
MÉTIS VOICES. MÉTIS CONSTITUTION.

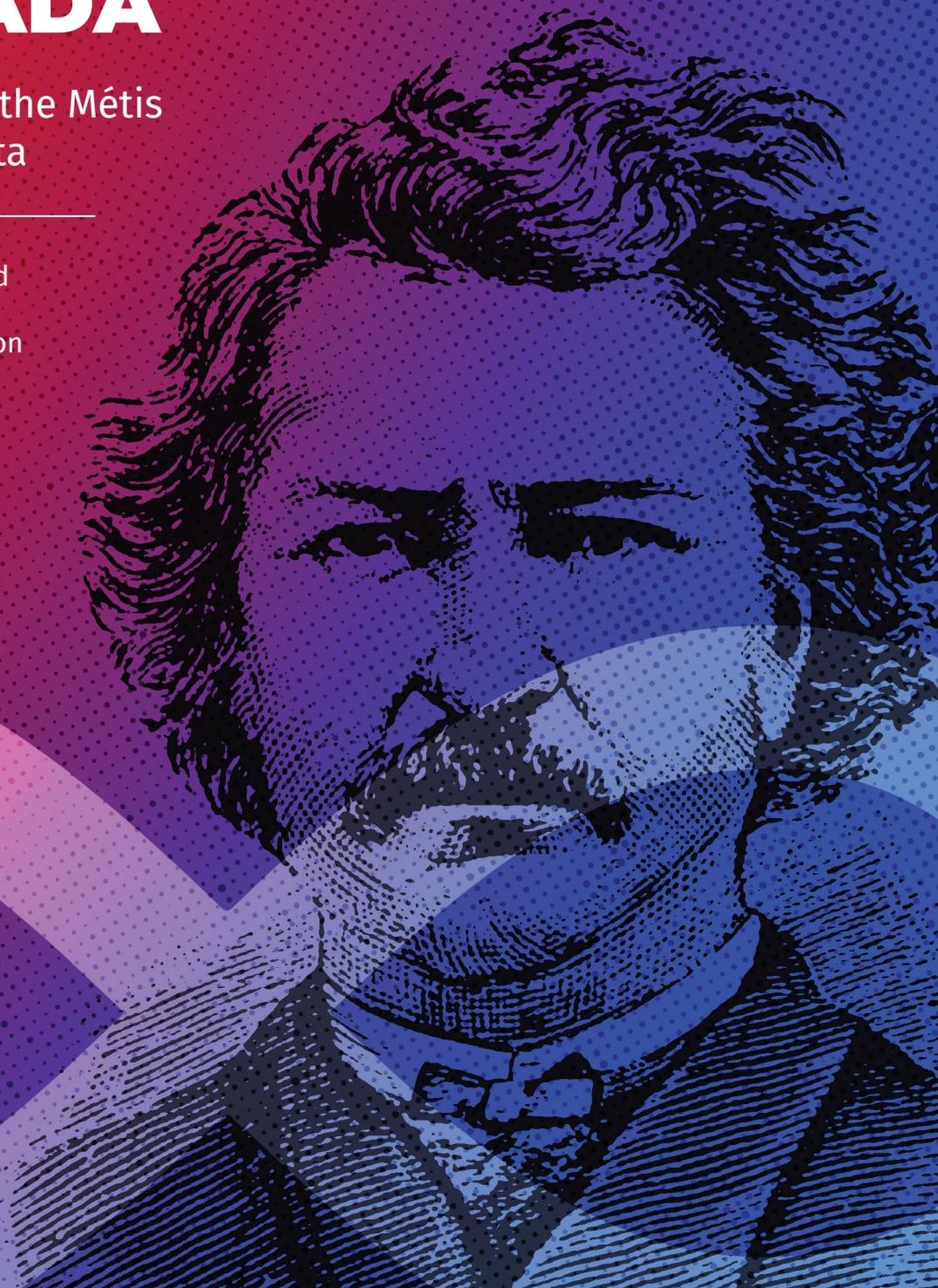


SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CANADA

The Government of the Métis
Nation within Alberta

This document was prepared
by the MNA Constitution
Commission for consideration
by MNA Citizens

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There are 25 self-government agreements across Canada involving 43 Indigenous communities, and 50 self-government negotiation tables. [See a map of current agreements here.](#)

Self-government agreements address (among other things) the following:

- The structure of the new government and its relationship with other governments.
- New funding arrangements.
- The relationship of laws between jurisdictions, such as how different laws will work together.
- How programs and services will be delivered to community members.
- Ways to promote improved community well-being, often with a focus on Indigenous languages, heritage, and culture and socio-economic initiatives.

The goal of reconciliation is to renew nation-to-nation and government-to-government relationships between federal and Indigenous governments. The Government of Canada [acknowledges](#) that this requires “*working in partnership with Indigenous peoples to undo federally imposed systems of governance and administration in favour of Indigenous control and delivery.*” Self-government negotiations are how we work together towards this goal and advance Indigenous self-determination, which is a fundamental Indigenous right and principle of international law, as set out in UNDRIP.

To [quote](#) the Government of Canada directly:

- The Government of Canada recognizes that all relations with Indigenous peoples need to be based on the recognition and implementation of their right to self-determination, including the inherent right of self-government.
- The Government of Canada recognizes that Indigenous self-government is part of Canada’s evolving system of cooperative federalism and distinct orders of government.

Negotiated agreements put decision-making power into the hands of Indigenous governments who make their own choices about how to deliver programs and services to their communities. This can include making decisions about how to better protect their culture and language, educate their students, manage their own lands, and develop new business partnerships that create jobs and other benefits for their citizens.



Because communities have different goals, negotiations will not result in a single model of self-government. Arrangements take many forms based on the different historical, cultural, political, and economic circumstances of the Indigenous governments, regions and communities involved. For example: Inuit land claim agreements have been signed in all 4 Inuit regions. These Inuit communities are pursuing their vision of self-determination under these agreements and in some cases through ongoing self-government negotiations. The Métis are also actively pursuing their own vision of self-determination through ongoing engagement with their citizens and through dialogue at Recognition of Rights and Self-Determination discussion tables with the Government of Canada.

Self-government is part of the foundation for a renewed relationship and is a pathway to development and economic growth that generates benefits for Indigenous peoples.

The signing of the **Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement (MGRSA)** in 2019 was a major milestone, as it was the first ever self-government agreement between Canada and any Métis government. The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and Métis Nation of Ontario have signed similar agreements. Now, the MGRSA explicitly recognizes the Métis Nation within Alberta as having an inherent and constitutionally protected right to self-government. The days of denial are behind us.

The MGRSA outlines steps the MNA must take to be recognized as a Métis government in federal legislation. These steps are:

- MNA citizens to ratify their constitution
- The Government of Canada and the MNA negotiate a fiscal agreement, intergovernmental relations agreement, and transition plan
- The MNA adopts core laws needed to function

Following the ratification of the MNA's Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, the Government of Canada must pass enabling legislation. The legislation implementing the MGRSA will give Canada the legal tools it needs to recognize the MNA as a government with the power to make laws regarding citizenship, leadership, and governmental operations. This legislation will also allow for ongoing negotiations to expand recognition of the MNA's jurisdiction to make laws about matters important to Métis Albertans, including rights, language, culture and heritage, education, housing, environment, land, and social welfare, among other things.