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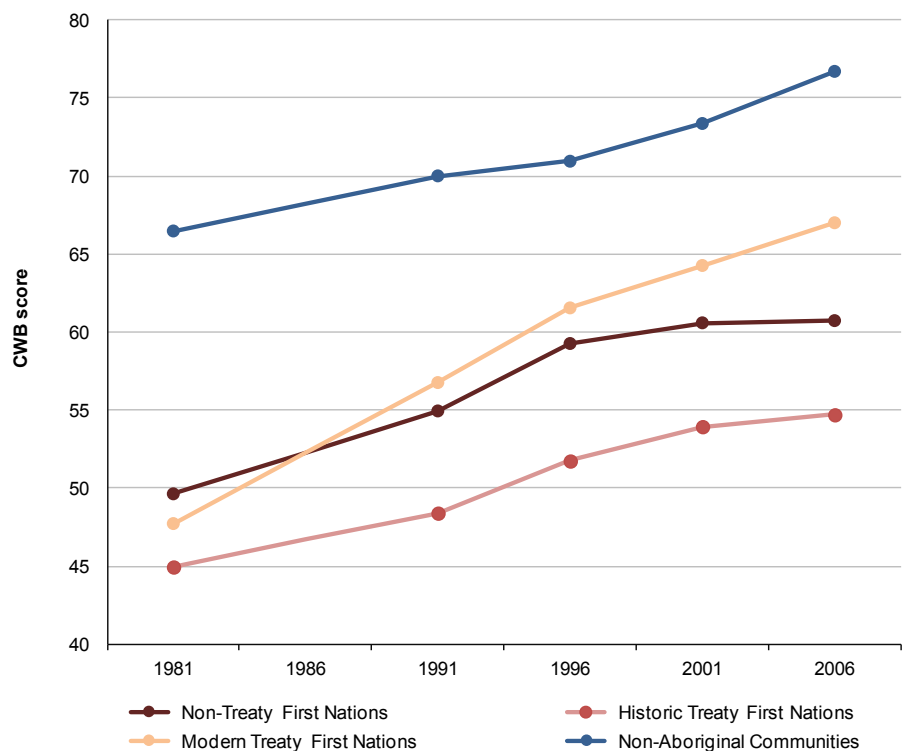
# Community Well-Being and Treaties

## TRENDS FOR FIRST NATION HISTORIC AND MODERN TREATIES

### Key findings:

- Since 1981, well-being has gradually improved in Historic and Modern Treaty First Nations.
- On average, both Modern Treaty and non-Treaty First Nations display higher well-being than Historic Treaty First Nations.
- The well-being of Modern Treaty First Nations improved twice as fast as Historic Treaty First Nations between 1981 and 2006.
- Prairie Historic Treaty First Nations present the lowest well-being scores of all Treaty First Nations.
- It is difficult to distinguish the impact of treaties on well-being from the impact of regional factors.

Figure 1: Average CWB scores, First Nation and non-Aboriginal communities, 1981-2006

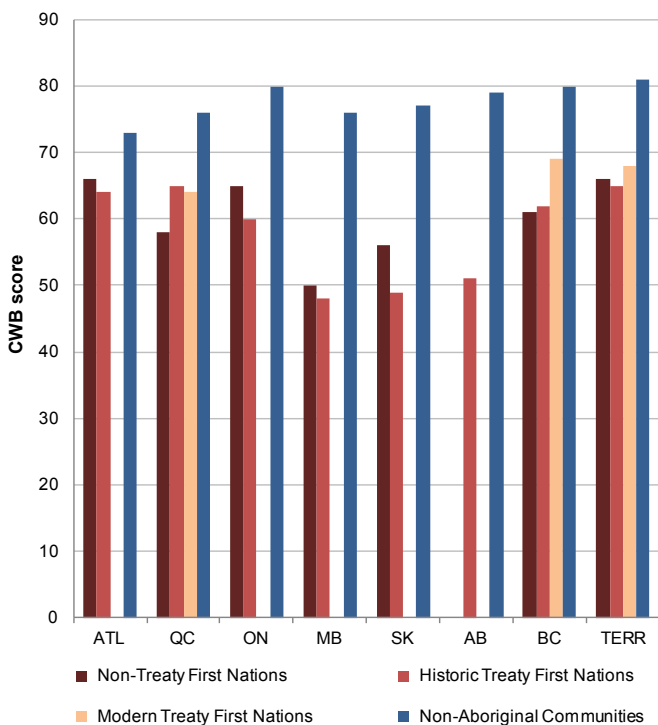


Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1981-2006, AANDC tabulations

### Introduction

This research brief reviews trends in the well-being of First Nation communities that are part of historic and modern-day treaties, using the Community Well-being Index (CWB). The CWB emphasizes social and economic well-being by measuring the state of education, labour force activity, income and housing in a community. CWB scores range from 0 (lowest well-being) to 100 (highest), with each component having an equal weight in the overall score. See endnotes for further details about Treaties and the CWB methodology.

**Figure 2: Average CWB scores by region, First Nation and non-Aboriginal communities, 2006**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006, AANDC tabulations

## Main Findings

### First Nation and non-Aboriginal CWB scores

Since 1981, CWB scores gradually increased in First Nation and non-Aboriginal communities (Figure 1). The pattern shows small improvements in almost all communities. The gap between First Nation and non-Aboriginal communities narrowed prior to 2001.

On average in 2006, CWB scores for First Nations remained about 20 points lower than for non-Aboriginal communities. Among the “bottom 100” Canadian communities, 96 were First Nations. At the same time, only one First Nation community ranked among the “top 100”.

### Historic and Modern Treaties CWB scores

As shown on figure 1, the 2006 CWB score for Modern Treaty First Nations (67) is 12 points higher than for Historic Treaty First Nations (55). Relative to non-Aboriginal communities (77), the well-being gap for Modern Treaty First Nations is less than half the gap observed for Historic Treaty First Nations. It is also worth noting that non-Treaty First Nations (61) also present an average score higher than Historic Treaty First Nations. The fact that about a third of these non-Treaty First Nations are engaged in modern treaty negotiations (on December 31, 2012) could, in part, explain their elevated CWB score.

In 1981, Historic and Modern Treaty First Nations had similar levels of community well-being. However, between 1981 and 2006, the CWB index of Modern Treaty First Nations (+19) improved at nearly twice the pace of Historic Treaty First Nations (+10). Additionally, between 2001 and 2006, while progress in well-being virtually flattened for Historic Treaty First Nations, Modern Treaty First Nations kept pace with non-Aboriginal communities.

### Components of CWB Scores

Analysis of each individual component of the CWB over time (1981-2006) reveals that, on average, Modern Treaty First Nations fare better than Historic Treaty First Nations. Specifically:

- While the gap relative to non-Aboriginal communities remains significant, education has improved across all Treaty First Nations. Improvements were driven mainly by higher high school completion rates.
- With respect to labour force activity and income, the gap between Historic Treaty First Nations and non-Aboriginal communities grew slightly between 1981 and 2006, while Modern Treaties closed their gap by about half.
- Historic and Modern Treaty First Nations show very different trends in housing conditions. Modern Treaty First Nations have made improvements between 1981 and 2001, while Historic Treaty First Nations show virtually no progress. Previous analysis has shown that improvements in housing quantity (crowding) were offset by declines in quality (need for major repairs).

### Regional variations in CWB scores

CWB scores vary across provinces and regions (Figure 2). Scores are lowest among First Nations in the Prairies, most of which have Historic Treaties and none of which have modern ones. This makes it difficult to distinguish the effects of treaties from the effects of other regional factors, particularly since Historic Treaty First Nations outside of the Prairies do not seem disadvantaged. First Nations in Prairie Provinces represent about 45% of all First Nation people in 2006.

### Variations in CWB scores across Treaties

Table 1 presents the 2006 CWB score for individual Historic and Modern Treaties. Irrespective of the type of treaties, the first feature of this table is the large variation in well-being across Treaties. CWB scores for Historic Treaties vary from 46 to 69 points, while Modern Treaties range from 54 to 89 points.

The second noticeable feature of this table is that the lowest scores are found within the Prairie Historic Treaties. Historic Treaties located in other provinces and territories compare favorably to Modern Treaties.

## Conclusion

Caution is recommended when interpreting these results. First, causality is not statistically demonstrated by this analysis. While modern treaties might provide greater opportunities than historic treaties for improving well-being, it is equally plausible that better-off First Nations may be more likely to engage in and successfully conclude modern treaty negotiations.

Second, the apparent relationship between modern treaties and improved well-being (relative to historic treaties) is likely the result of multiple intervening factors, such as: location,

natural resources and economic opportunities, leadership and good governance, safe communities and healthy families.

Nevertheless, studies (see references) have concluded that self-determination and engagement – both key elements of modern treaty-making – are also key factors in improving well-being in First Nation communities. That perspective does seem to be echoed in this statistical analysis.

**Table 1: CWB scores of individual First Nation Historic and Modern Treaties, 2006**

Treaty	Year	Prov/Terr	CWB
<b>Historic Treaties</b>			
Williams Treaties/ Upper Canada Treaties	1764-1923	ON	69
Robinson-Huron	1850	ON	69
Douglas Treaties	1850-1854	BC	65
Peace & Friendship Treaties	1725-1779	NB/NS/PE	64
Treaty 11	1921	NT/YT/NU	62
Treaty 3	1873	ON/MB	59
Robinson-Superior	1850	ON	59
Treaty 9	1905	ON/MB	55
Treaty 8	1899	SK/AB/BC/	54
Treaty 4	1874	MB/SK/AB	52
Treaty 7	1877	AB	50
Treaty 5	1875	ON/MB/SK	49
Treaty 1	1871	MB	49
Treaty 10	1906	SK/AB	49
Treaty 6	1876	SK/AB	47
Treaty 2	1871	MB/SK	46
<b>Modern Treaties</b>			
Tsawwassen First Nation Agreement	2009	BC	89
Yukon Umbrella Agreement	1995-2005	YT	75
Sahtu Dene and Métis Agreement	1994	NWT	67
Nisga'a Agreement	2000	BC	65
James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (Cree only)	1975	QC	65
Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement	1992	BC	64
Maa-nulth First Nation's Agreement	2005	BC	61
Tlicho	2005	BC	59
Northeastern Québec Agreement	1978	QC	54

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## References

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## Notes on Methodology

### The Community Well-Being Index

The Community Well-Being Index (CWB) uses data from the Census of Population. CWB scores range from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest).

The CWB measures four dimensions of well-being:

- Education (percent of adults in community that completed high school; percent with a university degree);
- Labour force activity (percent of adults in the labour force; percent employed);
- Income (total income per person in the community); and
- Housing (percent of community members living in non-crowded houses; percent living in houses that do not require major repairs).

CWB Indices have been calculated for 1981, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006.

Communities are defined in terms of census subdivisions (CSDs). CSDs are municipalities or other areas such as Indian reserves that are regarded as the equivalent of municipalities.

Related CWB articles and maps can be found at:  
<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016579/1100100016580>.

### Geography of Treaty First Nations

For the purpose of this statistical analysis :

- All First Nations that are part of a signed modern-day treaty as of December 31, 2012 were included in this trend analysis of the CWB scores for Modern Treaty First Nations;
- First Nations that are both part of historic and modern-day treaties have been classified as Modern Treaty First Nations;
- First Nations without Treaty include First Nations that are actively engaged in modern treaty negotiations as of December 31, 2012; and
- The CWB component analysis is limited to communities with a population size of 250 or more.

Related maps can be found at:

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100032297/1100100032309>;  
and <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/Map/ngtble/ngtble-eng.asp>.

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