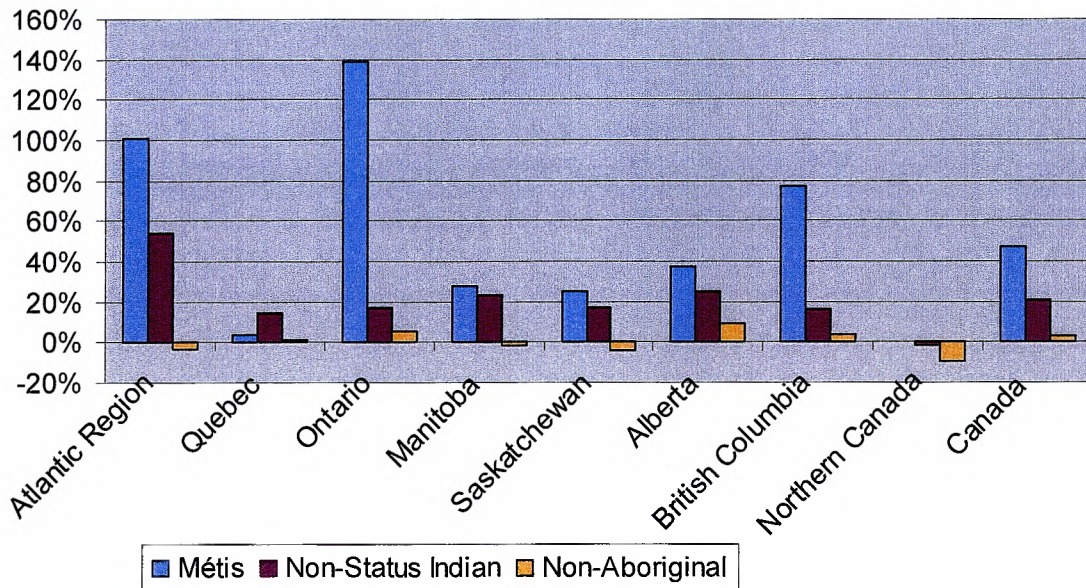
Figure 6: Non-Status Indian Population Increase



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Figure 7 shows more clearly the regional variation by percentage change in population for Métis, Non-Status Indians and non-Aboriginals. Ontario experienced the greatest Métis population increase from 1996 to 2001, with a percentage change of 139%, followed by the Atlantic region at 101% and British Columbia at 77%. The Non-Status Indian population experienced the greatest increase in the Atlantic region, with a percentage change of 54%.

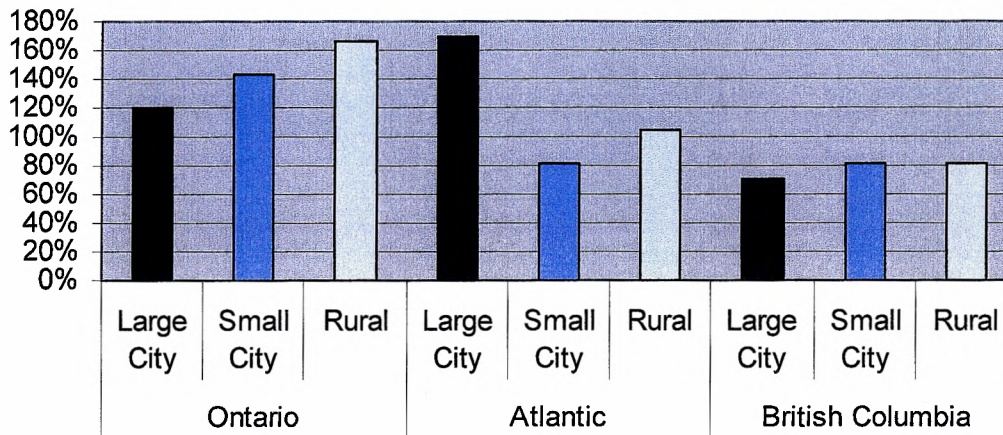
Figure 7: Percentage Population Change, 1996-2001



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Ontario, the Atlantic region and British Columbia are further broken down by rural area, small and large city in Figure 8 to help determine where most of this population increase is occurring. Figure 8, along with Figure 4 above, shows that large increases for Métis and Non-Status Indians have occurred in all three geographic regions. It may have been supposed, following Guimond (2003b), that population increase from new individuals entering from outside of the population through ethnic mobility would have mostly shown up in large cities, but this is not the case. Figure 8 shows that the percentage population change for Métis in Ontario, which had the largest Métis population increase overall, was greatest in rural areas, followed by small cities. The greatest population change in the Atlantic, however, occurred in large cities, followed by rural areas, while the increase was similar for rural areas, small and large cities in British Columbia.

Figure 8: Métis Percentage Population Change by Select Region, 1996-2001



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

A likely explanation for such a large population increase in both Ontario and the Atlantic region is the legal proceedings of two major cases related to natural resource use. In Ontario, the Powley case dealt squarely with the issue of a Métis Aboriginal right to hunt. The Powley case began with hunting infraction charges filed against two men in 1993, and went through two lower-court decisions before being heard by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2003. Public awareness of the potential for a finding of a Métis Aboriginal right to hunt was greatly heightened through the media over this period. In Atlantic Canada, the 1999 Marshall Supreme Court of Canada decision affirmed treat rights of Aboriginal groups to trade in products from hunting, fishing and gathering activities towards a “moderate livelihood.” There may be expectations that all Aboriginal groups in Atlantic Canada could benefit from the Marshall ruling.

Socio-Economic Characteristics by Rural-Urban Geography

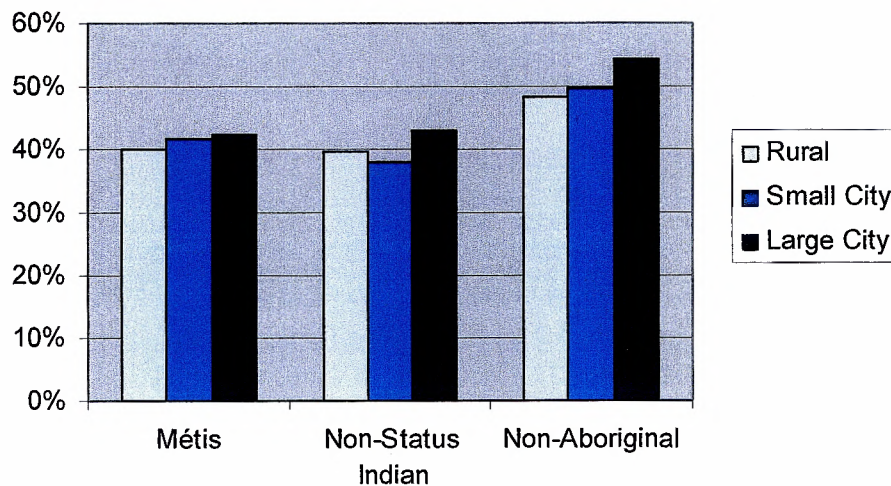
Métis and Non-Status Indians lag behind the Non-Aboriginal population in most socio-economic indicators of well-being. This tends to be the case as much in rural areas as in small and large cities. This section of the report will look at four indicators to give a general picture of socio-economic well-being: 1) educational attainment, as represented by those with high school education or greater where a degree or certificate has been attained; 2) employment rate; 3) median total income; and 4) housing units in need of major repair. The population of 15 years of age or older was used.

1) Educational Attainment

The indicator of high school education or greater with a degree or certificate was chosen because increasingly at least a high school education has become a minimum requirement for employment in most sectors. This choice follows the recent indicators discussion that took place at the federal minister's meeting in Kelowna, B.C.

Figure 9 shows the educational attainment of both Métis and Non-Status Indians in relation to the non-Aboriginal population in 2001. All three groups show greatest educational attainment in large cities, and the non-Aboriginal population shows greater educational attainment than Métis and Non-Status Indians in all geographic areas. The widest gap between the Métis and non-Aboriginal populations is found in large cities at 12 percentage points, followed by small cities and rural areas at 8. For Non-Status Indians the gap is widest in small cities at 12 percentage points, followed by large cities at 11 and rural areas at 8. Table 1 examines the change from 1996 to 2001 and compares the change for both Métis and Non-Status Indians with the non-Aboriginal population. The greatest gains between 1996 and 2001 in educational attainment occurred for Métis in rural areas and small cities followed by Non-Status Indians in large cities and rural areas. The greatest gains relative to the non-Aboriginal population were made by Métis in small cities and rural areas.

Figure 9: Percent of High School or Greater with Certification, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Table 1: High School or Greater with Certification, 1996 to 2001

| | | 1996 | 2001 | Percentage point change | Percentage point gain relative to non-Aboriginal |
|-------------------|------------|------|------|-------------------------|--|
| Geography | | % | | | |
| Métis | Rural | 33.6 | 39.9 | 6.3 | 3.3 |
| | Small City | 35.7 | 41.7 | 5.9 | 3.4 |
| | Large City | 37.5 | 42.2 | 4.7 | 2.0 |
| Non-Status Indian | Rural | 34.7 | 39.7 | 5.0 | 2.0 |
| | Small City | 34.1 | 37.9 | 3.8 | 1.2 |
| | Large City | 37.8 | 42.9 | 5.1 | 2.3 |
| Non-Aboriginal | Rural | 45.3 | 48.3 | 3.0 | |
| | Small City | 47.1 | 49.7 | 2.6 | |
| | Large City | 51.7 | 54.4 | 2.8 | |

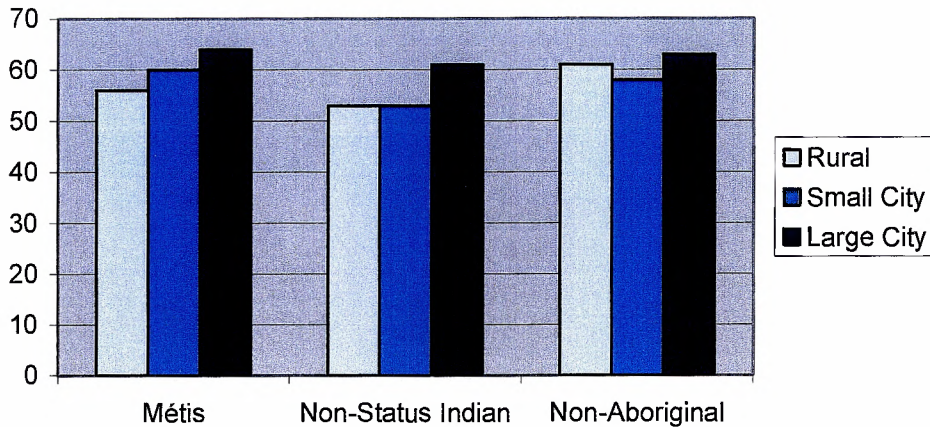
Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

2) Employment Rate

The employment rate refers to the number of persons, as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over, who reported employment in the week prior to a particular date established by the Census.

As with educational attainment, the employment rate was greatest for all groups in large cities in 2001. Unlike educational attainment, and the other variables examined, the employment rate is the only variable that is favourable for Métis (or Non-Status Indians) relative to the non-Aboriginal population – in large and small cities. This is not the case in rural areas, however, where the Métis rate is 5 percentage points lower than the non-Aboriginal rate, and the Non-Status Indian rate is 8 percentage points lower. There is also a difference of 5 percentage points for Non-Status Indians in small cities. Table 2 shows that the greatest gains from 1996 to 2001, both absolute and relative to non-Aboriginal gains, have been made by Métis in large cities and rural areas, and Non-Status Indians in large cities.

Figure 10: Employment Rate, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Table 2: Employment Rate, 1996-2001

| Geography | | 1996 | 2001 | Percentage point change | Percentage point gain relative to non-Aboriginal |
|-------------------|------------|------|------|-------------------------|--|
| % | | | | | |
| Métis | Rural | 49 | 56 | 7 | 5 |
| | Small City | 55 | 60 | 5 | 4 |
| | Large City | 55 | 64 | 9 | 6 |
| Non-Status Indian | Rural | 50 | 53 | 3 | 1 |
| | Small City | 49 | 53 | 4 | 3 |
| | Large City | 54 | 61 | 7 | 4 |
| Non-Aboriginal | Rural | 59 | 61 | 2 | |
| | Small City | 57 | 58 | 1 | |
| | Large City | 60 | 63 | 3 | |

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

3) Median Total Income

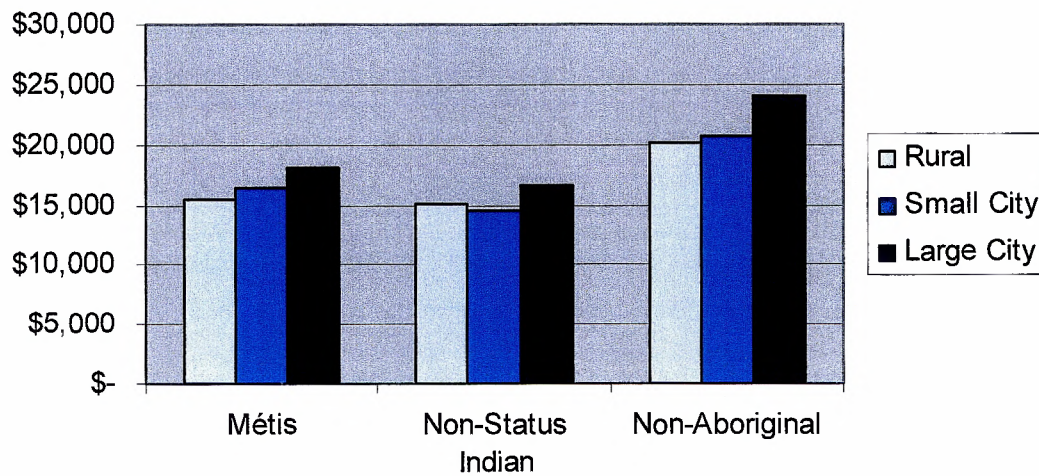
Median total income was chosen over average total income to better account for extremes on the income spectrum. The 1995 dollar figures have been adjusted by 2000 constant dollars using a standard formula developed by Statistics Canada, dividing the 1995 figure by 104.2 and multiplying by 113.5. The 1996 and 2001 Census questions asked respondents to report on income from the previous year, and hence the 1995 and 2000 figures are used. It should also be kept in mind that the younger age structure of the Métis

and Non-Status Indian populations would have an impact on their expected income relative to the non-Aboriginal population.

As with educational attainment and employment rates, median income is greatest in large cities for all groups. Figure 11 shows a large disparity of median income between both Métis and Non-Status Indians and the non-Aboriginal population for all geographic areas. The Non-Status Indian population shows the widest gap with the non-Aboriginal population in large cities at \$ 7,536, followed by small cities at \$ 6,153, while the Métis population shows the widest gap in large cities at \$ 6,060. Table 3 shows the Métis to have made greater percentage gains than the Non-Status Indian population, relative to the non-Aboriginal population, in all geographic areas, especially in large and small cities from 1995 to 2000, despite the large gaps that remained in 2000. Non-Status Indian percentage increases over the non-Aboriginal population were greatest in rural areas, while remaining relatively unchanged in small and large cities.

Employment rates may be favourable for Métis in small and large cities relative to the non-Aboriginal population, but this has not translated into greater income. These lower income rates very likely reflect the lower rates of educational attainment, consistent with Hull's (2005) study of educational attainment and labour market outcomes.

Figure 11: Median Total Income, 2000



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Table 3: Median Total Income, 1995-2000

| | Geography | 1995 | 2000 | Change of | Percentage change relative to non-Aboriginal |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| Métis | Rural | \$ 12,983 | \$ 15,401 | \$ 2,418 | 20% |
| | Small City | \$ 14,223 | \$ 16,363 | \$ 2,140 | 22% |
| | Large City | \$ 14,424 | \$ 18,006 | \$ 3,582 | 22% |
| Non-Status Indian | Rural | \$ 13,127 | \$ 15,083 | \$ 1,956 | 12% |
| | Small City | \$ 13,351 | \$ 14,453 | \$ 1,102 | 2% |
| | Large City | \$ 14,613 | \$ 16,530 | \$ 1,917 | 0% |
| Non-Aboriginal | Rural | \$ 18,739 | \$ 20,035 | \$ 1,296 | |
| | Small City | \$ 19,422 | \$ 20,419 | \$ 997 | |
| | Large City | \$ 22,072 | \$ 23,981 | \$ 1,909 | |

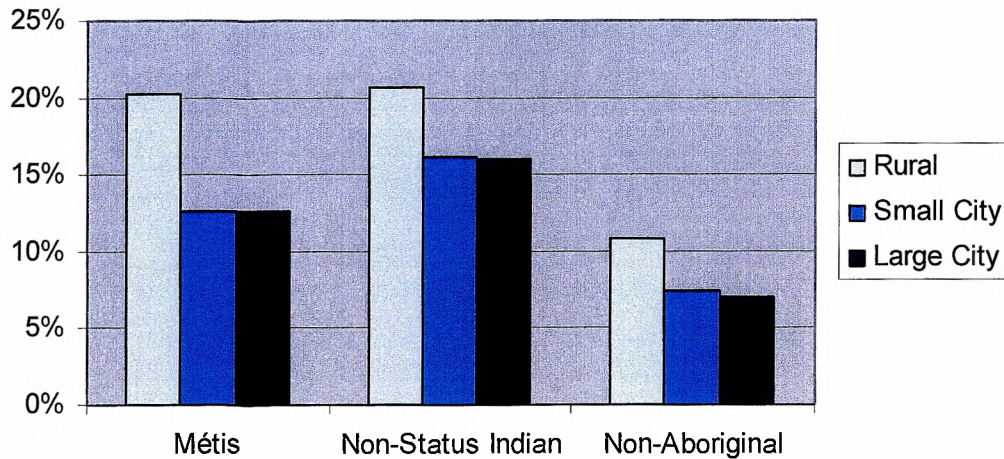
Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

4) Houses in need of major repair

This variable is based on the Census question asking respondents to indicate whether their dwelling requires repairs, and whether repairs required are minor or major. Major repairs include repair to plumbing or electrical systems or structural repairs to walls, floors, ceilings etc.

The rate of houses in need of major repair is greatest in rural areas for all groups. Figure 12 shows that the Métis and Non-Status Indian rate of houses in need of major repair is around double the non-Aboriginal rate for all geographic areas in 2001. The widest gaps with the non-Aboriginal rates are found for the Non-Status Indian population in small and large cities. Table 4 shows that Métis and Non-Status Indians in rural areas experienced the greatest decline of houses in need of major repair between 1996 and 2001, and that the gap with the non-Aboriginal population over this period also narrowed most for the Non-Status Indian and Métis in rural areas. Table 4 also shows the only example of all the variables examined of a worsening of conditions between 1996 and 2001 - for Non-Status Indians in large and small cities and Métis in large cities.

Figure 12: Houses in Need of Major Repair, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Table 4: Houses In Need of Major Repair, 1996-2001

| | | 1996 | 2001 | Percentage point change | Percentage point change relative to non-Aboriginal |
|-------------------|------------|------|------|-------------------------|--|
| | | % | | | |
| Métis | Rural | 22.0 | 20.3 | -1.7 | -1.3 |
| | Small City | 13.9 | 12.7 | -1.2 | -0.8 |
| | Large City | 12.2 | 12.7 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Non-Status Indian | Rural | 22.4 | 20.7 | -1.7 | -1.4 |
| | Small City | 14.7 | 16.1 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| | Large City | 13.6 | 16.1 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| Non-Aboriginal | Rural | 11.2 | 10.8 | -0.3 | |
| | Small City | 7.9 | 7.5 | -0.4 | |
| | Large City | 7.0 | 7.0 | 0.0 | |

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Analysis by Rural, Small City and Large City

When all variables are taken together and compared it is clear that Métis, Non-Status Indians and non-Aboriginal populations are generally worse off in rural areas than in urban areas. Socio-economic well-being tends to improve with the degree of urbanization. This seems most true for the Metis population, as Non-Status Indians have slightly lower levels of education and income in small cities than in rural areas and the

non-Aboriginal population has lower levels of employment in small cities than in rural areas. A single table of all variables has been generated for ease of reference as Appendix 1.

How does Métis and Non-Status Indian socio-economic well-being compare with the non-Aboriginal population by geographic area in 2001, and over time from 1996 to 2001? Métis and Non-Status Indians have remarkably similar levels for all variables examined in rural areas for 2001, and show worse outcomes than the non-Aboriginal population for all variables in rural areas. For two of the four variables, employment and housing, the gap between both Métis and Non-Status Indians and the non-Aboriginal population is widest in rural areas. This is in contrast to education and income where the widest gaps are found in large cities.

Métis experienced more improvement between 1996 and 2001 in education and housing in rural areas than in small or large cities, while making most improvements in employment and income in large cities. Non-Status Indians showed most improvement in rural areas in income and housing, and in large cities in education and employment. The gains made on these variables for Métis and Non-Status Indians from 1996 to 2001 relative to non-Aboriginals is also a mixed bag. For Métis, relative gains were greatest for employment in large cities, for education in small cities and for housing in rural areas. Métis income increased at similar rates relative to non-Aboriginals in all geographic areas. For Non-Status Indians, relative gains were greatest for education and employment in large cities, and for income and housing in rural areas.

Métis and Non-Status Indians closed the gap with non-Aboriginals on all variables in all geographic areas, with the exception of housing, where Non-Status Indians lost ground in large and small cities, and Métis in large cities. It is important to keep in mind, however, when comparing socio-economic well-being of Métis and Non-Status Indians over time, that the population in 2001 is not the same as it was in 1996. Métis in particular have experienced tremendous population increase over this period, which can only reasonably be attributed to new individuals moving into the population through ethnic mobility (Guimond 2003a,b). A cohort analysis that compares the change in Métis educational attainment by region may help to shed some light on the impact that ethnic movers have had on the socio-economic well-being of the Métis population.

Ethnic Mobility as a Factor of Métis Educational Attainment Increase

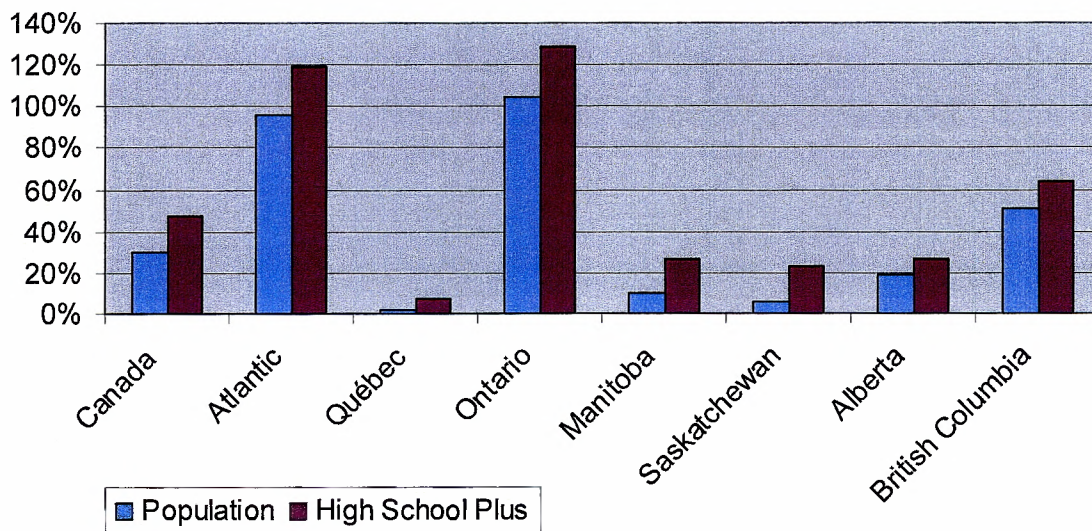
By taking an age cohort of those of age 35 and older in 1996 and comparing their educational attainment to those of age 40 and older in 2001, any substantial increase may be assumed to be driven by entries into the population from without. Most individuals have completed their school certification by age 35 and one would not expect to see a large increase in high school or greater education with certification for this population over a five year period. And indeed this is the case with the non-Aboriginal population where the cohort of those at age 40 and over in 2001 had declined by six percent from the 1996 population of those at age 35 and over, but the educational attainment rate remained

stable. How does the Métis change in educational attainment for this same cohort compare?

Figure 13 shows that the educational attainment of the Métis population aged 40 and over in 2001 increased by 48% over those aged 35 and over in 1996 for Canada. Figure 13 also shows a strong relationship between population increase, which varied considerably by region, and educational attainment. In other words, those areas of the country which experienced the greatest educational attainment for this age cohort also experienced the greatest population increase.

Migration from outside the population may account for some of the changes noted here, but other studies have discounted inter-provincial migration as a major contributor to Aboriginal population growth (Clatworthy, 2005). Also, with such large increases noted for some parts of the country, there would presumably have to be some correspondingly large declines in other parts of the country for migration to be considered to have played a significant role. Through a process of elimination, it becomes clear that ethnic mobility has contributed significantly to Métis population growth. From the relationship between increases in population and educational attainment in figure 13, it also seems very likely that ethnic mobility plays a significant role in the changes that have been noted in socio-economic variables of well-being.

Figure 13: Métis Population and Educational Attainment Increase by Age Cohort, 1996-2001



Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

Conclusions

The rural and small city Métis and Non-Status Indian populations have increased significantly from 1996 to 2001 and will likely continue to grow in future. The large city Métis and Non-Status Indian populations have also grown considerably. Evidence suggests that migration between rural and urban areas, or between provinces, cannot account for this population growth (Clatworthy, 2005; Guimond, 2003a,b; Norris et. al., 2003). Rather, it appears that ethnic mobility has played a significant role in all geographic areas. Ontario is a case in point. The Ontario Métis population increased 139% from 1996 to 2001, an increase that can only reasonably be accounted for by new individuals entering into the population through ethnic mobility. Large cities, however, were not where most of the proportional population increase occurred, rather it was in rural areas where the population almost tripled from 4,535 to 12,060 (see Figure 8).

An analysis of socio-economic well-being in 2001, and change from 1996 to 2001, does not reveal many trends of note, other than an increase in socio-economic well-being with increased urbanization in 2001, especially for Métis. Métis and Non-Status Indians both improved most, relative to the Non-Aboriginal population, between 1996 and 2001 on the education and housing variables examined in rural areas, but improved most in large cities on the employment variable. For income, Métis made considerable gains in all three geographic areas. Ethnic mobility seems to play a role in changes to Métis educational attainment, and may be expected to have a similar effect on other socio-economic variables.

A large proportion of the federal Aboriginal expenditure is targeted to on-reserve populations because of the constitutional and jurisdictional responsibility of the federal government for “Indians and lands reserved for Indians” in s. 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*. Much recent attention has been focussed, however, on a growing urban Aboriginal population with specific socio-economic needs (Siggner and Costa, 2005; Siggner, 2003a,b; Hanselmann, 2003). The federal government has recognized a need to increase expenditure in this area with recent funding announcements on an Urban Aboriginal Strategy. This study has shown, however, that the off-reserve Métis and Non-Status Indian populations in rural and small cities have also experienced large population increases with continuing socio-economic challenges that should not be forgotten in the Aboriginal policy agenda.

Appendix 1: A Comparison of Socio-Economic Variables, 1996 – 2001

Table 5: Socio-Economic Variables, 1996 – 2001

| | | Educational Attainment | | Employment Rate | | Median Income | | Housing | |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| | | 1996 | 2001 | 1996 | 2001 | 1995 | 2000 | 1996 | 2001 |
| Métis | Rural | 34% | 40% | 49% | 56% | \$12,983 | \$15,401 | 22% | 20% |
| | Small City | 36% | 42% | 55% | 60% | \$14,223 | \$16,363 | 14% | 13% |
| | Large City | 38% | 42% | 55% | 64% | \$14,424 | \$18,006 | 12% | 13% |
| Non-Status | Rural | 35% | 40% | 50% | 53% | \$13,127 | \$15,083 | 22% | 21% |
| | Small City | 34% | 38% | 49% | 53% | \$13,351 | \$14,453 | 15% | 16% |
| | Large City | 38% | 43% | 54% | 61% | \$14,613 | \$16,530 | 14% | 16% |
| Non-Aboriginal | Rural | 45% | 48% | 59% | 61% | \$18,739 | \$20,035 | 11% | 11% |
| | Small City | 47% | 50% | 57% | 58% | \$19,422 | \$20,419 | 8% | 8% |
| | Large City | 52% | 54% | 60% | 63% | \$22,072 | \$23,981 | 7% | 7% |
| Gap with Non-Aboriginal Population | | | | | | | | | |
| Métis | Rural | 12% ¹ | 8% | 10% ¹ | 5% | 69% ² | 77% | -11% ¹ | -10% |
| | Small City | 11% | 8% | 2% | -2% | 73% | 80% | -6% | -5% |
| | Large City | 14% | 12% | 5% | -1% | 65% | 75% | -5% | -6% |
| Non-Status | Rural | 11% | 9% | 9% | 8% | 70% | 75% | -11% | -10% |
| | Small City | 13% | 12% | 8% | 5% | 69% | 71% | -7% | -9% |
| | Large City | 14% | 12% | 6% | 2% | 66% | 69% | -7% | -9% |

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Canada, custom tabulations.

¹ The difference in percentage points compared to the non-Aboriginal population.

² The percentage of median income relative to the non-Aboriginal population, i.e. the Métis median income in 1995 was 69 % that of the non-Aboriginal median income.

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