

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

**REFORMING THE MN-S CONSTITUTION
AND RELATED LEGISLATION**



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Value of Métis Traditional Practices and Customs

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM CONSULTATIONS on Métis Values & Principles

- ⊗ Family & Kinship Relations
- ⊗ Métis Culture & Language
- ⊗ Land & Territory
- ⊗ Democracy
- ⊗ Identity & Citizenship
- ⊗ Leadership & Accountability
- ⊗ Duality of Religion & Spirituality
- ⊗ Freedom & Equality
- ⊗ Transparency & Awareness

Value of Métis Traditional Practices and Customs

FAMILY & KINSHIP RELATIONS - *Miyeu Waahkooyoowin* (good relations or being related in a good way)

- ⊗ The family unit is the foundation of Métis culture
- ⊗ Kinship is central to Métis identity
- ⊗ Centrality of kinship relations rooted in the fur trade where reciprocal relations developed over the Northwest
- ⊗ Kinship relations reaches across time and space, linking people and communities throughout the 'Historic Métis Nation Homeland'
- ⊗ Activities, assemblies, celebrations, festivals and events reconnect families (extended families and relatives)
- ⊗ Throughout history – ability to collaborate, hunt, tell stories and rejoice with each other, build our Nation

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CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

- ⊗ Métis emerged as a distinct people, who developed a unique culture, identity, language, way of life and political consciousness as a new Indigenous Nation in the Historic Northwest
- ⊗ Collective identity that was constituted through the struggles of the 19th century & that persists to this day as Riel's people
- ⊗ Métis possess symbols of nationhood – distinctive flag, national anthem, a unique language (Michif with various regional dialects), music and art
- ⊗ Métis ways of knowing and “think from a Métis perspective”
- ⊗ Acknowledging the individual and respecting the good of the collective
- ⊗ Diversity of the Métis & other terms e.g., *apitahwikosisan* in Cree

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LAND AND TERRITORY

- ⊗ Deep connection to Land and the relationship between the Métis and the Land is a vital part Métis Self-Government
- ⊗ Identity of the Métis Nation come from and are tied to the Land
- ⊗ Land gives us our deep sense of place and our sense of self
- ⊗ Share in the economy of our traditional territories
- ⊗ Relationship with the Land occurs at both the physical and the spiritual level
- ⊗ Secure Métis lands or land Rights, Economic Rights & negotiate Land Claims throughout Saskatchewan
- ⊗ Harvesting is connected to our relationship to the Land & Independence

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DEMOCRACY

- ⊗ Commitment to fulfilling Riel & Dumont's vision of a self-governing Métis Nation within Canada and described in Michif as ***ka tipaymishooyahk (we who own ourselves)***
- ⊗ Right to live as ***ka ishi pimaatishiyaahk (our way of life)***
- ⊗ Governance is based on the ballot-box system
- ⊗ Exercising the right to live in freedom whereby Métis men and women can enjoy their civil, political rights, economic, social, language and cultural rights
- ⊗ *Constitution Act*, s. 35 recognizes and affirms Métis as one of the three Aboriginal peoples of Canada
- ⊗ Acknowledge that Métis people have struggled against often overwhelming odds to reclaim traditional Homelands and assert nationhood

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IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP

- ⊗ People are the foundation of the Métis Nation
- ⊗ People are the citizens of the Métis Nation that share language, stories, community history and family relationships
- ⊗ People hold collective memories of the past and share long term dreams for their children
- ⊗ Strengthening individual identity and protection of the collective good and interests
- ⊗ Understanding collective accountability and responsibility
- ⊗ Each person alone is accountable and responsible for their conduct (e.g., respectful behavior, support of collective interests)
- ⊗ Respect and uphold Métis cultural values & language

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LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- ⊗ Selection of leaders through a combination of deliberation, dialogue and representative democratic processes ensures the legitimacy of ***ka niikaaniichik (those who lead us)***
- ⊗ Trust, Respect and Transparency are essential to self-government along with compassionate leadership
- ⊗ Representation (local, regional, women & youth) begins at the community level through ballot-box elections
- ⊗ Fostering balance of power among various components of government through assemblies and ballot-box elections
- ⊗ Power invested in leaders must be continuously renewed by the people through elections, assemblies & other mechanisms

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DUALITY OF RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

- ⊗ Duality in beliefs is a reality for Métis – spiritually minded and devoutly Christian
- ⊗ Respect the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- ⊗ ***Miyeu maahkootowin (good relations or being related in a good way)*** finds expression in opening and closing ceremonies, assemblies, gatherings with the involvement of elders, women and Locals
- ⊗ Respect for conservation in harvesting and connection to the Land

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FREEDOM AND EQUALITY

- ⊗ Riel's vision of freedom for his people – the freedom to live, trade and organize as Métis people...
- ⊗ In the past, developed various governance structures to achieve freedom and remain ***ka tipaymishooyahk (we who own ourselves)***
- ⊗ Individual freedom rooted in larger collective (Métis distinct)
- ⊗ Equal rights of men and women to enjoy all civil and political rights
- ⊗ Acknowledge the role of Métis women as 'mothers of the Métis Nation' as evidenced in historic and contemporary contributions to the Métis Nation as a whole

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TRANSPARENCY AND AWARENESS

- ⊗ Establish fair and open sharing processes and procedures in decision-making
- ⊗ Transparency minimizes the opportunity for preferential treatment and the advancement of private interests over public good
- ⊗ Listen to all citizens ensuring their voice is heard
- ⊗ Respectful engagement and empowerment as a people and eliminate lateral violence
- ⊗ Transparency and accountability in all environments

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Questions and Comments
Maarsi and Thank you

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