## **Intragenerational Ethnic Mobility of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Results from the 2001 and 2006 Censuses Record Linkage<sup>1</sup>**

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#### Abstract

The goal of this paper is to present an analysis of the intragenerational ethnic mobility of Aboriginal peoples using a new database, which allows direct estimation of the phenomenon in Canada for the first time: a record linkage between the microdatabases of the 20% samples of the 2001 and 2006 censuses. Intragenerational ethnic mobility, or change in the self-reporting of Aboriginal identity over the life course, was a key factor of population growth for the Métis and, to a lesser extent, for the North American Indians over the recent period, but no dataset provided a direct measure of the phenomenon up to now. The dataset used for this analysis allows direct estimation of intragenerational ethnic mobility flows between Métis, North American Indians and non-Aboriginal persons, and the analysis of demographic and social determinants of those changes in identity, using both descriptive and multivariate methods.

#### 1. Introduction

Population growth of Aboriginal peoples in Canada has been considerable in recent years. Despite the quasi-absence of international in-migration and a higher mortality (Wilkins et al., 2008), the number of persons who self-identify as Aboriginal (North American Indian, Métis or Inuit) has risen by 45% between the 1996 and 2006 censuses, far exceeding the population growth observed for the rest of the Canadian population (8%, Statistics Canada, 2008). While Aboriginal peoples have a higher fertility than the rest of the population (Ram, 2003; Statistics Canada, 2011), this factor alone cannot explain this exceptional growth. Looking at specific Aboriginal groups, the Métis population nearly doubled between 1996 and 2006 (+91%), a growth rate significantly higher than that observed for North American Indians (+29%) and Inuit (+26%).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada. The views and opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of Statistics Canada.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. The views and opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

Previous studies have shown that the population growth among Métis and North American Indians was largely related to changes in self-reporting of ethnic affiliation over the lifecourse, or intragenerational ethnic mobility. Thus, Guimond (1999), after having underlined that the growth among the people reporting a Métis identity and an Aboriginal ancestry exceeded a theoretical maximum natural increase of 5.5% per year<sup>4</sup>, concluded that an important part of the growth for this population between 1986 and 1996 could be attributed to intragenerational ethnic mobility. Using a similar method, Lebel, Caron Malenfant and Guimond (2011) concluded that intragenerational ethnic mobility contributed, between 1996 and 2006, to the larger part of population growth of the self-reported Métis identity population and to a significant part of the growth among the North American Indian identity population. In both studies, there was no evidence of intragenerational ethnic mobility for the Inuit population. Strongly related to mixed unions, and to the fluidity of the social and legal construct of Aboriginal concepts and definitions (Guimond, 2003), intragenerational ethnic mobility has also been observed in the United States (Passel, 1996) and in Australia (Ross, 1996).

The results of these studies helped to get a deeper understanding of the demographic dynamics among the Aboriginal populations. However, in the absence of data allowing for direct estimates, at least in Canada, these studies had to rely on indirect methods to analyse intragenerational ethnic mobility. Following cohorts from one census to the next, they were able to obtain a measure of net population gains and losses through ethnic mobility over a given period, but the full matrix of changes between groups and most of the characteristics associated with these changes remain unknown. This paper addresses part of these data gaps.

The goal of this paper is to analyze the intragenerational ethnic mobility of Aboriginal peoples using a new database, based on a record linkage between the 2001 and 2006 censuses, which allows direct estimation of the phenomenon in Canada for the first time<sup>5</sup>. Using this new database, this paper answers two specific questions: 1) what was, between 2001 and 2006, the importance of ethnic mobility flows between Métis, North American Indian and non-Aboriginal populations; 2) what were the determinants associated with those changes in identity.

This paper is structured as follow. In section 2, the main concepts related to Aboriginal peoples in Canada and ethnic mobility are defined. Section 3 describes the source of data. Section 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Theoretically, the maximum rate of natural increase is 5.5% per year. It is obtained from the highest crude birth rate (60 per 1,000 persons) observable in exceptional conditions – a young population, marrying young and practising no form of contraception – from which is subtracted the lowest crude death rate (5 per 1,000 persons). Such a combination of a high birth rate and a low death rate has probably never been observed (Guimond, 1999). <sup>5</sup> This linked database was created at Statistics Canada for a special analysis on the Internet mode effect in the 2006 Census (Grondin and Sun, 2008). Its use for the analysis and documentation of the ethnic mobility of Aboriginal peoples was granted in the context of the development of the *Population projections by Aboriginal identity in Canada, 2006 to 2031* (Statistics Canada, 2011), to better understand ethnic mobility and assess the feasibility of using such a database to develop projections parameters. This paper documents the main results of the analysis performed in this context.

presents the results of a descriptive and a multivariate analysis of the intragenerational ethnic mobility flows between groups.

## 2. Concepts

## 2.1. Aboriginal peoples

The evolving nature and complexity of the concept of aboriginality in Canada is well reflected by the absence of a consensus on a single definition (Guimond and Robitaille, 2009). In fact, many definitions co-exist. In this paper, three concepts are used, all of them being derived from the information collected in both the 2001 and 2006 Canadian census: Aboriginal ancestry, Aboriginal identity and Registered Indian status. Population counts for each concept are presented in Table 1.

Since 1871, all Canadian censuses have enumerated Aboriginal populations by means of a question about the ethnic or cultural group to which a person's ancestors belonged (Guimond and Robitaille, 2009). In 2006, the population with at least one Aboriginal ancestor, or *Aboriginal ancestry* population, numbered at 1,678,235, about half a million more that the population with an Aboriginal identity. More than 60% of the respondents with Aboriginal ancestors declared multiple ancestries (with or without non-Aboriginal ancestry), a proportion higher than in the total Canadian population (about 40%).

The concept of *Aboriginal identity* refers first and foremost to those persons who reported, through a distinct question on the census, identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit. In 2006, out of 31,241,030 Canadians, the Census enumerated 1,172,790 persons with an Aboriginal identity, including 698,025 North American Indians, 389,780 Métis and 50,480 Inuit. The Aboriginal identity population also includes persons who provided "Multiple Aboriginal identity responses" (7,740), as well as individuals with other "Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere" <sup>6</sup> (26,760), both categories accounting for only a small proportion of the population with an Aboriginal identity.

The third concept, the *Registered Indian status*, is a legal concept. With respect to the Census of Canada, it refers to those persons who reported being registered under the *Indian Act* of Canada. This legal concept was established to determine the right of residency on Indian reserves. The first version of the *Indian Act* in the confederative era dates backs to 1876. Since 1985, registration is established on the basis of the status of the parents and grandparents (Clatworthy, 2005). In the 2006 Census, 623,780 persons self-declared being Registered Indians. The vast majority of them reported a North American Indian identity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The "Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere" refer to the persons who did not self-report belonging to North American Indian, Métis or Inuit in the Aboriginal identity question but declared being either Registered Indians or members of a First Nation band (Statistics Canada, 2010).

	2001	2006
Aboriginal ancestry population		
Total	1,319,890	1,678,235
Aboriginal identity population		
Total	976,305	1,172,790
North American Indian (single response)	608,850	698,025
Métis (single response)	292,305	389,780
Inuit (single response)	45,070	50,480
Multiple Aboriginal identity responses	6,665	7,740
Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere*	23,415	26,760
Registered Indian population		
Total	558,180	623,780
Population of Canada		
Total	29,639,030	31,241,030

Table 1. Aboriginal ancestry, Aboriginal identity and Registered Indian populations inCanada, 2001 and 2006

\*Includes those who identified themselves as Registered Indians and/or band members without identifying themselves as North American Indian, Métis or Inuit in the Aboriginal identity question.

Sources: 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses of population, 20% sample data.

#### 2.2. Ethnic mobility

Ethnic mobility refers to changes in how ethnic affiliation is reported by individuals and among families. Different terms are used in the literature to designate that phenomenon: ethnic switching, passing, changing identities and changes in self-reporting of ethnic identity. These changes can either be intergenerational – children showing a different ethnic identity than their parents – or intragenerational – individuals changing their ethnic identity over the course of their life (Guimond and Robitaille, 2009; Boucher et al., 2009; Guimond, 2003). This paper focuses on intragenerational ethnic mobility<sup>7</sup> between 2001 and 2006 between Aboriginal identities.

Given the numbers involved and the limitations of the database used, Inuit and Multiple Aboriginal identity responses are excluded. Thus, only changes between three groups are considered:

- I. North American Indian;
- II. Métis;
- III. Non-Aboriginal.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> For the sake of simplicity, we often use only the term "ethnic mobility", or "ethnic transfers", to refer to "intragenerational ethnic mobility".

The category "Non-Aboriginal" includes all individuals who did not report having a North American Indian, a Métis or an Inuit identity, regardless of their ancestry or Registered Indian status. Thus, it was possible to study the relationships between the Registered Indian status and ethnic mobility not only for the persons who changed their identity from an Aboriginal group to non Aboriginal but in the other direction as well<sup>8</sup>. Finally, for the sake of simplicity, the concept of "ethnic migrants" is used in this paper to refer to the persons who changed their reported identity between 2001 and 2006.

#### 3. Data source

The database used for this analysis is the product of a record linkage between the microdata files of the 20% sample of the 2001 and 2006 censuses, both including the same questions on Aboriginal ancestry, Aboriginal identity and Registered Indian status, as well as many demographic and socioeconomic variables. Since the 2001 database did not contain the names of respondents, linking options were limited. Hence the record linkage was performed in two main steps. First, pairs of individuals living in the same household were created (using only date of birth and sex as identifiers) and were matched from one census to the next, within a same geographical area<sup>9</sup>. Second, in order to add individuals living alone, the dwellings in 2001 and 2006 were linked using an address register and individuals within a same dwelling in both occasions were linked by date of birth and sex. The record linkage was successful for 649,200 records<sup>10</sup>. The resulting database was reweighted by Aboriginal identity, sex, age group, place of residence and marital status in order to obtain a population composition consistent with the 2001 and 2006 censuses<sup>11</sup>.

It is important to note that, as place of residence was one of the variables taken into account in both steps of the linkage, the database excludes most of the migrants<sup>12</sup>. This may have an importance if geographic mobility and ethnic mobility are related. Also, for this analysis, the territories and Indian reserves were excluded<sup>13</sup>. Although the exclusion of Indian reserves reduces the number of North American Indians by about half, their numbers remain sufficiently large in the linked database for the purpose of this analysis. With respect to the analysis of ethnic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> In the remainder of the paper, the persons who declared being band members were grouped with Registered Indians. For simplicity, Registered Indians is used to refer to both populations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The geographical areas used are census divisions, defined as follow: "Group of neighbouring municipalities joined together for the purposes of regional planning and managing common services" (Statistics Canada, 2010). In 2006, there were 288 census divisions in Canada.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The probability of being in the 20% sample both in 2001 and in 2006 was one out of 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The census data used for reweighting were, in 2001 and 2006, adjusted for census net undercoverage by age, sex and place of residence. For comparability, the 2006 Census geographic infrastructure was applied to the 2001 Census.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Except the couples who migrated within the same geographic area between 2001 and 2006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The record linkage was performed on databases which exclude the population who responded to certain census forms such as the form used to enumerate northern areas and most Indian reserves (2D form).

mobility itself, the exclusion of northern territories and Indian reserves from the linked database is not expected to introduce a bias in the numbers. Prior work by Guimond (2009) suggests that populations living on reserve and in the North are less likely to experience ethnic mobility because of their homogeneity in term of Aboriginal identity. In the case of reserves, this homogeneity is largely driven by the fact that residency is generally restricted to North American Indians (in 2006, 88% of the Indian reserves' inhabitants were North American Indians). Finally, the foreign-born population as well as the population belonging to a visible minority group<sup>14</sup> were also excluded from the linked database, in order to focus the analysis on the population that is the most likely to experience ethnic mobility in terms of Aboriginal identity. After these exclusions, the linked file consists of 436,500 records, that is, 427,400 non-Aboriginal people, 4,600 North American Indians and 4,500 Métis in 2001.

4. Results

#### 4.1. Magnitude of intragenerational ethnic mobility

Figure 1 presents population growth attributable to intragenerational ethnic mobility for the three groups compared between 2001 and 2006. Consistently with previous studies, it shows that intragenerational ethnic mobility contributed to population increase for both the Métis and the North American Indians living off reserve. It also shows that the Métis group benefited far more than North American Indians from this increase, with about 29% growth in 5 years compared to 9%.

During the same period, the total growth, including not only intragenerational ethnic mobility but also natural increase and international migrations, was 35% for the Métis and 17% for the North American Indians living off reserve. Thus, population growth due to ethnic mobility represented for these two groups a major part of the total population growth. This component contributed to more than 80% of the growth of the Métis population and about 50% of that of the North American Indians from 2001 to 2006. On the other hand, ethnic mobility had a slight negative impact on the population composed of non-Aboriginal people, reflecting the fact that this group is a net "contributor" to the growth of the Métis and North American Indians.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> According to the Canadian *Employment Equity Act*, visible minorities include "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race and non-white in color" (Statistics Canada, 2010).



Figure 1. Net population change (in percentage) through intragenerational ethnic mobility in Canada between 2001 and 2006

Note: Excluding Territories, Indian reserves, foreign-born population and persons belonging to a visible minority group. Source: Linked 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses of population.

Table 2, which cross-tabulates self-declared Aboriginal identity in 2001 and in 2006, provides greater details about the different flows behind the net population gains and losses presented above. It shows that the ethnic mobility flows are not unidirectional, from non-Aboriginal to Aboriginal peoples. In fact, about 21% of the 2001 off reserve North American Indian population and 26% of the 2001 Métis population transferred to another group during the studied period, with most of them – more than two thirds for both groups – self-reporting a non-Aboriginal identity in 2006. Among the non-Aboriginal population in 2001, about 1% transferred to an Aboriginal group in 2006, close to two thirds of them having moved to the Métis.

Table 2. Aboriginal identity in 2001 and in 2006, Canada

		Identity in 2006				
		North American Indian	Métis Non-Aboriginal identity		Total	
7 7	North American Indian	79,3% (269 200)	6.1% (20,600)	14.6% (49,725)	100% (339,500)	
ntity 2001	Métis	7.7% (22,600)	74.2% (216,400)	18.1% (52,700)	100% (291,700)	
Ider in 2	Non-Aboriginal identity	0.4% (79,600)	0.6% (140,200)	99.0% (22,358,900)	100% (23,107,500)	

Note: Excluding Territories, Indian reserves, foreign-born population and persons belonging to a visible minority group. Source: Linked 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses of population.

The low proportion of transfers from the non-Aboriginal population is a reflection of the demographic imbalance between the three studied populations: the non-Aboriginal people represented about 97% of our sample in 2001. Thus, this low proportion of transfers translates into an absolute number of ethnic migrants (219,800) that represents 60% of all ethnic migrants,

the other 40% being equally distributed between the "former" Métis and North American Indians. The inflows for both the Métis and North American Indians are, consequently, heavily composed of previously non-Aboriginal people.

### 4.2. Individual characteristics associated with intragenerational ethnic mobility

Who are these persons who self-reported a different identity in the 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses? This is a complex question and our ability to provide a detailed answer is limited, even with a rich census database such as the one used for this analysis. Many of the historical, legal and psycho-sociological factors associated with the phenomenon cannot be properly assessed with the existing resources. One aspect that can be investigated with this linked database is differences in characteristics of ethnic migrants according to their "original identity" (i.e., in 2001) since the three studied identity groups differ from one another in various ways. For instance, the North American Indians are, on average, younger than the Métis, who are themselves younger than the non-Aboriginal people. Also, Aboriginal peoples are more concentrated in the western provinces of Canada. The proportion of non-Aboriginal people who live in large metropolitan areas (Census metropolitan areas) is greater than that of the Aboriginal groups. North American Indians and Métis are also, on average, less likely to have graduated from high school (Statistics Canada, 2008; Hébert et al., 2008).

Characteristics of ethnic migrants can also be associated with the "new identity" (i.e., in 2006), as it is reasonable to argue that a transfer from North American Indian to Métis is a distinct phenomenon when compared to a transfer from North American Indian to non-Aboriginal people, for example. For this reason, we chose to analyze individual characteristics associated with four distinct ethnic flows:

- I. From Non-Aboriginal identity in 2001 to North American Indian in 2006;
- II. From Non-Aboriginal identity in 2001 to Métis in 2006;
- III. From North American Indian identity in 2001 to non-Aboriginal in 2006;
- IV. From Métis identity in 2001 to non-Aboriginal in 2006.

The characteristics of the populations who changed from North American Indian to Métis and from Métis to North American Indian, the two smallest ethnic mobility flows (see Table 2), are not presented. Table 3 presents the ethnic mobility rates corresponding to the four main flows analyzed, for selected characteristics.

The flows compared differ with regards to characteristics associated with the propensity to change in self-reporting of identity. Regarding the variables associated with aboriginality, having an Aboriginal ancestry or being a Registered Indian is associated with a higher ethnic mobility rate from the perspective of the non-Aboriginal population, but not for the North American Indians or the Métis. Province or region of residence is also related to ethnic mobility: provinces or regions with a higher share of Aboriginal peoples within their population (Prairies and British Columbia) tend to display higher rates of ethnic mobility for the non-Aboriginal people but

lower rates for the Aboriginal identity groups, the flow from non-Aboriginal persons to North American Indians being an exception. The other variables do not seem to present straightforward relationships with ethnic mobility. For example, living in a census metropolitan area (CMA) is associated with a higher rate of transfers from a North American Indian to non-Aboriginal identity, a lower rate of transfers from a non-Aboriginal to a Métis identity, while it does not appear to increase or decrease ethnic mobility for the two other flows. Also, ethnic mobility decreases with age for non-Aboriginal people, increase with age for the North American Indian and do not really vary with age for the Métis. Ethnic mobility rates do not appear to be related to education or gender, except maybe for the transfers from Métis to non-Aboriginal identity, slightly more likely for the persons with a high school diploma.

Table 3. Out-ethnic mobility rate by selected characteristics and Aboriginal identity in
2001 and 2006, Canada, 2001 to 2006

Characteristics in 2001	North American Indian (2001) to Non-Aboriginal identity (2006)	Métis (2001) to Non-Aboriginal identity (2006)	Non-Aboriginal identity (2001) to North American Indian (2006)	Non-Aboriginal identity (2001) to Métis (2006)
Total	14.6	18.1	0.4	0.6
Aboriginal ancestry				
Yes	11.6	16.6	7.3	12.1
No	34.7	26.0	0.2	0.4
Registered Indian				
Yes	3.4	8.5	25.7	8.3
No	39.4	19.0	0.3	0.6
Province / region of residence				
Atlantic / Québec	35.7	35.6	0.3	0.3
Ontario	19.6	25.6	0.4	0.5
Prairies	5.2	14.0	0.2	1.4
British Columbia	11.7	12.0	0.6	0.8
Live in largest metropolitan centers (CMAs*)				
Yes	18.0	18.5	0.3	0.5
No	11.5	17.8	0.4	0.9
Age group				
0 to 14	11.3	18.8	0.5	1.0
15 to 34	15.7	17.6	0.5	0.7
35 to 54	16.1	17.6	0.3	0.5
55+	19.4	18.9	0.2	0.3
Have a high school diploma				
Yes	14.7	19.2	0.3	0.6
No	14.5	15.6	0.4	0.7
Gender				
Male	16.0	18.9	0.3	0.6
Female	13.6	17.3	0.4	0.6

\*Census metropolitan areas. The census metropolitan areas are defined as composed of at least 100,000 persons, including an urban core of at least 50,000.

Note: Excluding Territories, Indian reserves, foreign-born population and persons belonging to a visible minority group. Source: Linked 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses of population.

In order to assess the net effect of these variables after controlling for one another, we prepared four logistic regressions, one for each ethnic flow, estimating the probability of having made an ethnic transfer between 2001 and 2006. Results are presented in Table 4. The multivariate analysis first confirms the results obtained from the descriptive analysis for the relationships between Aboriginal ancestry and Registered Indian status, on one hand, and ethnic mobility on the other. The patterns regarding place of residence appear with more clarity, the propensity to change from an Aboriginal identity to no Aboriginal identity being lower in the Prairies, British Columbia and non metropolitan areas, while it is generally the opposite for the two flows from a non-Aboriginal identity to an Aboriginal identity.

Characteristics in 2001	North American Indian (2001) to Non-Aboriginal identity (2006)	Métis (2001) to Non-Aboriginal identity (2006)	Non-Aboriginal identity (2001) to North American Indian (2006)	Non-Aboriginal identity (2001) to Métis (2006)
Aboriginal ancestry				
Yes	0.33	0.60	26.24	26.75
No (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Registered Indian				
Yes	0.07	0.46	25.44	2.24
No (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Province / region of residence				
Atlantic / Québec	2.68	1.73	0.72	0.75
Ontario (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Prairies	0.42	0.45	0.43	2.91
British Columbia	0.65	0.39	1.38	1.55
Live in largest metropolitan centers (CMAs*)				
Yes	1.36	1.19	0.82	0.58
No (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Age group				
0 to 14 (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
15 to 34	1.58	NS	0.78	0.67
35 to 54	NS	NS	0.63	0.56
55+	1.54	NS	0.33	0.32
Have a high school diploma				
Yes	NS	1.27	0.57	0.66
No (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Gender				
Male	NS	NS	0.84	NS
Female (reference)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

# Table 4. Odds ratios from four logistic regressions estimating probability of changing Aboriginal identity between 2001 and 2006, Canada

\*Census metropolitan areas. The census metropolitan areas are defined as composed of at least 100,000 persons, including an urban core of at least 50,000.

Note 1: Excluding Territories, Indian reserves, foreign-born population and persons belonging to a visible minority group. Note 2: NS= not significant at the 0.05 level. All other coefficients are significant at the 0.05 level. Source: Linked 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses of population.

The multivariate analysis also clarifies relationships that were either unsuspected or ambiguous according to the descriptive results presented above. Education is negatively associated with ethnic mobility for non-Aboriginal persons, suggesting that individuals transferring to Aboriginal

groups are less educated than those not transferring. On the contrary, education is positively associated with ethnic mobility for the Métis, while it is not a factor with respect to ethnic transfers of individuals reporting a North American Indian identity in 2001. The relationship between age and ethnic mobility for the North American Indians does not hold, ethnic mobility no longer increasing linearly with age, but remains for the other groups. Gender is not significantly associated with ethnic mobility, except for ethnic mobility from non-Aboriginal to North American Indian, with lower odds for males that for females.

#### 5. Conclusion

This paper aimed to answer the following two questions: 1) what was the magnitude of ethnic mobility flows between North American Indians, Métis and non-Aboriginal people in Canada between 2001 and 2006; and 2) what were the characteristics associated with ethnic mobility? Using a database resulting from a record linkage of the 2001 and 2006 Canadian censuses of population, the analysis showed that, even if the Métis and North American Indians living off reserve benefited from ethnic mobility in terms of population increase, the flows were not unidirectional from non-Aboriginal to Aboriginal peoples. Actually, the proportion of persons who left the Métis and North American Indian groups between 2001 and 2006 was 26% and 20% respectively. The analysis also revealed relationships, either positive or negative, between changes in self-reporting of identity and some socio-economic characteristics. This was especially the case for Aboriginal ancestry and Registered Indian status which were both strongly associated with ethnic mobility from a non-Aboriginal to an Aboriginal identity, while they contribute strongly to identity maintenance among Aboriginal peoples.

This study has several limitations, one being related to the fact that the database used excludes a majority of persons who changed place of residence between 2001 and 2006. It is possible that, in certain situations, ethnic mobility may be triggered by spatial / geographic mobility (e.g., when a person migrates for education or work-related reasons, which could imply significant changes in one's social networks).

The study focuses on the magnitude of the ethnic mobility flows and their characteristics. It does not estimate the impact of in- and out- ethnic mobility flows on the socioeconomic composition of the groups under study (e.g., age, education). Such analysis could be performed with the same database and would be of great interest to understand the rapid changes currently occurring among Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

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