

From  
the Past

Into  
the Future

Manitoba  
**Métis**  
Policy

**SUMMARY**

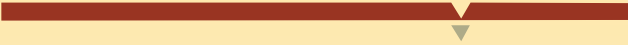
**Government of Manitoba**

SEPTEMBER 2010

## Introduction

The Government of Manitoba and the Manitoba Metis Federation formally agreed to work together to prepare the Métis Policy in 2008. Both agreed that the goals of the policy would be to strengthen the capacity of the Métis people in Manitoba to address current and emerging economic and social issues, and achieve greater self-reliance and socio-economic well-being. To do this, the Government of Manitoba and the Manitoba Metis Federation worked together on the basis of trust and respect, built upon existing partnership relationships and focused efforts on their mutual interests.

In the months that followed, the province and the federation held internal and joint meetings, information sessions in every region of the province, workshops and focus groups, town hall meetings, and interviews with academics and external groups serving Métis people. This highly participatory process contributed significantly to a greater understanding of Métis people's priorities and how to address them. The Métis Policy was shaped by this feedback.



The Métis Policy describes the process that the Government of Manitoba will use to both close the gap in quality of life and promote excellence for the estimated 71,810 Métis people living in the province. It builds on the cultural distinctness of the Métis as a defining feature of Manitoba's social fabric and the knowledge that enhancing Métis goals and prosperity strengthens Manitoba's social and economic vibrancy. Through the Métis Policy, we can ensure that we understand and recognize the Métis for their contributions to Manitoba and to Canada, and create the tools for Métis people to participate fully and benefit equally from what society has to offer.

The Métis Policy Principles and Framework are not based on any evaluation or assessment of Aboriginal rights. They are not intended to define any Aboriginal rights of the Métis in Manitoba and do not affect any Aboriginal rights of Métis people in Manitoba.



# Métis Policy Principles

The Métis Policy is guided by the following five principles.

## **Recognition Principle**

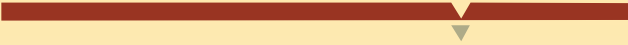
The Métis were leaders in the creation of the Province of Manitoba.

The Métis are a distinct Aboriginal people in Manitoba with a unique history, culture and aspirations to be protected and nurtured while respecting diverse Métis needs and the common values shared by all Manitobans.

## **Partnership Principle**

The Manitoba Metis Federation is a political representative of Métis people in Manitoba and represents in Manitoba the Métis who collectively refer to themselves as the Métis Nation.

The Manitoba Metis Federation provides advice to the provincial government in priority setting, policy and program development to make sure that Métis interests are properly reflected in programs and services that affect Métis.



The renewed relationship between the Government of Manitoba and the Manitoba Metis Federation will be ongoing, based on mutual respect, reciprocity, understanding, responsibility, sharing and transparency.

### **Comprehensive Principle**

An integrated and coordinated approach to Métis issues will promote greater consistency and help ensure equity of access and the effectiveness and efficiency of resources available to the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Government of Manitoba.

### **Capacity Principle**

The Manitoba Metis Federation and Government of Manitoba will have the resources to meaningfully participate in their renewed relationship within the overall priorities of, and resources available to the Government of Manitoba.

### **Accountability Principle**

The Manitoba Metis Federation and the Government of Manitoba are accountable to their respective constituencies and to each other.

# Métis Policy Framework

The Métis Policy Framework is a guide for the Government of Manitoba in its relationships with Métis people and the Manitoba Metis Federation and importantly, on developing a Métis Policy Action Plan.

The framework is made up of four complementary areas designed to work as an integrated whole:

## **Enhance Métis People's Participation**

The first element aims to better inform, get feedback from and where appropriate, involve Métis people in decision-making processes of the Government of Manitoba. Enhancing Métis people's participation will improve the channels of communication between the province and both the Manitoba Métis people and the Manitoba Metis Federation, thereby facilitating a better understanding of Métis interests, needs and aspirations. With this improved understanding, decision-making processes and the sustainability of solutions will be improved. Enhanced participation also involves regular feedback on the ways that input was used, enhancing transparency and accountability.




## **Better Understanding**

The second element will create a capacity within the Government of Manitoba to better understand the implications of government policy and programming decisions and to put practices in place that value and respond respectfully to Métis culture as an integral part of Manitoba's heritage and future prosperity. Processes to enhance our understanding of Métis history, culture and values will promote a strong sense of pride among Métis people, help to overcome racism, and create a respectful relationship with people who are not Métis. A better understanding of Métis circumstances is fundamental to an evidence-based approach to the implementation of the Métis Policy.

## **Distinctions-Based Approach**

A distinctions-based approach expands the role of the Métis people in Government of Manitoba decision-making and problem-solving processes, the implementation of policy and programming, and in the delivery of services. However, the Métis are a diverse people and respecting these differences in a Métis-specific approach is not a clear-cut exercise. A long-term commitment to deal with the distinct nature of



Métis culture, with full regard for both the diversity of Métis people and the common values that hold our society together will be necessary. The Métis Policy will not affect any Métis person's ability to choose Métis-specific programs or programs of general application.

## **Improved Relationships**

Respectful, revitalized formal and informal relationships between the Government of Manitoba, Métis people and the Manitoba Metis Federation will be fostered in each element of the Métis Policy Framework. Recognition of the Manitoba Metis Federation as the primary representative of Métis people is an important part of formalizing relationships. At the same time, there are a number of organizations widely recognized as stakeholders in Métis issues, either as service providers, cultural knowledge providers or researchers. The Métis Policy will build on these resources by better aligning and coordinating efforts that support the overall goals of the policy.