

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

The First Nations (formerly known as Indian) peoples include:

- 1. Innu of Labrador (and Quebec)**

The Innu live in Natuashish and Sheshatshiu. Each community has a chief and council (Mushuau Innu First Nation and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation respectively). Together they make up the Innu Nation. Their language, Innu-aimun, is the first language of all Innu although education is in English. There are about 2300 Innu in the province, with the vast majority living in the two communities. See www.innu.ca

- 2. Mi'kmaq**

The Mi'kmaq live all over the island but are concentrated on the West and South Coasts and Central Newfoundland. The Federation of Newfoundland (FNI) has 11 member bands. Mi'kmaq speak English in this province; like the majority of Aboriginal languages in Canada, the Mi'kmaq language is a threatened language elsewhere in Canada. See <http://qalipu.ca/>. The only reserve on the island of Newfoundland is a Mi'kmaq reserve at Conne River (Miawpukek First Nation), home to about 800 people with 1700 living off-reserve.

When Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949 the Indian Act was not applied. This meant that First Nations people in this province did not have reserves, status, or access to many of the benefits enjoyed by other First Nations people in Canada. Miawpukek became a reserve in 1987 -- after a long struggle. The Innu were registered and reserves established earlier this decade, again after a long struggle for recognition

Inuit

- 1. Inuit of Nunatsiavut**

The Inuit of Nunatsiavut, whose heartland is the North Coast of Labrador, consists of five communities as well as others in Central Labrador. There are several thousand Nunatsiavut Inuit. They settled their land claim in 2005 and established the Nunatsiavut Government (NG). Some Inuit in Hopedale and Nain in particular speak Inuktitut and one of the priorities of the NG is to preserve the language. See www.nunatsiavut.com

- 2. Southern Inuit of NunatuKavut's**

The Southern Inuit of NunatuKavut's heartland is the South Coast of Labrador from Lodge Bay to Paradise River although members live in Central Labrador and elsewhere. There are several thousand Southern Inuit, formerly known as Metis. Their first language is now English although, as in some Nunatsiavut communities where Inuktitut is no longer the language of daily life, 'pieces of Inuktitut' survive. The NunatuKavut land claim is not yet settled although progress is being made. See <http://www.nunatukavut.ca/home>

This above information was extracted from **Basic fact sheet prepared for faculty and staff of Memorial University by Maura Hanrahan, Ph.D., Special Advisor for Aboriginal Affairs** at <http://staff.library.mun.ca/staff/staffdir/acadcouncil/feb12/WhoAreAboriginalPeoplesNewfoundlandLabrador.pdf>