

Indigenous Affairs

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 – 2026

New Nouveau Brunswick

Indigenous Affairs

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

Province of New Brunswick
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TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

Her Honour the Honourable Louise Imbeault

Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Indigenous Affairs, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Keith Chiasson
Minister

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Keith Chiasson
Minister of Indigenous Affairs

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Indigenous Affairs for the fiscal year April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,



Martha O'Sullivan
Deputy Minister

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Over the past year, our department has worked closely with First Nations to advance several key priorities.

One example of this important work was the signing of revenue sharing agreements with seven Mi'kmaq and six Wolastoqey communities. The agreements provide First Nations communities with greater autonomy to address local priorities while fostering stronger relationships with the provincial government. The Department of Finance and Treasury Board has been a valued partner in this work, and we thank them for their involvement.

Additionally, the first bilateral health forum (known as "Mawita'nen") was held to improve health outcomes for First Nations in New Brunswick. Held in Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar) First Nation, the forum marked the beginning of discussions between the Province, First Nations, and health representatives to support Indigenous self-determination in health care. We look forward to continuing these important discussions with First Nations and the Department of Health.

Advancing work on policing in First Nations communities also remains a priority. Policing is a complex issue that impacts each community differently and requires all partners to work together to identify and implement sustainable solutions that address the unique needs of each community. The Department of Justice and Public Safety has advanced this work significantly over the past year, and we are grateful for their commitment to improving justice and public safety for First Nations.

Through initiatives such as the Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU), the Indigenous Courtworker Program and the use of Eagle Feathers in the justice system, we continue to strengthen culturally appropriate supports for Indigenous people and families navigating the justice system. Since October 2025, the New Brunswick FILU has been housed within the Department of Indigenous Affairs, with funding from Justice Canada through the Federal Victims Strategy's Victims Fund, supporting families of missing and murdered Indigenous people in accessing information, services and support. These initiatives reflect our commitment to improving access to justice and ensuring Indigenous people and families are supported with compassion, respect and cultural understanding.

The department has made significant progress on key priorities to advance reconciliation while continuing important work on many other initiatives. Although we have achieved meaningful milestones, there is still much work ahead.

I thank everyone for their contributions to this success and look forward to building on this progress in the year ahead.



Honourable Keith Chiasson
Minister of Indigenous Affairs

DEPUTY MINISTER'S MESSAGE

This report highlights the many accomplishments of the Department of Indigenous Affairs during the 2025-2026 fiscal year. These achievements were made possible through the dedication and hard work of the department's staff and the strong partnerships established with Indigenous communities across New Brunswick.

Throughout the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the department has continued to fulfill its mandate by overseeing a whole-of-government approach to Indigenous relations. This has included leading negotiations, coordinating cross-departmental initiatives, and ensuring government's duty to consult with First Nations is upheld. At the heart of these efforts is a commitment to advancing reconciliation, fostering mutual respect, and upholding Treaty and Indigenous rights.

Central to the department's work is the understanding that meaningful relationships are key to creating shared success. By collaborating with Indigenous leaders, communities, and other government departments, Indigenous Affairs has been able to better support the priorities identified by First Nations. These collaborative efforts have enabled the province to promote greater awareness of programs and services available to Indigenous communities, ensuring they are accessible and effective.

Looking ahead, the department remains focused on building upon this year's successes. Strengthening relationships, advancing key initiatives, and promoting collaboration will serve as the foundation for continued progress. The achievements detailed in this report are a testament to what can be accomplished when we work together toward a more inclusive and equitable future. Together, we are creating pathways to greater understanding, respect, and reconciliation through concrete actions.

I extend my sincere thanks to the team at the Department of Indigenous Affairs for the passion, dedication, and professionalism they bring to their work every day.

A commitment to building relationships with the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Nations is essential to advancing reconciliation between First Nations and all levels of government. Through meaningful dialogue, robust consultations, and inclusive decision-making, we continue to demonstrate and confirm our commitment to building trust between governments.



Martha O'Sullivan
Deputy Minister
Indigenous Affairs

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Delivering for New Brunswickers

The priorities the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) has focused on represent the stories and solutions we hear from residents across the province. Our goal is to make a difference and enhance the quality of life for everyone in the province we proudly call home. Together, we are learning, growing, adapting, and discovering new and transformative ways of doing business. GNB is focused on taking the necessary steps to move our priorities forward, and work is being done more efficiently and effectively every day. New Brunswickers are resilient, creative, and compassionate people, and by working collaboratively, we can create the brighter future we all deserve. GNB is prioritizing partnerships, and trusting and empowering the people and organizations on the ground working most closely with New Brunswickers to achieve results.

Priorities

GNB is focused on creating a brighter future for all New Brunswickers. To make progress towards this vision, several priorities have been identified within the following areas:

- Health care
- Affordability and housing
- Education
- The economy
- Environment
- Trusted leadership

We invite you to explore the commitments we have made within each priority area, as well as updates on our achievements and the metrics we use to measure success. For more information, visit: gnb.ca/accountability.

HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2025-2026 fiscal year, Indigenous Affairs focused on these government priorities through:

- Completion of negotiations with the Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey First Nations in the province to advance economic reconciliation, respect Treaty and Indigenous rights, and support the financial independence and prosperity of First Nations communities through the development of revenue sharing agreements.

- Partnering with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) to launch the Anti-Racism website.

- Collaboration with the Department of Health and Sankewitahasuwakon to launch a bilateral health forum (Mawita'nen) in September 2025 to advance culturally safe and equitable healthcare services for Indigenous people in the province.

- Provided $2.5M in funding support to Indigenous organizations and partners.

- Initiated dialogue with Indigenous consultation representatives and organizations regarding the duty to consult process.

In 2025-26, all departments worked together to develop the Government of New Brunswick's first three-year Accessibility Plan. This plan outlines how government departments will work to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility from April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2029.

The Accessibility Plan was built with input from New Brunswickers who have experienced barriers and has five goals:

- Make government spaces more accessible
- Ensure New Brunswickers can receive information and communicate with government in accessible ways
- Build capacity for government to identify, prevent and remove barriers
- Make it easier for people to apply for and interact with government services
- Introduce changes to reduce barriers people have experienced

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

OUTCOME #1 – NEGOTIATION OF REVENUE SHARING AGREEMENTS

The Government of New Brunswick has committed to rebuilding relationships with First Nations and to renegotiate new tax agreements to ensure all parties have a fair deal.

Why is it important?
The revenue sharing agreements establish a collaborative framework to share provincial tax revenue generated within First Nations communities (from tobacco, gas, motive fuel and provincial HST), supporting local priorities and fostering economic independence. This revenue will stay within communities to support priorities like housing, education, elder care, health care, and economic development. The agreements promote both community autonomy and equitable economic growth while strengthening ties between First Nations and the provincial government. This collaborative approach is a step toward reconciliation, equity, and shared prosperity, benefiting all New Brunswickers.

Overall Performance
A revenue sharing agreement for all six Wolastoqey First Nations was finalized and signed by each Wolastoqey chief. Seven individual revenue sharing agreements with Mi'gmaq First Nations were finalized and signed by the Mi'gmaq chiefs.

Baseline: 13 out of the 15 First Nations communities (87 per cent) previously held revenue sharing agreements with the province (tax agreements)
Target: Finalize new revenue sharing agreements with all 15 First Nations communities in New Brunswick)
Actual: 13 out of the 15 First Nations communities (87 per cent) signed new revenue sharing agreements

OUTCOME #2 – BILATERIAL HEALTH FORUM

Invite First Nations Leaders to create a bilateral forum and ongoing process with the goal of achieving culturally safe and equitable healthcare for Indigenous people in New Brunswick.

Why is it important?
Significant gaps exist in health services for Indigenous people in New Brunswick. While access to services via the prevalent formal system exists, these services are not typically offered within First Nations communities and are not always culturally informed.

Overall Performance
The Bilateral Health Forum launch was held September 18, 2025, in Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar) First Nation as a first step in the ongoing journey. The theme of the event was "Mawita'nen" - we gather together. The launch, co-led by Sankewitahasuwakon, the Departments of Health and Indigenous Affairs, intends to be an ongoing process with the goal of achieving culturally safe and equitable healthcare for Indigenous peoples. Over 85 participants attended the launch of the Bilateral Health Forum.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome
The departments of Indigenous Affairs and Health began working together with Sankewitahasuwakon (representing First Nations) to outline needs for the bilateral forum in early 2025.

Target: Forum in place
Actual: Bilateral forum in place

OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

The Department of Indigenous Affairs works to strengthen relationships between the province and First Nations. The department coordinates initiatives and guides the government's overall approach to Indigenous relations.

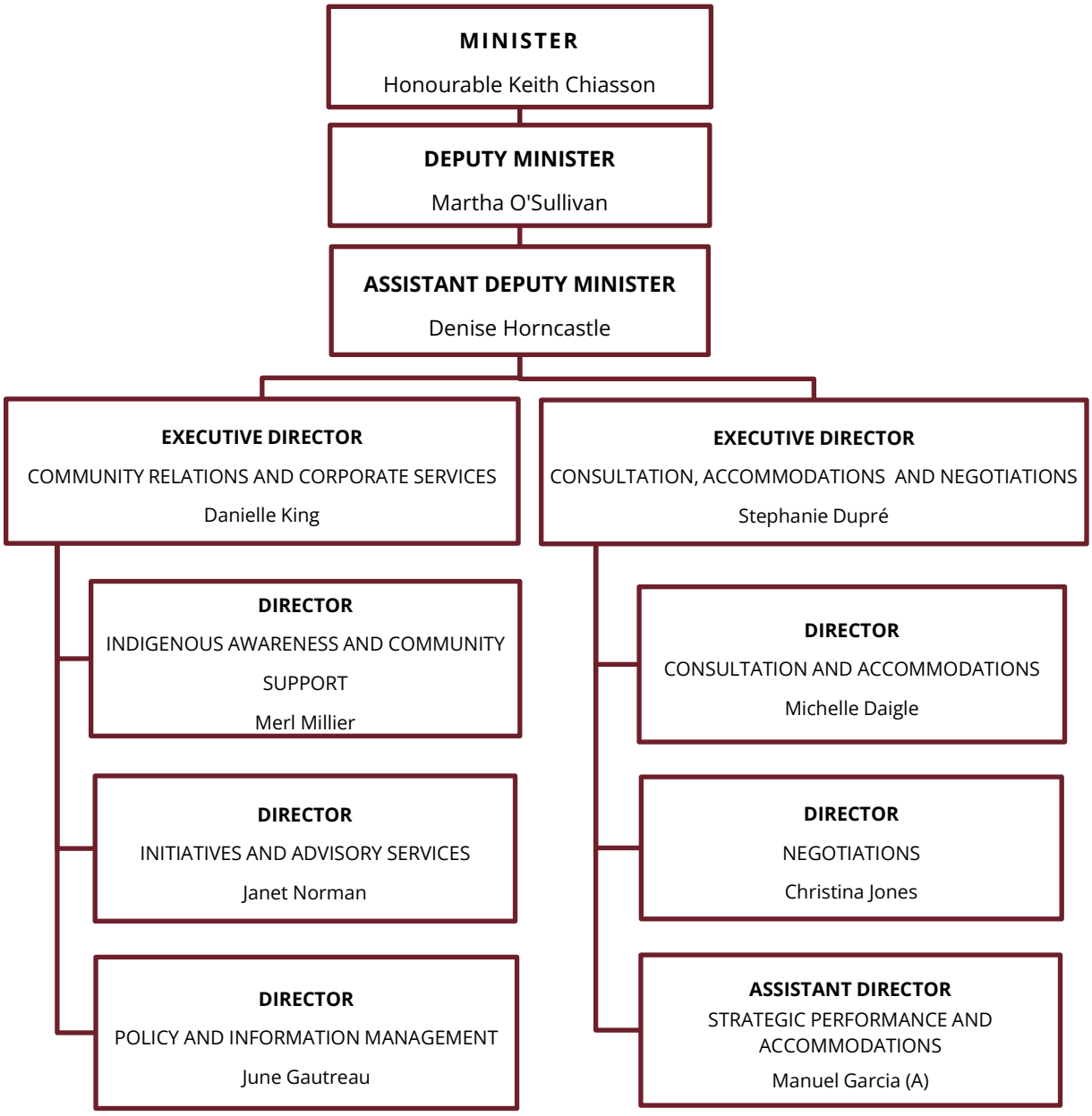
The department serves as the main point of contact to represent the province's interests in negotiations and multilateral initiatives. It also leads the consultation and accommodation processes with First Nations. Additionally, the department conducts research, analysis, and provides policy advice on matters involving Indigenous peoples.

The department works in partnership with Indigenous communities and organizations, businesses, community groups, and all levels of government. Through collaboration, the department aims to foster meaningful partnerships and support the priorities of Indigenous people in the province.

Mission Statement
To ensure that the rights of First Nations are upheld, to negotiate shared interests, and to promote collaboration with Indigenous peoples, governments and other partners to advance reconciliation.

Vision Statement
To promote an environment of meaningful dialogue with Indigenous peoples, to ensure that First Nations' rights are understood by all, and to continue the advancement of reconciliation through positive actions and awareness.

HIGH-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



As of March 31, 2026

DIVISION OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND CORPORATE SERVICES

Overview

The **Community Relations and Corporate Services Division** promotes and facilitates opportunities for education, awareness and relationship building, and supports all GNB departments in their initiatives that relate to Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations. In addition, the division provides direction and support to the department in strategic planning, policy development, legislative affairs, information management, performance management, and federal-provincial-territorial activities.

The division comprises three branches: the Indigenous Awareness and Community Support Branch, the Initiatives and Advisory Services Branch, and the Policy and Information Management Branch.

The **Indigenous Awareness and Community Support Branch** is responsible for developing and delivering Indigenous awareness training and workshops to the public service, and promoting educational opportunities provided by Elders, Knowledge Holders, and Indigenous organizations. The branch provides advice and guidance within the department and across government on effective ways to advance reconciliation and build meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations. The branch also acts as a resource and culturally safe point of contact to support Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations in accessing government programs and services.

Highlights

- Provided 21 cultural safety and awareness sessions to GNB departments and agencies and service providers.
- Worked with Indigenous peoples, community members, tribal councils, businesses, employers, and community partners to help navigate programs and services offered by GNB.
- Facilitated 16 Eagle ceremonies for Indigenous communities.
- Advanced work on implementation of smudging in government buildings and the introduction of Eagle feathers in New Brunswick's courts.
- Assumed oversight of the NB Family Information Liaison Unit, which serves as a central point of contact for families of missing and murdered Indigenous peoples (MMIP).

The **Initiatives and Advisory Services Branch** is responsible for leading and fulfilling the department's mandate as the hub for all initiatives across government that involve Indigenous peoples by applying a whole-of-government approach in exploring all initiatives, programs and services, overcoming silos, and looking for opportunities. The branch is also responsible for supporting all GNB departments by building relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations to ensure that government is delivering programs and services that are responsive to the needs and priorities of Indigenous peoples and have the greatest positive impact.

Highlights

- Collaborated with all departments and supported the involvement of the Wabanaki Council on Disability to develop GNB's first three-year Accessibility Plan. The plan will outline how government departments will work to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility from April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2029.
- Provided a grant to the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) to develop definitions and protocols to support the organization in expanding their Indigenous Business Directory, creating a comprehensive inventory of NB-based Indigenous businesses.
- Collaborated with Sankewitahasuwakon, the Department of Health, and Regional Health Authorities to establish a bilateral health forum (Mawita'nen), with the goal of achieving culturally safe and equitable health care for Indigenous people in New Brunswick. The forum launch was held September 18, 2025, in Ugpi'ganjig.
- Continued to work in partnership with Service New Brunswick and Opportunities New Brunswick on an Indigenous Procurement Strategy. The goal of the Strategy is to support Indigenous businesses in participating in GNB procurement opportunities.
- Supported 256 initiatives by responding to First Nations inquiries and concerns, fostering relationships, strengthening opportunities for First Nations participation in government initiatives, and providing advice on impacts, engagement and implementation of government proposals.

The **Policy and Information Management Branch** is responsible for advancing Memoranda to Executive Council; providing direction and support related to agreements, policies, and financial transactions; managing ministerial correspondence; administering the department's financial resources; coordinating and supporting the Minister's legislative business; and overseeing information and records management, including the collection, management, access, use and final disposition of information assets related to the department's mandate, activities and initiatives.

Highlights

- Provided financial analysis and support for key government priorities throughout the fiscal year, including but not limited to Main Estimates, Public Accounts, Memoranda to Executive Council, briefing notes, and quarterly reporting.
- Coordinated the review of 256 Memoranda to Executive Council from other departments to assess the potential impacts of proposals on Indigenous people in New Brunswick and ensure First Nations concerns and opportunities were considered.
- Coordinated the provincial response to two addition to reserve proposals.
- Responded to eight access to information requests within the legislated deadlines, with an average completion time of 37 business days.
- Responded to 140 ministerial correspondences.
- Supported the administration and delivery of funding by awarding 39 grants totalling more than $700,000 to Indigenous organizations and partners for cultural and economic development projects, initiatives, and events.

CONSULTATION, ACCOMMODATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS

Overview

The **Consultation, Accommodations and Negotiations Division** promotes and facilitates opportunities for awareness on government's duty to consult obligations and the benefits of early engagement with First Nations. The division provides direction and leadership to all GNB departments regarding consultation and accommodation, engagement, and negotiations with First Nations. In addition, the division provides support and guidance to external project proponents, businesses and municipal governments on matters related to engagement and consultation with First Nations.

The division comprises three branches: the Consultation and Accommodations Branch, the Negotiations Branch, and Strategic Performance and Accommodations Branch.

The **Consultation and Accommodations Branch** is responsible for implementing the duty to consult process; leading consultation with First Nations relating to private industry project proposals and provincial government projects and initiatives; and liaising with First Nations communities and working with government departments on provincial matters which may have an adverse impact on Aboriginal and treaty rights or be of interest to First Nations. The branch also supports and provides advice on early engagement and presents information on government's obligations and the benefits of early engagement and provides direction and support to all GNB departments and external parties.

Highlights

- Hosted an all-Nations information session on government priorities with the departments of Natural Resources, Environment and Local Government, and Energy.
- Supported the Department of Environment and Local Government in their introductory virtual engagement sessions around government priority areas from the Environment Pillar. Individual sessions were held with the Peskotomuhkati, Wolastoqey, and Mi'gmaq Nations.
- Supported the Department of Environment and Local Government in discussions with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) surrounding the Government of Canada's proposed approach to developing co-operation agreements with NB to achieve "one project, one review."
- Presented on the duty to consult and accommodate to numerous existing and potential project proponents, as well as to various teams within government.
- Supported the Department of Natural Resources on the development and release of the Comprehensive Mineral Strategy.
- The branch managed 171 active files of varying complexity. Key activities included reviews and assessments related to the duty to consult; seeking engagement opportunities; delivering presentations to GNB staff, leadership, and external project proponents; providing advice and support to GNB departments and project proponents; facilitating correspondence and meetings with First Nations, project proponents, and departments; and reviewing memorandums submitted to the Executive Council.

Negotiations play a critical role in advancing reconciliation in New Brunswick. The **Negotiations Branch** coordinates and leads negotiations with First Nations on areas of mutual interest. The branch is responsible for negotiating agreements and arrangements that support First Nations' goals and priorities, provide greater clarity on Aboriginal and treaty rights, address matters of trilateral interest involving First Nations, New Brunswick, and Canada, and foster a positive and productive partnership.

Highlights

- Advanced tripartite negotiation tables and bilateral negotiation meetings, working groups and ad-hoc informal discussions on topics including justice, community safety, governance, archaeology, land protection and conservation, child and family services, and provincial parks.
- Collaborated with and/or represented several GNB departments at negotiation tables, including Natural Resources; Tourism, Heritage, and Culture; Social Development; and Justice and Public Safety.

The **Strategic Performance and Accommodations Branch** is responsible for providing advice and support and tracks the implementation of accommodation commitments made by government to First Nations that result from consultation activities and/or negotiations. The branch is responsible for ensuring that accommodations deriving from the duty to consult process address identified adverse impacts to rights and ensures accommodation holders are accountable fir fulfilling their commitments to First Nations. The branch also conducts research and develops ethnohistoric reports for the province.

Highlights

- Supported discussions with First Nations consultation organizations to review the province's duty to consult process. Meetings have taken place will all four of the consultation organizations and remain ongoing.
- Awarded the first Department of Natural Resources Tuition Bursary as an accommodation commitment under the 2022 Forest Strategy.
- Created dashboards to monitor current and ongoing government accommodation commitments for departments.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

This financial overview was prepared based on the best available information at the time of publication and therefore may not correspond exactly with the figures that will be subsequently published in GNB's Public Accounts.

Ordinary Budget – The Ordinary Budget expenditures cover the day-to-day operations of the department.

TABLE 1: ORDINARY EXPENDITURE
STATUS REPORT BY PROGRAM COMPONENT

Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2026 ($000s)

ORDINARY PROGRAM	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE (UNDER) OVER
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS	**9,128**	**9,108**	**(20)**

SUMMARY OF STAFFING ACTIVITY

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2025-2026 for Indigenous Affairs.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR		
EMPLOYEE TYPE	**2025**	**2024**
Permanent	39	40
Temporary	4	3
TOTAL	43	43

The department advertised two competitions, including two open (public) competitions and no closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE *CIVIL SERVICE ACT*	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: • a high degree of expertise and training • a high degree of technical skill • recognized experts in their field	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginal, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	0
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	2
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	1
Regular appointment of students/ apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	1

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of Indigenous Affairs, and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

The department did not have any legislative activity.

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACTIVITIES

Introduction

In 2025-2026, the Department of Indigenous Affairs continued to fulfill its obligation under the *Official Languages Act*. The department was committed to actively offering and providing quality services in both official languages, while promoting the positive aspects of bilingualism. Below are associated activities that were carried out on an ongoing basis during the year.

Strategic Objective 1

Ensure high quality, equal bilingual services to all New Brunswickers.

- Ensured all new employees receive information about the *Official Languages Act* and the policies and regulations governing their interaction with respect to official languages.
- Provided training to employees on the content of the Language of Service and Active Offer policies.
- Ongoing discussions between human resources consultants and managers to ensure linguistic requirements in all departmental job postings.

Strategic Objective 2

Provincial government employees are able to work and pursue a career in the official language of their choice.

- Ensured all new employees were provided an opportunity to state their preferred language of work for communication purposes through the employment acceptance form.
- Provided training to employees on the content of the Language of Work policy.
- Provided a Language of Work Quick Reference Guide to new employees through the employee orientation package.
- Ensured employees received their performance review in the language of their choice.

Strategic Objective 3

New Brunswickers understand the socio-economic benefits of bilingualism through improved and effective communication and better support.

- Through the department's onboarding program, ensured new employees are familiarized with the *Official Languages Act* and ensured they complete the mandatory training.
- Ensured employees review the *Official Languages Act* and policies during the annual performance management process.

Strategic Objective 4

Positive measures are implemented to promote the development of both official linguistic communities:

- The department's Official Languages Coordinator attended meetings established through Treasury Board to remain knowledgeable and proactive on all activities regarding official languages.
- In 2025-26, several employees received second language-training.
- Continued the Café Franco, a French-language initiative that offered employees a relaxed space to build vocabulary and practice their second language through engaging activities. In addition, employees also furthered their knowledge of French-Canadian culture through music, recommended television programs, and documentaries to reflect the province's rich cultural heritage and the diverse perspectives of Francophone communities across New Brunswick.

Conclusion

The department did not have any official languages complaints during the fiscal year 2025-2026.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

The department did not have any recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General in the current reporting year and the previous four years.

REPORT ON THE *PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Indigenous Affairs did not receive any disclosure of wrongdoing in the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

APPENDIX A

Indigenous peoples in New Brunswick

The term "Indigenous peoples" is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Indigenous peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. These groups have distinct histories, languages, cultures, and spiritual beliefs.

In New Brunswick, there are 15 First Nation communities, which include nine Mi'gmaq communities and six Wolastoqey communities. These communities encompass 32 reserve locations across the province. Each community is governed by an elected Chief and Council. The process for selecting Chiefs and Councillors varies:

- Most communities in New Brunswick follow the *First Nations Elections Act*, with a four-year term;
- Two communities operate under the *Indian Act*, with a two-year term;
- Two others use custom election systems, with a five-year term.

The Peskotomuhkati (Passamaquoddy) Nation in southwest New Brunswick is not currently recognized as a First Nation under the *Indian Act.* In 2017, the federal government received a claim from the Peskotomuhkati Nation at Skutik. Discussions regarding their recognition and rights remain under federal jurisdiction.

As of December 31, 2025, the federal Indian Registry System recorded 17,805[1] First Nations individuals living both on and off reserve in New Brunswick (see Table 2). However, data from the 2021 census estimates that the province is home to 33,295[2] people who identify as Indigenous (see Table 5).

In 2025, New Brunswick's total population was 868,630[3]. Among this, First Nations accounted for two per cent. Although this may seem small, the First Nations population is growing rapidly. Between 2016 and 2021, the First Nations population in New Brunswick increased by 7.2 per cent compared to the province's overall population growth of 3.8 per cent (see Table 6).

The 2021 census also highlighted that the Indigenous population is younger than the general population in New Brunswick. The median age for First Nations individuals was 35, compared to 45 for the total New Brunswick population[4].

[1] ***Source:*** *ISC/CIRNAC's Indian Registry System as of Dec. 31, 2025*
[2] ***Source:*** *Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population*
[3] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, Population estimates for New Brunswick, 2025*
[4] ***Source:*** *Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2021*

TABLE 1

NEW BRUNSWICK AND FIRST NATIONS POPULATION		
YEAR	NEW BRUNSWICK POPULATION[5]	FIRST NATIONS POPULATION
2025	868,630	17.805

Chart 1

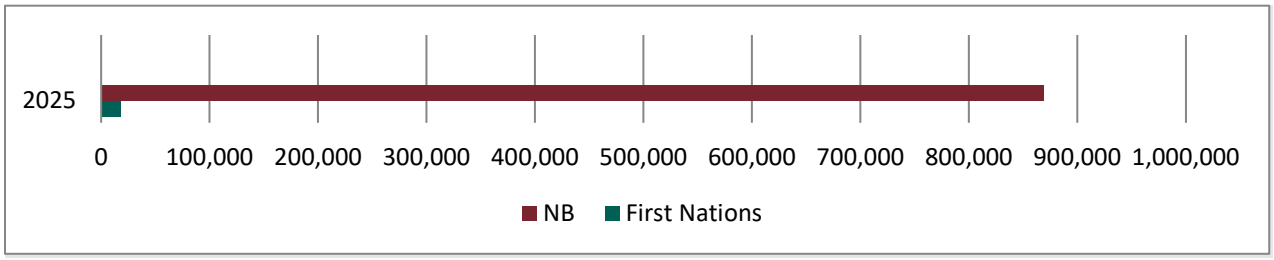


Table 2 [6]

FIRST NATIONS IN NEW BRUNSWICK	TOTAL	ON-RESERVE	OFF-RESERVE
Bilijk (Kingsclear)	1,073	736	337
Buctouche Micmac (Tjipogtotjg)	129	81	48
Eel River Bar First Nation (Ugpi'ganjig)	893	369	524
Elsipogtog First Nation (Big Cove)	3,672	2,836	836
Esgenoôpetitj First Nation (Burnt Church)	1,987	1,406	581
Fort Folly (Amlamgog)	136	32	104
Indian Island (Lno Minigog)	219	115	104
Madawaska Maliseet First Nation (Matawaskiye)	376	152	224
Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation (Red Bank)	713	451	262
Natoaganeg (Eel Ground)	1,137	600	537
Oromocto First Nation (Welamukotuk)	921	361	560
Pabineau (Oinpegtijoig)	408	158	250
Saint Mary's (Sitansisk)	2,222	959	1,263
Tobique (Neqotkuk)	2,721	1,646	1,075
Woodstock (Wotstak)	1,198	292	906

NOTE: *On-reserve numbers for each First Nation should not be taken to represent the true population for the following reasons:*
1) They contain no information on any non-registered individuals who may be living on reserve, and
2) Similarly, they contain no information on any members registered to other bands who may be living on reserve.

[5] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, Population estimates for New Brunswick, 2025*
[6] ***Source:*** *ISC/CIRNAC'S Indian Registry System as of Dec. 31, 2025*

Chart 2A

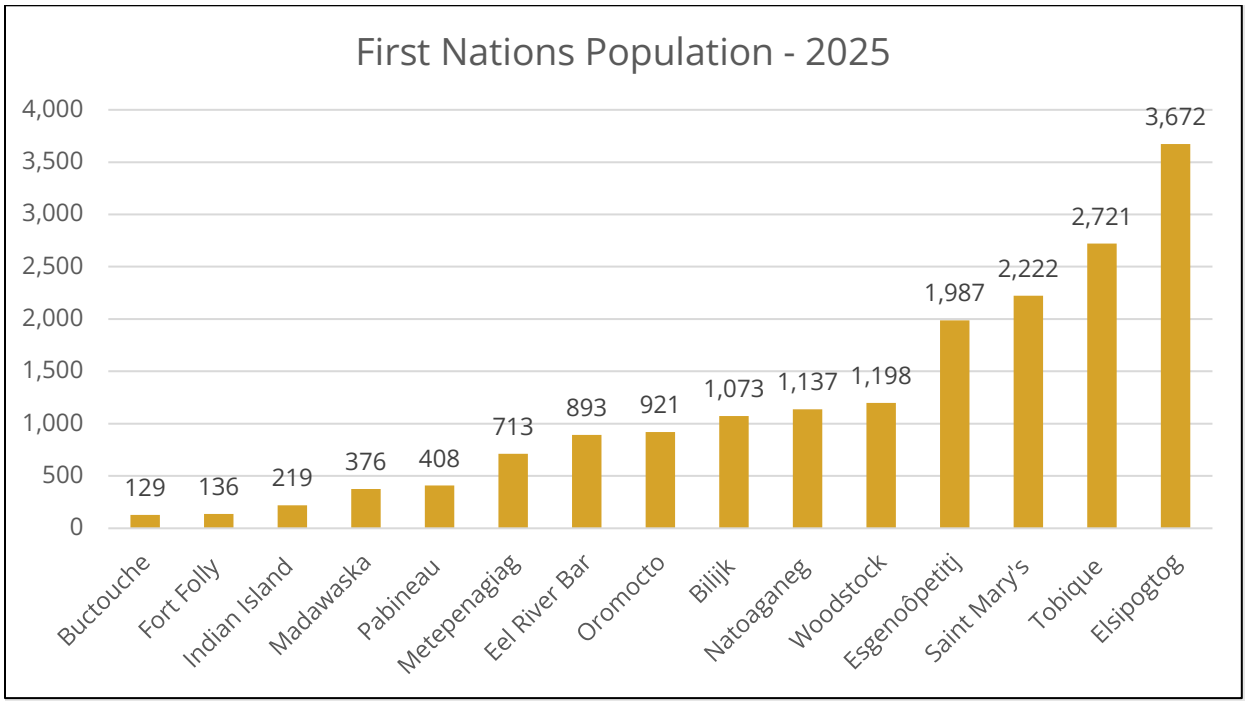


Chart 2B

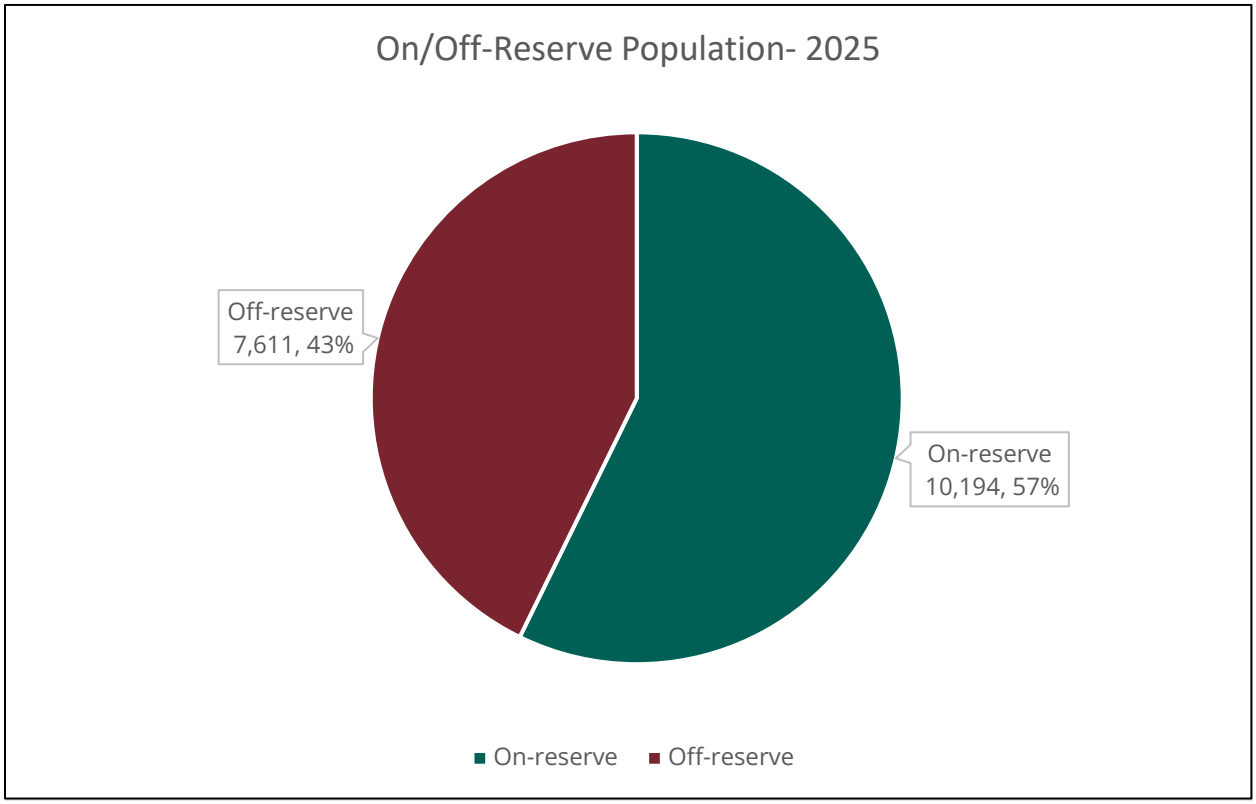


Chart 2C

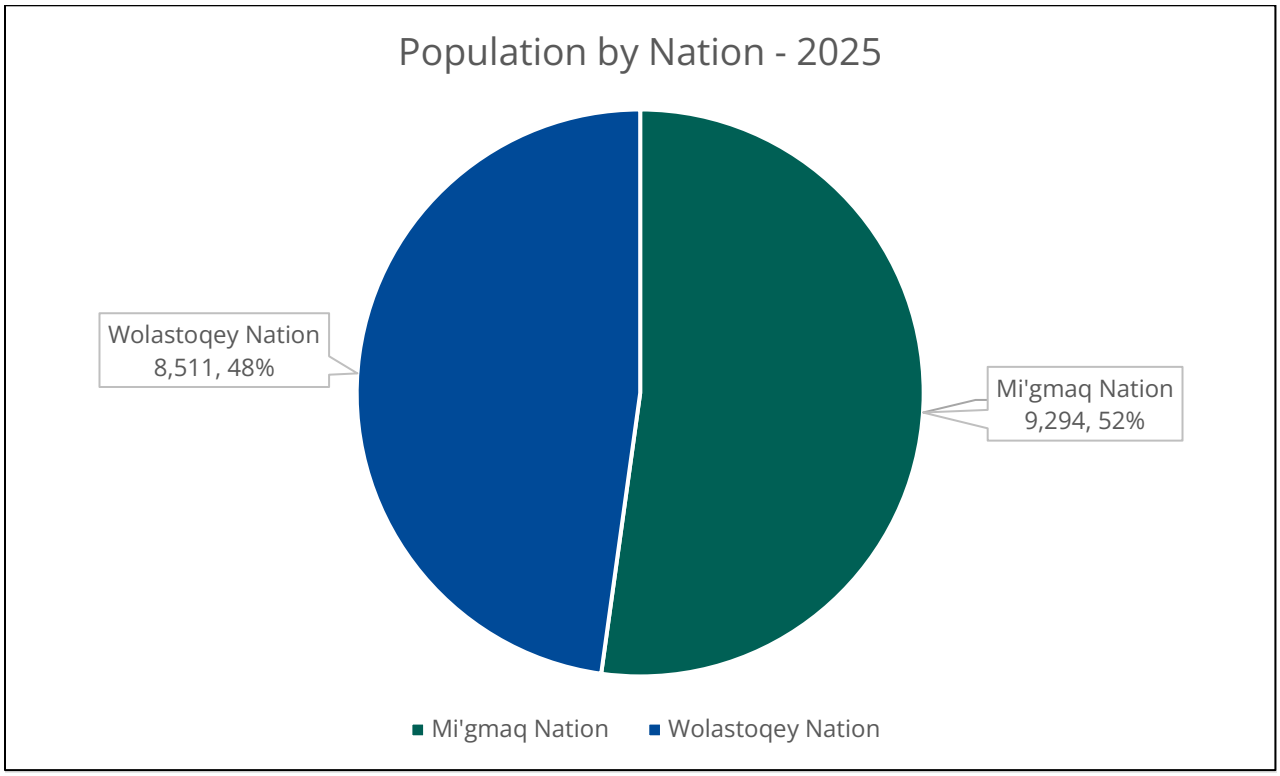


Chart 2D

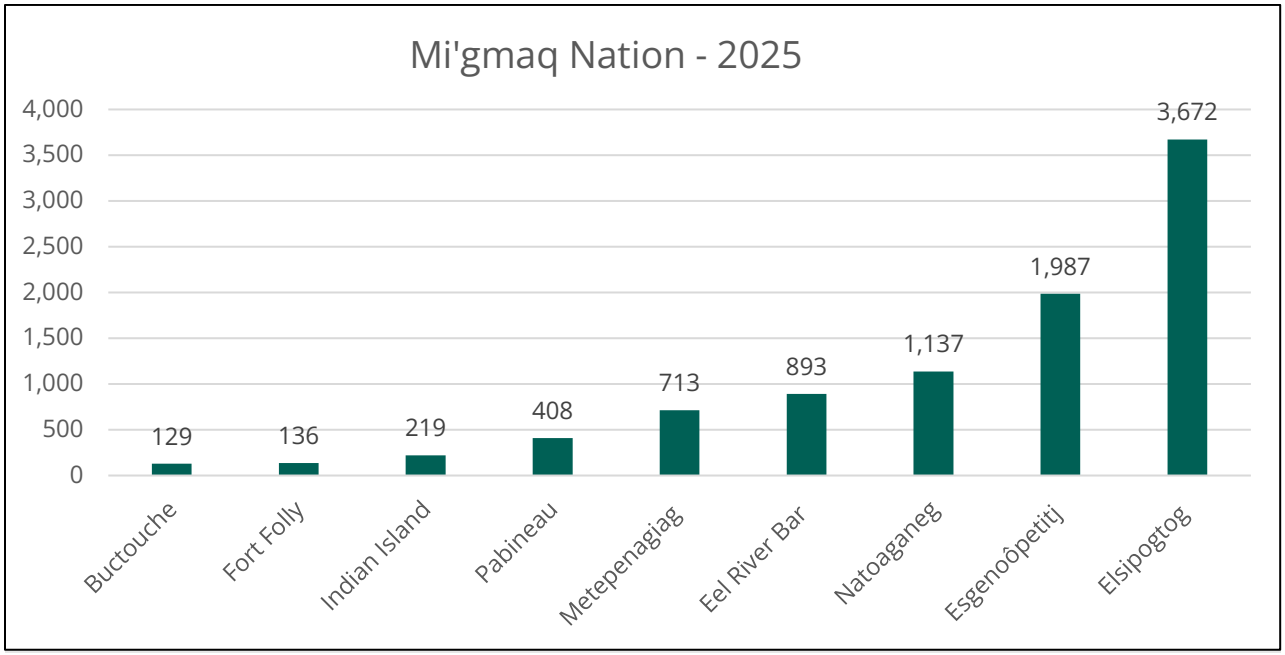


Chart 2E

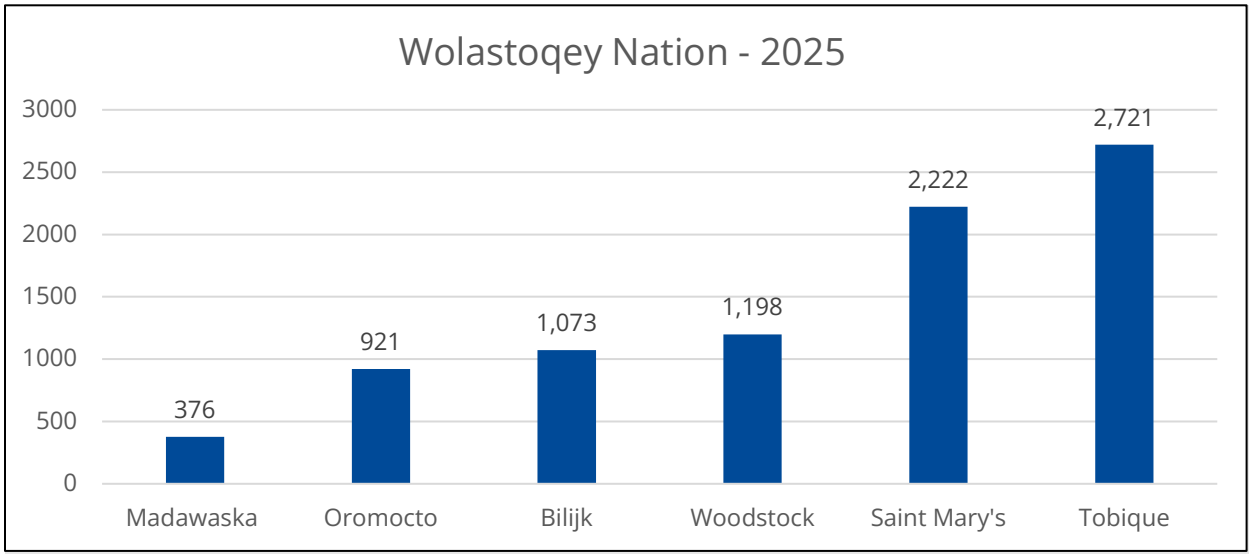


Table 3

FIRST NATIONS POPULATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK [7]			
YEAR	TOTAL	ON-RESERVE	OFF-RESERVE
2016	15,830	9,644	6,186
2017	16,123	9,732	6,391
2018	16,246	9,781	6,465
2019	16,509	9,889	6,620
2020	16,662	9,922	6,740
2021	16,985	9,968	7,017
2022	17,270	10,014	7,256
2023	17,510	10,098	7,412
2024	17,723	10,138	7,585
2025	17,805	10,194	7,611

[7] ***Source:*** *ISC/CIRNAC'S Indian Registry System as of Dec. 31, 2025*

Chart 3

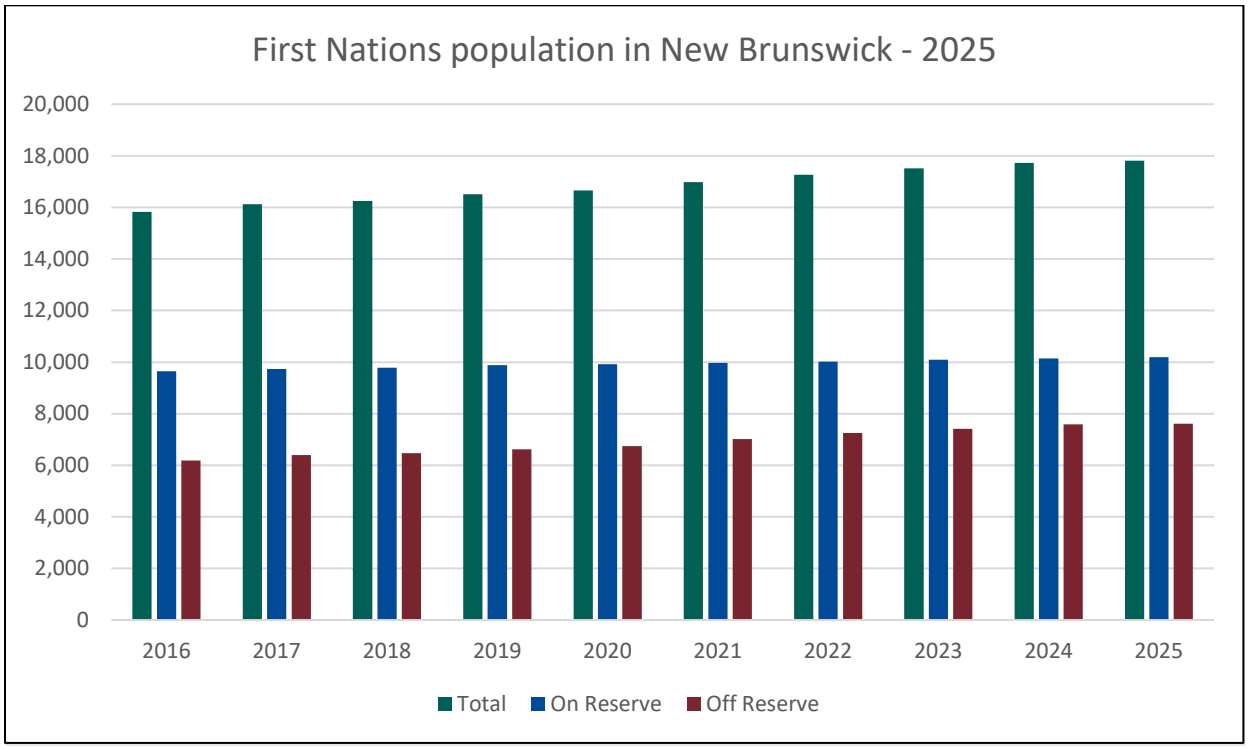


Table 4

NEW BRUNSWICK AND FIRST NATIONS POPULATION		
YEAR	NEW BRUNSWICK POPULATION[8]	FIRST NATIONS POPULATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK[9]
2021	789,225	16,985
2022	812,061	17,270
2023	834,691	17,510
2024	857,381	17,723
2025	868,630	17,805

[8] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, Table 17-10-0009-01Population estimates, quarterly*

[9] ***Source:*** *ISC/CIRNAC's Indian Registry System*

Chart 4A

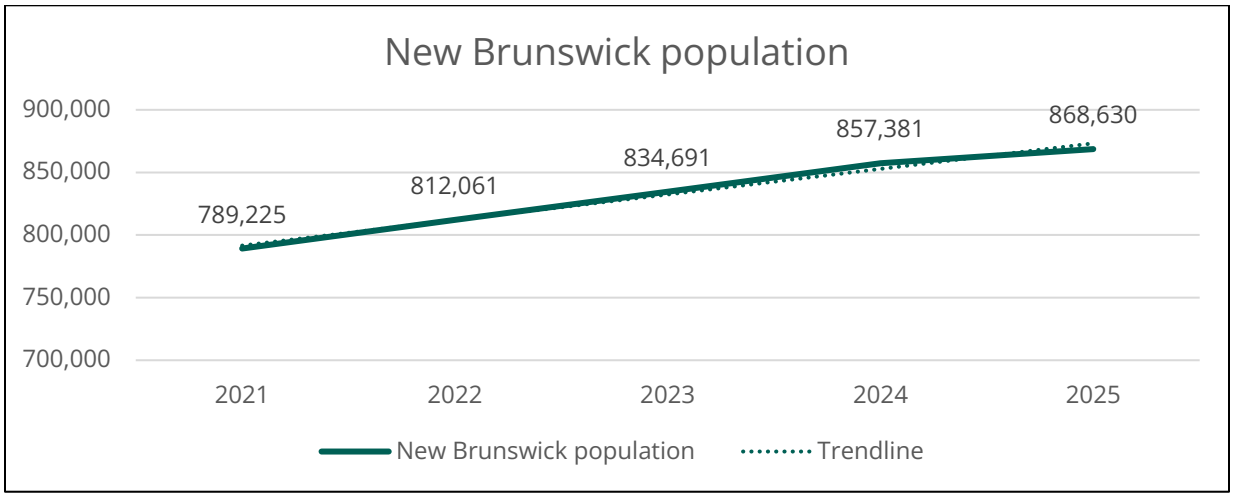


Chart 4B

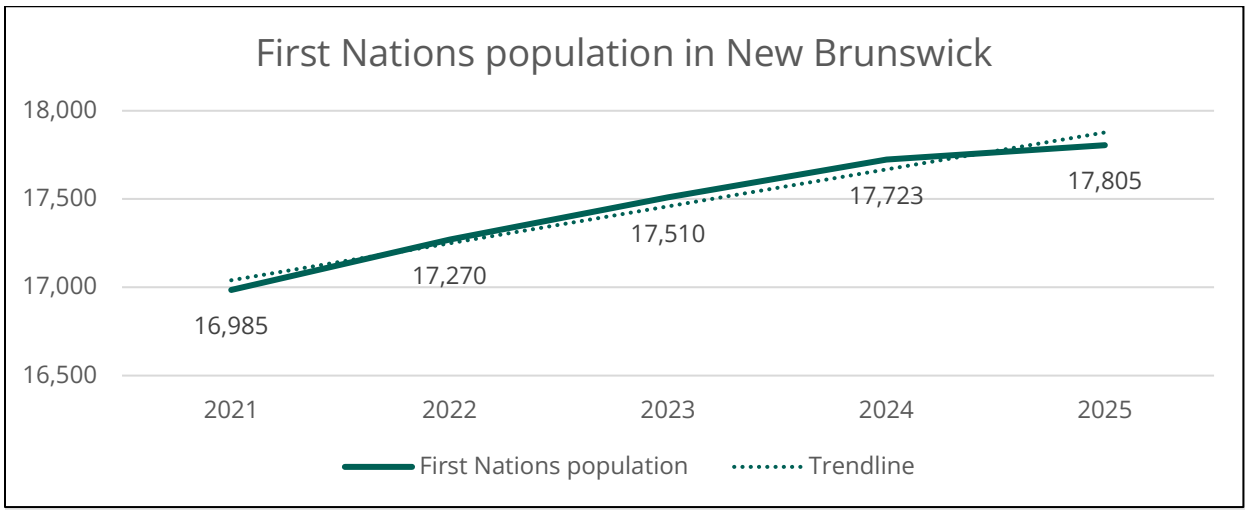


Table 5

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (ABORIGINAL IDENTITY) IN NEW BRUNSWICK			
YEAR	ABORIGINAL IDENTIFY[10]	FIRST NATIONS POPULATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK	NEW BRUNSWICK POPULATION
2021	33,295	16,985	747,101

[10] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population*

Chart 5A[11]

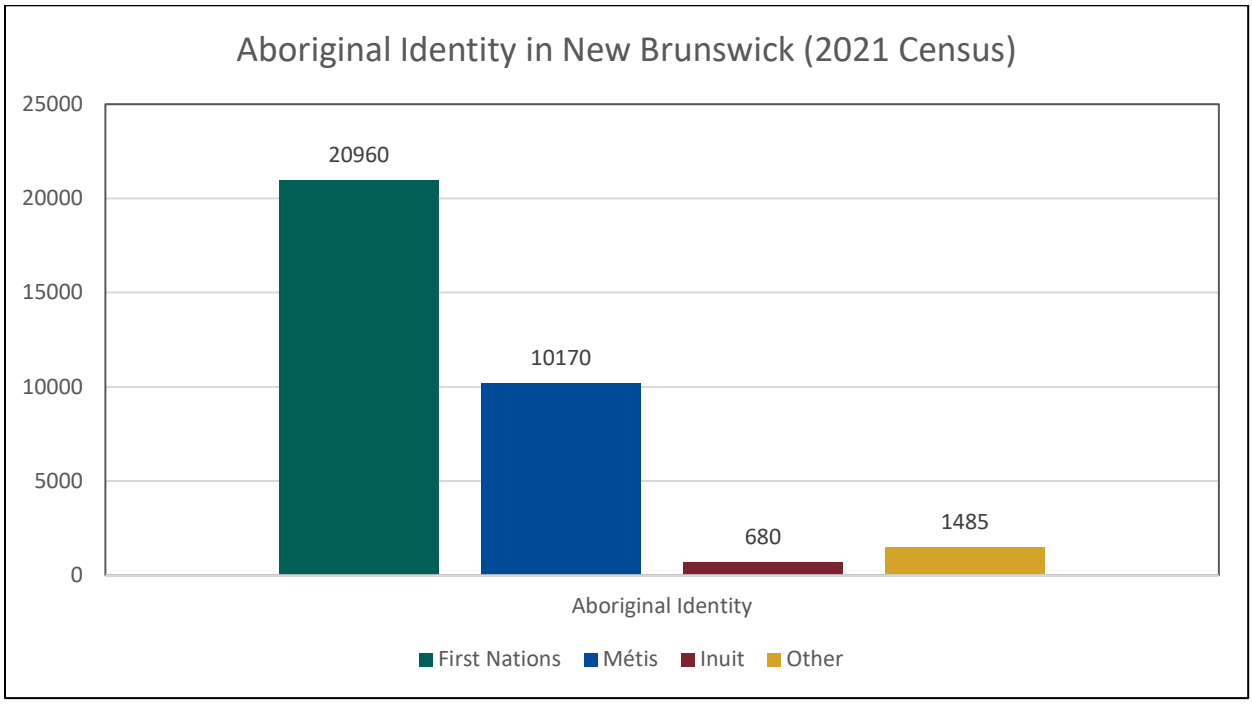
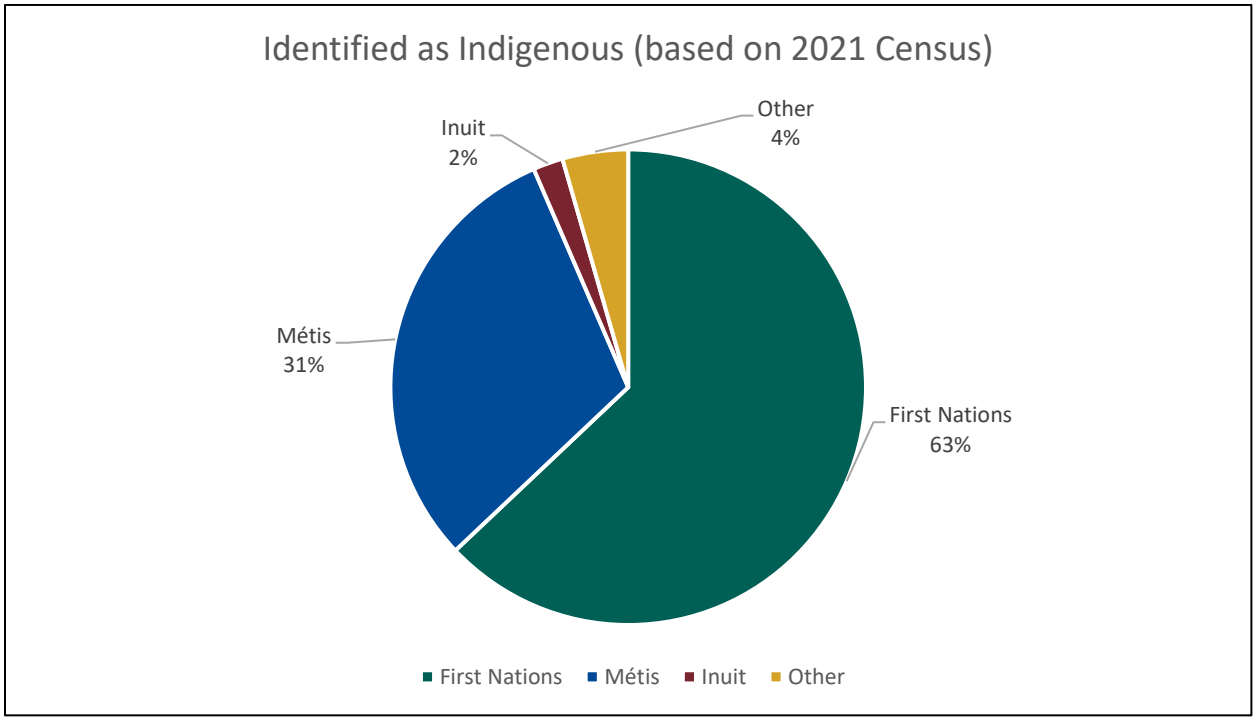


Chart 5B[12]



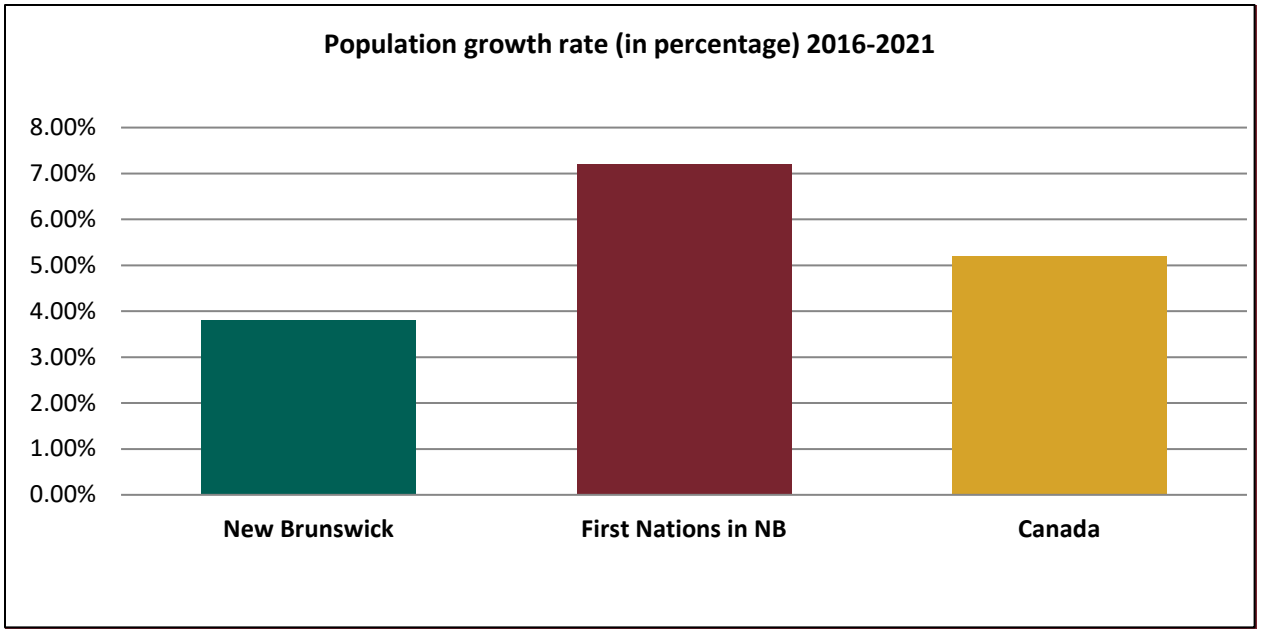
[11] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population*

[12] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population*

Table 6

POPULATION GROWTH [13]			
YEAR	NEW BRUNSWICK POPULATION	FIRST NATIONS POPULATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK	CANADA POPULATION
2016	747,101	15,830	35,151,728
2021	812,061	17,270	36,991,981
Population growth rate	**3.8%**	**7.2%**	**5.2%**

Chart 6



[13] **Source:** *Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population*