

Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2001

Guidelines for researchers and analysts

The following guidelines are designed to assist analysts and researchers in preparing research proposals, and planning and carrying out their analyses using the Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2001.

Before undertaking analysis using the APS 2001

Before undertaking any analysis using the APS data, researchers and analysts should first familiarize themselves with the complexity of the APS 2001 and the resulting implications for analysis.

Regarding the research proposals, the "Project Proposal template", available on the Statistics Canada website (www.statcan.ca/english/rdc/apply.htm) provides an excellent description of the requirements of the research proposal and researchers are strongly advised to consult this template.

Researchers are also encouraged to use this document to ensure that they have addressed relevant elements of the **APS 2001** before submitting research proposals. Other documentation is available that will aid researchers in creating their research plans, including: the *APS 2001 – Concepts and Methods Guide*, APS 2001 questionnaires and Data Dictionaries. Go to <http://www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/indexa.htm> and click on 'Aboriginal Peoples Survey'.

On-reserve Aboriginal Population

The APS 2001 data for the on-reserve Aboriginal population will have to be analysed and interpreted with caution. As described in the *Concepts and Methods Guide*, the sampling plan focused on large reserves. As a result, the APS data for Aboriginal people living on the approximately 120 reserves selected for participation in the APS 2001 **are not representative of national or provincial on-reserve populations.** Data for the reserve communities are representative at the community-level only. Any aggregation of APS reserve data is representative only of the reserves that participated in APS, and cannot be considered representative of the total on-reserve population.

Off-reserve Aboriginal Population

The APS 2001 data for the off-reserve Aboriginal population are representative at the national, provincial and regional levels. Community-

level data are available for approximately 8 Métis settlements, 53 Inuit communities, 9 selected census metropolitan areas (Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver) and 35 other communities with a large number or high concentration of Aboriginal people.

Definitions of the Aboriginal Population

The APS 2001 uses similar concepts to those found on the Census of Population to define the Aboriginal population – **ethnic/cultural origin, Aboriginal identity, registered Indian status, and membership in an Indian Band or First Nation**. These concepts can be combined to create unique definitions of the Aboriginal population. The APS 2001 file contains several derived variables that represent the most commonly-used definitions of the Aboriginal population. Specifications of these definitions are included in each of the APS 2001 data dictionaries.

Generally the common definitions of the Aboriginal population are:

- **Aboriginal Identity Population** - This is the most commonly used definition of the Aboriginal population. Respondents were asked: *Are you an Aboriginal person, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit?* Individuals who responded in the affirmative are considered to “identify” as Aboriginal, thus part of the Aboriginal Identity population. Also included are those with registered Indian status, regardless of whether they “identify” with an Aboriginal group. The Aboriginal Identity population can be broken down into three Aboriginal groups (North American Indian, Métis, Inuit). Some respondents report identifying with more than one Aboriginal group (for example, both North American Indian and Métis).
- **Aboriginal Origin/Ancestry Population** - Respondents were asked if any of their ancestors belonged to an Aboriginal group (North American Indian, Métis, Inuit). The Aboriginal Origin/Ancestry population can also be broken down into three Aboriginal groups (North American Indian, Métis, Inuit). Again, some respondents report more than one Aboriginal group.

Specify your chosen definition of the Aboriginal population.

APS 2001 Analytical Files

Provide a preliminary list of the variables to be used in the analysis. Four analytical files are created:

Adult Core file, which contains information collected through the APS adult core questionnaire and selected variables from the 2001 Census, for all Aboriginal respondents 15 years and over.

Arctic file, which contains the variables found in the Adult core file and data from the Arctic supplemental questionnaire, for those Aboriginal respondents 15 years and over living in Inuit Communities.

Métis file, which contains the variables found in the Adult core file and data from the Métis supplemental questionnaire, for those respondents 15 years and over who reported Métis identity and/or Métis ancestry and who were living off-reserve and outside Inuit communities.

Children and Youth file, which contains information collected through the APS Children and Youth (under 15) questionnaire, and selected variables from the 2001 Census.

Each APS file that is placed in the RDCs has a data dictionary. The data dictionaries describe all variables (including derived variables) residing on the base. Users may also wish to consult the questionnaires.

Comparative Sources

Indicate any other sources of data and whether these data will be included as raw data or in tabular form.

Some surveys use different concepts to determine the Aboriginal population. For example, the Canadian Community Health Survey has used a slightly different concept (racial and cultural background) to define the Aboriginal population. When using comparative sources, it is important to consider how the target populations may differ from the APS 2001 population.

Specific populations of interest

Sample sizes will be needed that are sufficiently large both to respect confidentiality and to give reliable estimates. If the analysis is to be limited to a subgroup or domain (age groups, provinces, etc.), then provide a description of the sub-group or domain. For example: "This study will examine health determinants and outcomes of Aboriginal youth (15-24) living in urban areas."

Estimating Variance

Variance is a good indication of the quality of an estimate. All of the estimates obtained from the APS are based upon a sample of persons and not upon a

complete enumeration. As a result, some variability is associated with the sample.

Standard statistical analysis software like SAS or SPSS is not capable of handling the complex survey design of the APS 2001 when estimating the variance. Users have the option of employing the 'CV Estimation Tool' and the 'Bootstrap Weights' (see description below). Further information is available in the RDCs.

The 'CV Estimation Tool' – For simple cross-tabulations or frequency distribution at the person level, a simple interactive tool is available free of charge. Users select the domain of estimation and the percentage closest to the estimate and the program provides an approximation of the coefficient of variation and the lower and upper limits of the 95% confidence interval.

Bootstrap Weights using WESVAR – In order to obtain more precise and accurate estimates of variance, it is necessary to use the bootstrap weights.¹ As mentioned, standard statistical analysis software does not have an integrated bootstrap procedure; further steps will have to be carried out using the software WESVAR. Technical and practical details are provided in the RDCs.

¹ The bootstrap method consists of selecting a certain number of independent samples from the original sample, with replacement, and producing estimates for each sample. To get more detail on this procedure, see the *Concepts and Methods Guide*, Section 8.1 "Sampling Errors".