Aboriginal People in Alberta: A Regional Perspective

Aboriginal people in Alberta face different socioeconomic circumstances than other Albertans. At the provincial level in 2011, Aboriginal people had lower incomes and were less likely to be in the labour force. If they were participating in the labour force, they were more likely to be unemployed. Almost three times as many Aboriginal people reported low educational attainment compared with non-Aboriginal Albertans. Aboriginal seniors were more likely to be living in low income and less likely to be living alone. The proportion of Aboriginal children living in low income was over twice the comparable rate for non-Aboriginal children.

The Aboriginal population is not evenly distributed across the province. Census division (CD) 11 (Edmonton) had the highest number of people reporting Aboriginal identity with almost twice the number of Aboriginal people as CD 6 (Calgary) (Table 1). In addition, there is considerable regional variation in the selected socio-economic indicators. CD 11 (Edmonton) saw a higher unemployment rate and a lower labour force participation rate than CD 6 (Calgary). CD 1 (Medicine Hat) had the largest proportions of Aboriginal seniors and children living in low income. Among census divisions, CD 15 (Banff) and CD 16 (Wood Buffalo) saw the highest median total income gaps between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people.

The following thematic maps show the varied conditions of Aboriginal people across Alberta, and the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people for comparison.

Table 1: Population and Global Non-Response (GNR) Rates, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Aboriginal population</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal population</th>
<th>GNR²</th>
<th>Major City/Town</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>220,695</td>
<td>3,347,285</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 1</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>72,485</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>Medicine Hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 2</td>
<td>5,890</td>
<td>144,255</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 3</td>
<td>7,470</td>
<td>28,095</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>Pincher Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 4</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>8,970</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>Hanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 5</td>
<td>4,445</td>
<td>44,085</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>Drumheller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 6</td>
<td>37,680</td>
<td>1,256,160</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>Calgary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 7</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>36,255</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>Stettler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 8</td>
<td>12,955</td>
<td>171,680</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>Red Deer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 9</td>
<td>2,510</td>
<td>18,415</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>Rocky Mtn. House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 10</td>
<td>4,055</td>
<td>85,980</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>Camrose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 11</td>
<td>68,145</td>
<td>1,113,700</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>Edmonton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 12¹</td>
<td>14,410</td>
<td>48,120</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>Cold Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 13</td>
<td>6,720</td>
<td>60,625</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>Whitecourt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 14</td>
<td>2,570</td>
<td>25,650</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>Edson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 15</td>
<td>4,210</td>
<td>27,935</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>Banff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 16</td>
<td>7,595</td>
<td>59,410</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>Wood Buffalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 17</td>
<td>24,405</td>
<td>36,530</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>Slave Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 18</td>
<td>2,695</td>
<td>11,610</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>Grande Cache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD No. 19</td>
<td>10,200</td>
<td>97,330</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>Grande Prairie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Statistics Canada

¹ The Indian reserve of Saddle Lake 125, located within census division 12, was incompletely enumerated in the 2011 Census. Data are not available for this area, and thus are not included in census division 12.

² The global non-response rate (GNR) combines both complete non-response (household) and partial non-response (question) into a single rate. The GNR is an indicator of data quality, where a smaller GNR suggests more accuracy. When the GNR is 50% or above, the data are suppressed. A higher GNR indicates the need for user caution.
Map1: Population Distribution of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People in Alberta

In 2011, the largest proportion of the total number of Aboriginal residents in the province was recorded in CD 11 (30.9%), followed by CD 6 (17.1%) and CD 17 (11.1%); the smallest was reported in CD 4 (0.1%). Over half of the Aboriginal people in Alberta lived in the Edmonton-Calgary corridor (CD 6, 8 and 11), with another 17.6% residing in CD 17 and CD 12 (see the left map below).

In 2011, the largest proportion of non-Aboriginal population in the province was recorded in CD 6 (37.5%), followed by CD 11 (33.3%) and CD 8 (5.1%). Three out of four non-Aboriginal people lived in those three regions, with the remaining census divisions each accounting for a less than 5% of non-Aboriginal population in Alberta (see the right map below).
Map 2: Proportion of Regional Population Reporting Aboriginal Identity

In 2011, the regions with the highest proportions of the population who were Aboriginal people included CD 17 at 40%, CD 12 with almost a quarter and CD 3 where about one out of every five residents reported an Aboriginal identity. Generally, northern regions were more likely to have a higher percentage of Aboriginal residents than the southern regions (see the left map below).

In 2011, of the three Aboriginal groups, First Nations and Métis people made up the majority of the Aboriginal population in each census division, with Inuit accounting for less than 2%. The highest percentage of First Nations people was reported in CD 3 (91.8%), followed by CD 15 (86.1%) and CD 5 (78.5%); while the highest percentage of Métis people was reported in CD 4 (83.3%), followed by CD 14 (70.6%) and CD 10 (67.8%) (see the right chart, Inuit population not included in the chart due to very small numbers).

The classification of Aboriginal identity (based on self-identification) is as follows: Aboriginal single identity (First Nations (North American Indian) single identity, Métis single identity, Inuk (Inuit) single identity), Aboriginal multiple identities and Aboriginal identities not included elsewhere.
Map 3: Median Total Income

In 2010, the median total income of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over was higher in urban areas such as CD 11 and CD 6 as well as surrounding areas. CD 15 saw the lowest median total income ($14,208) and CD 16 saw the highest ($38,833) (see the left map below).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over, Aboriginal people reported lower median total incomes for all census divisions across Alberta. The smallest difference was reported in CD 4 ($2,033); the largest differences were recorded in CD 16 ($32,834), followed by CD 15 ($22,130) (see the right map below).

---

Notes:
- At the Alberta level, the median total income of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2010 was $23,013.
- At the Alberta level, the median total income of non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2010 was $37,057.

---

4 Total income refers to monetary receipts from certain sources (e.g., employment income, government transfer, Old Age Security, income from investment, etc.), before income taxes and deductions, during calendar year 2010. Median total income is calculated for those individuals who are at least aged 15 years and who have an income (positive or negative).
Map 4: Median Employment Income

In 2010, the highest median employment income of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over was seen in CD 16 ($78,485), followed by CD 4 ($74,218) and CD 14 ($57,792). The lowest was observed in CD 15 ($29,975). Thirteen out of a total nineteen census divisions saw a median employment income higher than $40,000 (see the left map below).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over, Aboriginal people had lower median employment incomes for all census divisions across Alberta except CD 4. The smallest difference was recorded in CD 10 ($317); the largest in CD 16 ($27,921), followed by CD 15 ($21,611) (see the right map below).

Employment income refers to total income received by persons who worked full year, full time during calendar year 2010 as wages and salaries, net income from a non-farm unincorporated business and/or professional practice, and/or net farm self-employment income. Median employment income is calculated for those individuals who are at least aged 15 years and who have an income (positive or negative).

Notes:
At the Alberta level, the median employment income of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2010 was $46,735.
At the Alberta level, the median employment income of non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2010 was $55,984.
Map 5: Unemployment Rate

In 2011, the unemployment rates of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over ranged from 7.0% (CD 18) to 28.3% (CD 15), with two thirds of the census divisions seeing a higher than 10% unemployment rate. The unemployment rates in the Calgary area (CD 6) and Edmonton area (CD 11) were 11% and 12.2% respectively (see the left map below).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over, a higher proportion of Aboriginal people experienced unemployment in almost all census divisions. The smallest gap was observed in CD 18 (2.1%), and the largest gap was observed in CD 15 (22.8%). Generally, larger gaps were observed in census divisions with higher unemployment rates of Aboriginal people (see the right map below).

Notes:
- At the Alberta level, the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2011 was 12.6%.
- At the Alberta level, the unemployment rate of non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2011 was 5.4%.
Map 6: Labour Force Participation Rate

In 2011, the lowest participation rate of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over was observed in CD 9 (46.2%), and the highest participation rate was observed in CD 10 (76%), followed by CD 6 (74.3%) and CD 19 (72%). Only five out of nineteen census divisions saw a higher than 70% participation rate for Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over (see the left map below).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over, lower labour force participation was observed in most census divisions (except CD 6 and CD 10) for Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over. Generally, larger gaps were observed in census divisions with lower labour force participation among the Aboriginal population, with the gap ranging from 2.7% (CD 14) to 29.3% (CD 9) (see the right map below).

Notes: At the Alberta level, the labour force participation rate of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2011 was 64.9%. At the Alberta level, the labour force participation rate of non-Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in 2011 was 73.7%.
In 2010, the lowest proportion of Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over living in low income status was recorded in CD 13 (3.2%), while the highest was recorded in CD 1 (51.4%). In four census divisions (CD 1, CD 2, CD 18 and CD 19), at least one in five Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over experienced low income (see the left map below; the number of persons is included in parentheses (some of the numbers are not available due to data suppression)).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over, larger proportions of Aboriginal seniors were seen in the condition of low income except in CD 13. Generally, larger gaps were observed in census divisions with a higher percentage of Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over living in low income status, with the gap ranging from 1.1% (CD 12) to 42.3% (CD 1) (see the right map below).

6 The Low-income measure after tax (LIM-AT) is a fixed percentage (50%) of the median adjusted after-tax income of households observed at the person level, where ‘adjusted’ indicates that a household’s needs are taken into account.
Map 8: Low Income Under 18 (based on after-tax low-income measure)

In 2010, at the census division level, at least one in twenty Aboriginal people under age 18 experienced low income. The lowest proportion was recorded in CD 5 (4.8%), while the highest was recorded in CD 1 (36.9%), followed by CD 8 (32.5%) and CD 10 (29.7%). Both the Calgary (CD 6, 25.3%) and Edmonton (CD 11, 29%) areas saw a higher percentage of young Aboriginal people living in low income conditions (see the left map below, the number of persons is included in parentheses (some of the numbers are not available due to data suppression)).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people under the age of 18, larger proportions of Aboriginal children were seen in the condition of low income except in three census divisions (CD 5, CD 15 and CD 18). Generally, larger gaps were observed in census divisions with higher percentage of Aboriginal children living in low income status, with the gap ranging from 3% (CD 16) to 21.8% (CD 1) (see the right map below).

Notes:
At the Alberta level, the low income rate of Aboriginal people aged less than 18 years in 2010 was 25.9%.
At the Alberta level, the low income rate of non-Aboriginal people aged less than 18 years in 2010 was 12.4%.
Map 9: Seniors (65+) Living Alone

In 2011, at the census division level, at least one in ten Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over in private households were living alone. The lowest proportion was reported in CD 9 (9.5%); while the highest was reported in CD 1 (67.6%). Both Calgary (CD 6, 31.4%) and Edmonton (CD 11, 20.6%) areas saw a higher percentage of Aboriginal seniors living alone (see the left map below, the number of persons is included in parentheses).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over, only five census divisions saw a higher proportion of Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over living alone. Among those, CD 2 reported the smallest difference (5.2%), while CD 1 reported the largest difference (36.6%) (see the right map below).

Notes: At the Alberta level, the percentage of Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over in private households living alone in 2011 was 21.7%.
At the Alberta level, the percentage of non-Aboriginal people aged 65 years and over in private households living alone in 2011 was 25.4%.
Map 10: Internal Migration

In 2011, for almost all census divisions (except CD 15), at least one in twenty Aboriginal people moved during the previous year. The lowest percentage of Aboriginal people who moved was recorded in CD 15 (2.4%), while the highest percentage was recorded in CD 19 (15%), followed by CD 10 (13.4%) and CD 2 (13%) (see the left map below).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people, fourteen out of nineteen census divisions reported a higher rate of mobility among Aboriginal people. It is worth noting that Aboriginal people saw a significantly lower proportion of internal migrants in CD 15 and CD 16 than non-Aboriginal people. Generally, greater differences were observed in census divisions where a higher percentage of Aboriginal people moved in the last year, with the gap ranging from 0.7% (CD 18) to 8.2% (CD 2) (see the right map below).

Internal migration refers movement to a different city, town township, village or Indian reserve within Canada in the year prior to the 2011 Census.

Notes: At the Alberta level, the percentage of Aboriginal people moved (internal migrants) within the year prior to the 2011 Census was 7.4%.
At the Alberta level, the percentage of non-Aboriginal people moved (internal migrants) within the year prior to the 2011 Census was 4.5%.
Map 11: Education

In 2011, at the census division level, at least one in five Aboriginal adults had no certificate, diploma or degree. The smallest proportion of Aboriginal people aged 25 years to 64 years with no certificate, diploma or degree was reported in CD 2 (18.9%), while the largest proportion was reported in CD 9 (53.9%), followed by CD 17 (53.6%) and CD 7 (50%) (see the left map below).

When compared to non-Aboriginal people aged 25 years to 64 years, all census divisions recorded a higher percentage of Aboriginal people with low educational attainment. The smallest difference was observed in CD 2 (3.9%) and the largest in CD 15 (39.3%), followed by the CD 7 (35.6%) and CD 9 (35.2%). Generally, larger gaps were observed in census divisions with a higher percentage of Aboriginal people aged 25 years to 64 years with no certificate, diploma or degree (see the right map below).

Notes:  
At the Alberta level, the percentage of Aboriginal people aged 25 years to 64 years with no certificate, diploma or degree in 2011 was 30.4%.  
At the Alberta level, the percentage of non-Aboriginal people aged 25 years to 64 years with no certificate, diploma or degree in 2011 was 11.3%.