

Aboriginal People and National Aboriginal Organizations

INTRODUCTION

The different legal entitlements that apply to indigenous people in Canada are reflected in the different political organizations that exist at the national level to represent their various interests. Apart from a racial distinction between Inuit and so-called “Indian” peoples, a number of other classifications exist—most of them applying to the indigenous people referred to as “Indians”.

Status Indians are indigenous people with legal status under the *Indian Act*. The Inuit are expressly excluded from the application of the *Indian Act*, although they are “Indians” within the meaning of the word as used in s. 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Status Indians may be further subdivided into:

- treaty and non-treaty Indians
- band members with Indian status and band members without
- status Indians with band membership and those without
- “C-31” Indians (registered as a result of the 1985 amendments to the *Indian Act* aimed at eliminating sex discrimination in the entitlement provisions) and “regular” Indians (registered otherwise than under the 1985 amendments)
- Indians registered under s. 6(1) of the Act and therefore able to pass on status to their children even where the other parent is a non-Indian and s. 6(2) Indians who cannot pass on status to their children in the same circumstances.