

Socio-demographic Portrait

The Nunavik territory is a remote area characterized by a high proportion of young people and with different housing arrangements than the rest of Quebec. The Nunavik Inuit Health Survey 2004 revealed that forty percent of Inuit are under the age of 15. The average size of Nunavik households is 4.7 persons, which is almost double that of the rest of Quebec. Most Inuit are living in households with other family members because of a high birth rate and a shortage of residences, and very few live alone, regardless of their marital status. Multiple family households represent 31% of Nunavik households.

The proportion of adopted children aged 17 and under is 29% among Nunavik Inuit. The observed adoption rate, which appears very high when compared to the rest of Quebec, is consistent with the age-old Inuit tradition of custom adoptions, defined as a privately arranged adoption. The average age at adoption for the adoptive mother and father are 38 and 43 years old respectively.

The level of education observed is significantly lower among Nunavik Inuit than that of the general population. Of the Inuit aged 15 and over, 22% have obtained a secondary school diploma or more which is substantially lower than that in the rest of Quebec (68%). Young Inuit have a higher level of education than their elders. Moreover, a positive trend is observed for the 18-29 age group, with 27% having completed secondary school in 2004, compared to 19% in 1992. Besides, 72% of individuals aged 15-29 plan to continue their education in the future.

Inuit also have limited opportunities for higher-paying and steady jobs: they have extremely low incomes and a significant proportion have a precarious job status. Survey results reveal that 70% of participants aged 15 and over were employed at the time of the study. Among people who work only 67% had a full-time job, indicating a large proportion of people with a precarious job

status. People who had completed secondary school were more likely to be employed than those with less than secondary school education (83% vs. 66%). There is also significant improvement compared to the 1992 survey results which observed an employment rate of only 53%. The employment rate is higher on the Ungava coast at 75%, compared to 67% on the Hudson coast. The relationship between area of residence and occupation during the two weeks prior to the survey suggests that traditional activities occupy a greater place in the daily lives of the Inuit living along the Hudson coast.

Inuit have a much poorer overall appreciation of their health status than do other Quebecers. Only 22% of Inuit consider themselves in excellent or very good shape compared to 57% in Quebec. It should be noted that definitions of health vary among cultural groups and that perception of personal health status may be influenced by one's cultural experience.

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STATISTICAL ANALYSES

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