

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

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Inuit

□ Notice

This website will change as a result of the dissolution of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. During this transformation, you may wish to consult the updated [Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada home page](#) or the newly-created [Indigenous Services Canada home page](#).

Inuit are the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic. The word Inuit means "the people" in the Inuit language of Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

- Learn about the February 9, 2017 [announcement of an Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee](#) by the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

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Inuit population and language

Many Inuit in Canada live in [53 communities across the northern regions of Canada in Inuit Nunangat](#), which means "the place where Inuit live."

Inuit Nunangat is comprised of four regions:

- Inuvialuit (NWT and Yukon)
- Nunavik (Northern Quebec)
- Nunatsiavut (Labrador)
- Nunavut

In total, approximately 64,235 Inuit live in Canada.

Find out more

- [Inuit Health: Selected findings from the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey](#)
- [Inuit history and culture: an introductory reading list](#)
- [Tungasuvvingat Inuit: Inuit community centre](#)
- [Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre](#)
- [Manitoba Inuit Association](#)

Inuktitut

Throughout Inuit Nunangat, Inuktitut is spoken; however, each region has its own dialect(s). There are two written styles of Inuktitut: syllabics and roman orthography.

Syllabics use symbols to represent sounds rather than letters. Roman orthography uses the English alphabet to sound out the words in Inuktitut.

Nanilavut: Let's find them

Tuberculosis in Canada was at epidemic proportions in the early twentieth century and peaked between the 1940s and 1960s. A significant number of Inuit were affected and sent away from their communities to undergo treatment.

Many patients were treated and returned home. Others succumbed to the illness and were buried in cemeteries near the treatment facilities.

To right historical wrongs, in 2010 the Government of Canada established a working group at the request of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., which includes:

- all Inuit Land Claim holders
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
- Pauktuutit
- the Government of Nunavut
- the Government of the Northwest Territories
- Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
- Health Canada

This group is called Nanilavut, which means "let's find them" in Inuktitut.

Through the guidance of the Nanilavut working group, comprehensive research was undertaken on finding Inuit lost loved ones from the past tuberculosis epidemic and a database is being finalized containing records of those that were sent away for medical treatment during the epidemic. The Government of Canada is working in partnership with Inuit leadership on the Nanilavut initiative in order to properly address this historical wrong.

In February 2017, the Prime Minister signed a declaration to create the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee, which advances the shared priorities of Inuit and the Government of Canada. Canada is working through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee to finalize the federal response to Nanilavut to help bring closure and begin the healing process for families and communities.

Building Inuit economic success, including art

According to the [2016 Census](#), the Inuit population is young, with a median age of 24. The Government of Canada has several programs and initiatives to help young Inuit fully participate in the Canadian economy.

The [First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy](#) supports initiatives that provide Inuit and First Nations youth with work experience, information about career options and opportunities to develop skills that help them gain employment and develop careers.

The [Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development](#) was launched in 2009 to guide federal actions towards increasing the participation of Inuit, First Nations and Métis in the Canadian economy. This was followed by the [Strategic Partnerships Initiative](#), in 2010, which helps to increase Aboriginal participation in complex economic opportunities.

As well, Inuit in Nunavut are currently participating in the [construction of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station](#). More than 65% of the construction packages have been awarded so far to Inuit-owned or Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. registered firms.

Inuit art

The arts are a vital element of Inuit culture and traditions. Cape Dorset in Nunavut is known as the "Capital of Inuit Art" and one out of five workers here are employed in the arts.

For decades, Inuit art has played an integral role in the Northern economy and contributed millions of dollars to the regional economy.

In July 2017, the Government of Canada officially transferred the responsibility for the management of the Igloo Tag trademark to the Inuit Art Foundation (IAF). This decision was taken after extensive consultations with members of the Inuit art industry. The objective of this transfer is to increase the Inuit art community's ability to regulate art in a way that benefit Inuit artists and help preserve the values of Inuit cultural heritage for generations to come.

The IAF supports Inuit artists and the development and appreciation of Inuit art and promotes Inuit artists from all four northern regions (Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut) in Canada and internationally.

INAC has developed a comprehensive analysis of the Inuit arts economy (i.e. fine arts, music, film, theatre and other forms). The study includes a full economic analysis of the Inuit arts economy in each of the four Inuit regions, as well as southern Canada. It will inform policy development to better support Inuit arts and artists in Canada.

Find out more

- [Impact of the Inuit arts economy](#)
- [The education and employment experiences of Inuit: Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2012](#)
- [Sustainable Development Working Group of the Arctic Council](#)

Devolution and land claims agreements in Inuit Nunangat

Northern governance and placing more control into the hands of Northerners have been a major part of Canada's [Northern Strategy](#).

- [Yukon Devolution](#)
- [Northwest Territories Devolution](#)
- [Nunavut Devolution](#)

Inuit [land claims agreements](#) have been signed in all four Inuit regions:

- The [James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement](#) in Nunavik in 1975
- The [Western Arctic \(Inuvialuit\) Claims Settlement Act](#) in Inuvialuit in 1984
- The [Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act](#) in Nunavut in 1993
- The [Land Claims Agreement between the Inuit of Labrador and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Newfoundland and Labrador and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada](#) in Nunatsiavut in 2005

Under their respective land claims agreements, Inuit were granted title to certain blocks of land. The four

land claims regions cover about 40 per cent of Canada's land mass.

- Under the *Western Arctic (Inuvialuit) Claims Settlement Act*, Inuvialuit of the [Inuvialuit Settlement Region](#) [pdf], have title to approximately 91,000 square kilometres of land.
- Under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act*, Inuit in Nunavut have title to 352,191 square kilometres of land.
- Inuit of Nunavik have title to 8,152 square kilometres of land and exercise some rights over 992,307.58 square kilometres of land. They also have title to approximately 5,100 square kilometres of land on the islands in the [Nunavik marine region](#).
- Under the *Land Claims Agreement between the Inuit of Labrador and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Newfoundland and Labrador and Her Majesty the Queen in Right Canada*, Inuit of Nunatsiavut have title to approximately 15,800 square kilometres of land within the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area and rights over 72,520 square kilometres of land in northern Labrador.

Government of Canada's apology for the Inuit High Arctic relocation

In August 2010, the [Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development apologized to Inuit families who were relocated in the 1950s to the High Arctic](#). During these relocations, Inuit families from Port Harrison (Inukjuak) in Northern Québec and Pond Inlet in Nunavut were moved to the High Arctic communities of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord (Craig Harbour) in Nunavut.

Inuit who were relocated had to adapt to colder climates and longer periods of total light or darkness. Inuit were separated from home communities and extended family were not provided with adequate shelter and supplies and were not properly informed of where they would be located or for how long.

The 2010 apology helped Inuit affected by the relocation continue to move towards healing and reconciliation.

Find out more

- [Map of Inuit relocation route](#)
- [Canada's Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development](#)
- [Reconciliation](#)
- [Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples](#)

Success stories

Learn more about community driven efforts that improve the lives of Inuit individuals, families and communities.

- [Students on Ice](#)
- [Nunavik Youth Hockey Development Program, Kuujjuaq, Quebec](#)

- [Nunavut Sivuniksavut expansion](#)
- [Orchestre symphonique de Montréal Nunavik Tour](#)
- [Sprouts Day Camp, Iqaluit, Nunavut](#)
- [Inuit Ullumi - Inuit Today: Arts, Culture and Business Festival](#)
- [Unikkausivut – Sharing our stories](#)

INAC's role

INAC negotiates and implements [Acts, agreements, treaties and land claims](#) on behalf of the Government of Canada. The department is also responsible for fulfilling obligations in historic treaties. Strong partnerships among Indigenous peoples, governments and the private sector continue to emerge as we address outstanding land claims and treaty issues and work toward [self-government](#).

INAC works with Inuit organizations, and territorial and provincial governments to build social well-being, economic prosperity and healthy communities for the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, Nunavut and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. This includes support for the Nunavik Housing Policy and coordinating the Nunatsiavut Housing Needs Assessment (issues that are outside of negotiated land claims agreements and are not covered through on-reserve housing policies and programs).

INAC promotes [circumpolar](#) cooperation and plays a role in the [Arctic Council](#).

Inuit organizations

INAC partners with many Inuit organizations, including:

- [Avataq Cultural Institute](#)
- [Inuit Circumpolar Council](#)
- [Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#)
- [Inuvialuit Regional Corporation](#)
- [Makivik Corporation](#)
- [National Inuit Youth Council](#)
- [Nunatsiavut Government](#)
- [Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated](#)
- [Pauktuutit - Inuit Women of Canada](#)

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