



Indigenous Identity Stratifier: Guidance on Measuring and Reporting Inequalities

Definition

Construct: Self-identified Indigenous identity

This reporting guideline measures Indigenous identity for Indigenous Peoples in Canada using a distinctions-based approach. This approach recognizes First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples as separate groups, each with their own diverse cultures, traditions, communities and histories.¹ Although the term “Indigenous Peoples in Canada” often refers to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, these categories may not reflect the preferred community or nation-specific labels.^{2, 3}

This reporting guideline is based on the minimum standard for the collection of Indigenous identity data published by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). For more information, see CIHI’s page on [race-based and Indigenous identity data](#).

Measure: Indigenous identity

CIHI’s Indigenous identity stratifier was adapted from standards published in 2018 by the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate for the identification and monitoring of systemic racism.⁴

Table Indigenous identity reporting categories

Category*
First Nations
Inuk/Inuit
Métis
Mixed Indigenous identity (any combination of 1, 2 and/or 3)
Do not identify as First Nations, Inuk/Inuit and/or Métis
Do not know
Prefer not to answer
Unknown

Note

* Implementation of the Indigenous identity stratifier should include data governance agreements, engagement with appropriate Indigenous authorities and processes related to culturally safe data collection.





Variations

This Indigenous identity stratifier is a minimum reporting guideline. There may be a need for or interest in reporting results specific to communities or nations, status or membership. In some cases, optional write-in categories may be used to allow respondents to self-identify as they prefer.

Key considerations

- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) identifies Indigenous Peoples' unique rights to self-determination, autonomy and governance.^{5, 6} These include the right to data sovereignty, as described in the First Nations Principles of OCAP® (ownership, control, access and protection of data collection processes).⁷ Within this context, the analysis and reporting of Indigenous data should include data governance agreements, engagement with appropriate Indigenous authorities and processes related to culturally safe reporting of the data. CIHI's [Guidance on the Use of Standards for Race-Based and Indigenous Identity Data Collection and Health Reporting in Canada](#) provides direction and links to resources relevant to these processes.

How can I access Indigenous identity data?

CIHI's [Measuring Health Inequalities: A Toolkit — Equity Stratifier Inventory](#) is periodically updated with a complete list of the stratifier information available in CIHI's databases, as well as in certain Statistics Canada databases. Note that not all databases reporting on Indigenous identity follow CIHI's Indigenous identity data collection standard.

Aligned with the principles of Indigenous data sovereignty, CIHI's policy requires approval from appropriate First Nations, Inuit or Métis authorities before data can be released or disclosed that can identify Indigenous Peoples or communities. For more information, see [A Path Forward: Toward Respectful Governance of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Data Housed at CIHI](#).

Statistics Canada's standards

[Indigenous identity of person](#), April 1, 2021, to current

Examples of related concepts:

- [Registered or Treaty Indian status of person](#)
- [Residence on or off reserve of person](#)
- [Membership in a First Nation or Indian band of person](#)
- [Enrollment under an Inuit land claims agreement of person](#)
- [Membership in a Métis organization or Settlement of person](#)



Related resources

The [CIHI Reference Data Model Toolkit](#) provides codes for data collection of the Indigenous identity standard in health care settings.

Visit the [Equity stratifiers page](#) for guidance on additional stratifiers.

Version history

June 2022	Additional reporting categories added for information sheet.
March 2022	Updated standard released in <i>Guidance on the Use of Standards for Race-Based and Indigenous Identity Data Collection and Health Reporting in Canada</i> .
July 2020	Proposed standard released in Proposed Standards for Race-Based and Indigenous Identity Data Collection and Health Reporting in Canada.

References

1. Department of Justice. [Principles: Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship With Indigenous Peoples](#). 2018.
2. Voyageur C, Calliou B. [Various shades of red: Diversity within Canada's Indigenous community](#). *The London Journal of Canadian Studies*. 2000.
3. Frideres J. [Aboriginal identity in the Canadian context](#). *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*. 2008.
4. Government of Ontario. [Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism: Ontario's Complete Standards and Guidance for Race-Based Data Collection for Government and Other Public Sector Organizations, Including Steps to Follow for Data Collection, Management and Use](#). 2018.
5. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Indigenous Peoples. [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). Accessed November 18, 2021.
6. Government of Canada. [Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada](#). Accessed November 23, 2021.
7. First Nations Information Governance Centre. [Ownership, Control, Access and Possession \(OCAP™\): The Path to First Nations Information Governance](#). 2014.

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