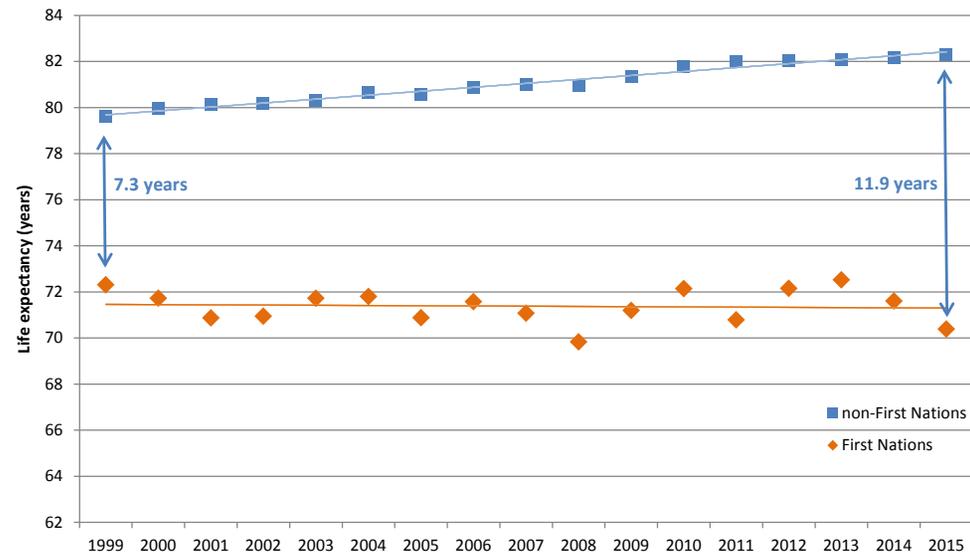


Trends in life expectancy over time for First Nations in Alberta

Life expectancy at birth by First Nations status and year, Alberta, 1999-2015

Life expectancy at birth is the average number of years a newborn baby is expected to live if current death trends apply. It is determined by a number of factors that include genetic, social, and environmental conditions. In a previous edition of *First Nations—Health Trends Alberta*, life expectancy at birth was presented by country and by First Nations status in Alberta. Here, we present life expectancy between 1999 and 2015 for non-First Nations and First Nations in the province separately.¹

For non-First Nations, life expectancy at birth rose between 1999 and 2015 from 79.6 to 82.3 years. This increase was observed in both men (77.1 to 80.0 years) and women (82.1 to 84.6 years). For First Nations in the province, however, life expectancy remained around the same over this time period: an average of 71.4 years. This was true for both males and females with life expectancies averaging 69.5 and 73.6 years, respectively. Because life expectancy rose over time for non-First Nations but remained similar in First Nations, the gap in life expectancy between these populations widened from 7.3 years in 1999 to 11.9 years in 2015.



The gap in life expectancy between First Nations and non-First Nations in Alberta is widening

An average life expectancy of 71.4 in First Nations in Alberta between 1999 and 2015 is comparable to life expectancy at birth for the general population of Canada in the early 1960s.² This disparity between First Nations and non-First Nations in Alberta is similar to inequities reported between indigenous people and their non-indigenous counterparts in other developed countries. In Australia, for example, the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their non-indigenous counterparts in 2010-2012 was estimated to be 10.6 and 9.5 years for males and females, respectively.³ Unlike in Alberta, however, this gap has narrowed in Australia since 2005-2007, decreasing by 0.8 and 0.1 years in males and females, respectively.

¹ This is the 5th in a series of First Nations-specific Health Trends compiled in collaboration by Alberta Health and the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre (AFNIGC). To suggest future topics, please contact the AFNIGC (communications@afnigc.ca; 403-539-5775).

² <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/health26-eng.htm> (Accessed online March 3, 2016).

³ <http://www.aihw.gov.au/deaths/life-expectancy/> (Accessed online March 3, 2016).