It's all about them: Ethnicity/Aboriginality in the Americas

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Outline

- Historical reminder

- The measurement of aboriginality in the Censuses
  - Indicators
  - Estimates

- The measurement of aboriginality in the Latino Barometro
  - Methodology, indicators
  - Estimates

- Why are estimates so variable? Canada as a case study.
  - Methodology, indicators
  - Estimates of variability
  - Who are they?

- Conclusion

When it all started

A reminder

- As Europeans – Spanish, Portuguese, French, British, Dutch, etc. – settled in the Americas, it was the start of:
  - To a greater or lesser extent,
    - The emergence of "us" --Whites --and "them" --"Indians", Inuit, etc.
    - In the same way as "we" --French, British, Spanish, etc. – were all whites, they – Cree, Aymara, Quechua, Inca, Sioux – were all Indians (or Red).
    - "We" were almost only men and therefore, intermixing took place and Métis/Meztizos/half-blood were born.
  - A question arised with the "classification era": How do we classify the Métis? Are they White or Indian?
    - One answer was to classify according to the way people live.
    - In Canada, a specific "nation" emerged with its own invented language "mischief".
    - In some Latin American countries, the term Mestizo is used to speak of people whose skin colour is white.

And later on,...

- 18th-19th Century: White people brought African people as slaves. They became the "Black people".

- 20th Century: wars, political and economic problems brought people from all over the World to immigrate into the Americas.

- And the Censuses needed answers to specific questions:
  - Who do we count?
  - How do we count?
  - Which categories do we use?

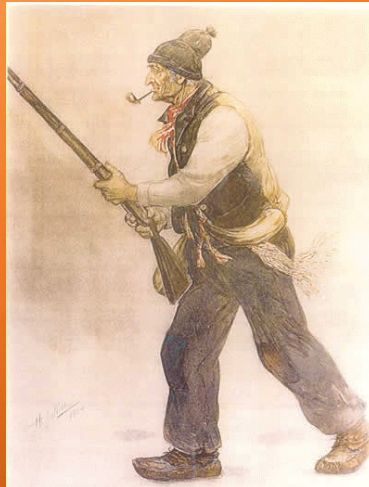# Why do we want to classify according to ethnicity?

- Reason no. 1:
  - We want to measure inequalities according to ethnicity in order to fight them.

- Reason no. 2:
  - Governments want to count the number of people they are indebted to, i.e., Aboriginals.

- Reason no. 3:
  - Opinions, voting preferences, attitudes may vary according to ethnicity.

- We end up asking:
  - What is ethnicity?
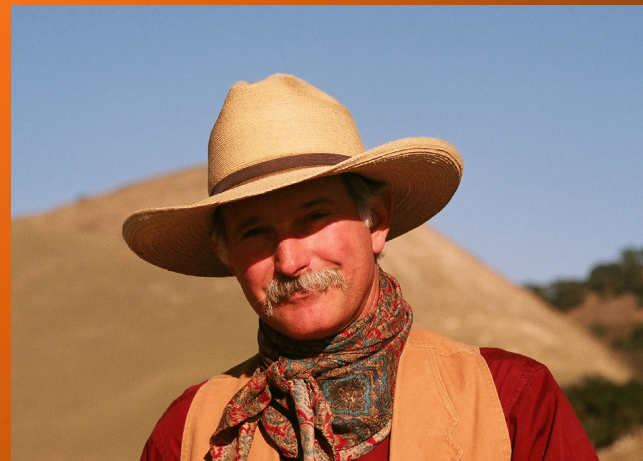 - How should we measure it,... or should we?

Who are "they"? Who are "we"?

Aboriginal

Opening of the fourteenth session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

French Canadian

American

Who are they?

Evo Morales, president Bolivia

Alexandre Dumas, mulato/Black

Alexandre Pushkin, mulato/Black

Carey Price, Métis, goaltender (hockey)

An Indian, a Métis, a Mulato may not look much different from any other citizen. Therefore, he/she may choose to reveal – or not – his/her identity. And...Indigenous in Peru, you become Hispanic in North America.

The measurement of aboriginality in the Censuses

Indicators

- **Self-identification:** All countries, except U.S.A., Cuba, Peru & Uruguay.
  - Are you...(4)?
  - Se considera, se reconece? Do you consider yourself? (8)
  - Pertenece? Do you belong?To a nation, grupo poblacional,...(11)

- **Physical traits** (7):
  - Four countries use "race": U.S., Brazil, Jamaica & El Salvador.

- Origins (3):
  - Canada, Uruguay, Argentina.

- **Residence in a Native territory** (4):
  - Canada, Columbia, Panama, Paraguay.

- **Culture**:
  - Language (11): In Peru, sole indicator

- Legal status: Canada, Brazil (?)

The measurement of aboriginality in the Censuses

The Métis/Mestizo/half-blood category

- Six (6) Latin American countries propose a "Métis" category: Costa Rica, Cuba, Equador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Nicaragua.
  - In Costa Rica, Métis and White are in same category.
  - In Cuba, Métis and Mulatto are in same category
  - In Nicaragua, "Métis of the Caribbean Coast" is considered an Indigenous group.
- In Canada, the Métis category – the French term is used – appeared in the Census in 1981; it has two meanings:
  - Métis Nation of the Red River
  - Any mixed-blood person.
- In a number of Censuses, the possibility to identify with multiple categories appeared recently (but no "mixed" cat.).

First Observations

- It is impossible to compare the countries' ethnic composition using their Censuses because it is not measured in the same way in the different countries.

- CEPAL (2014) shows that:
  - The proportion of Indigenous people – excluding Mestizos – varies from close to zero to 60% (Bolivia).
  - Three countries (Peru, Guatemala & Bolivia) have more than 20% who self-identify as indigenous, excluding Mestizos.
  - In Peru, the only indicator is mother tongue.

Does Latino Barometro give more reliable information?

Indicators

- 2007-2011: ¿A qué **raza** se considera perteneciente Ud.? (**ESPERE RESPUESTA Y MARQUE UNA SOLA**)

- 2001:Con qué **etnia o raza** Ud. se identifica mejor? (+cat "ninguna")

- Asiático(a) 1
- Negro(a) 2
- Indígena 3
- Mestizo(a) 4
- Mulato(a) 5
- Blanco(a) 6
- Otra raza 7
- No sabe 8
- No responde 0

Does Latino Barometro give more reliable information?

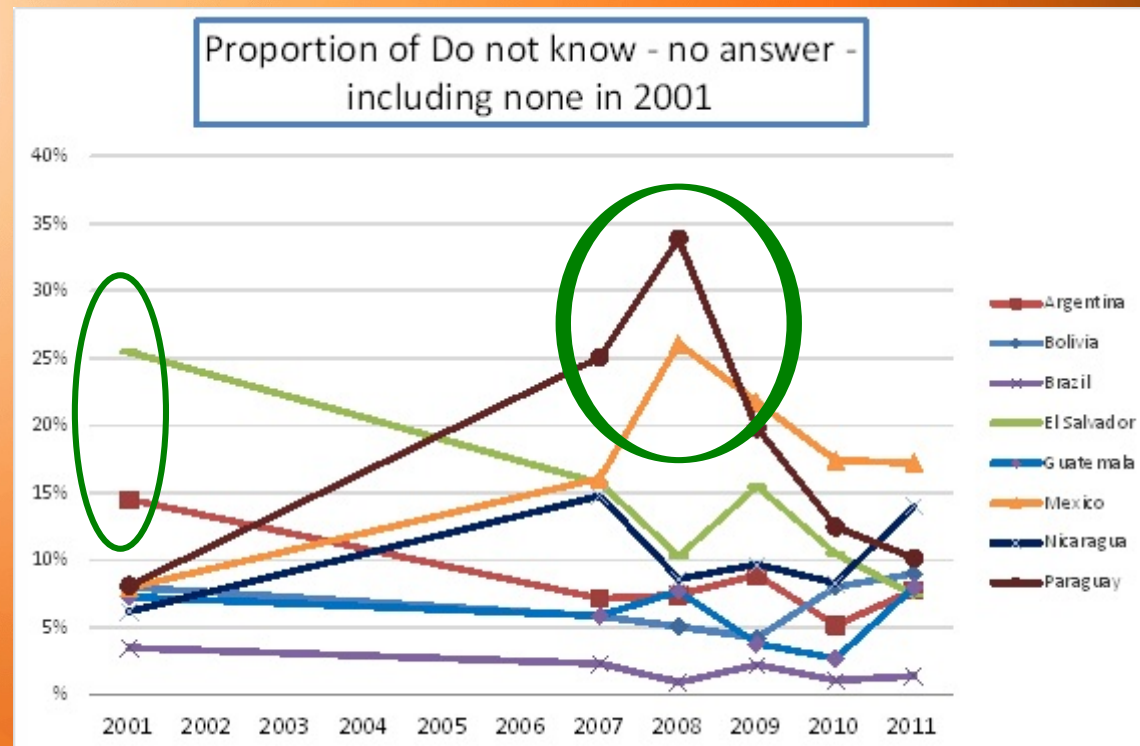## Indicators

- 2002-2011 ¿Cuál es su idioma materno? (LEA ALTERNATIVAS, ESPERE RESPUESTA Y MARQUE UNA SOLA)

-

- Espanol 1
- Portugues 2
- Lengua autoctona/indigena..... 3
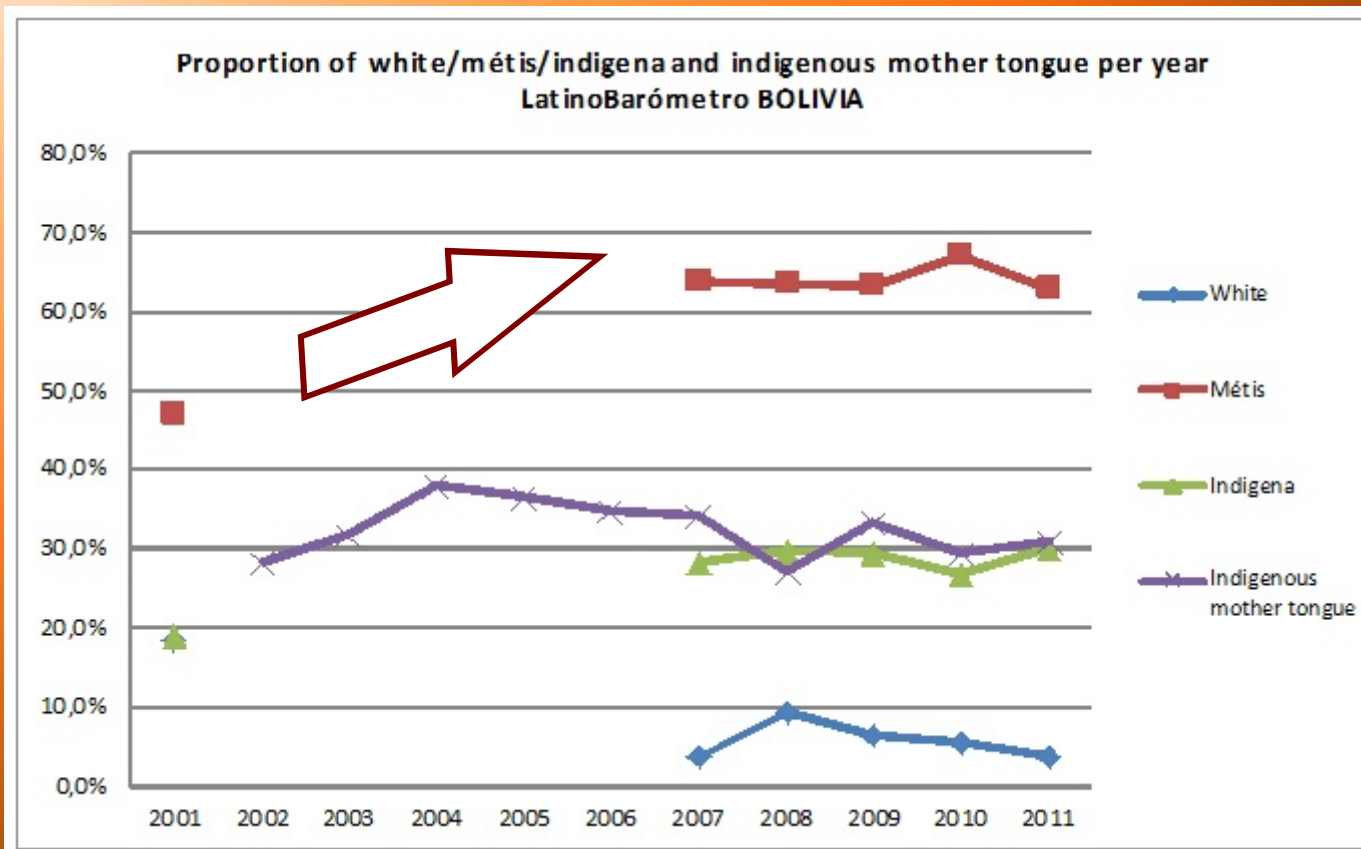- Otra 4

- What is your mother tongue?
  - Read, wait for answer and mark only only one.
  - Spanish, Portuguese, an indigenous language, Other.

What are the estimates?

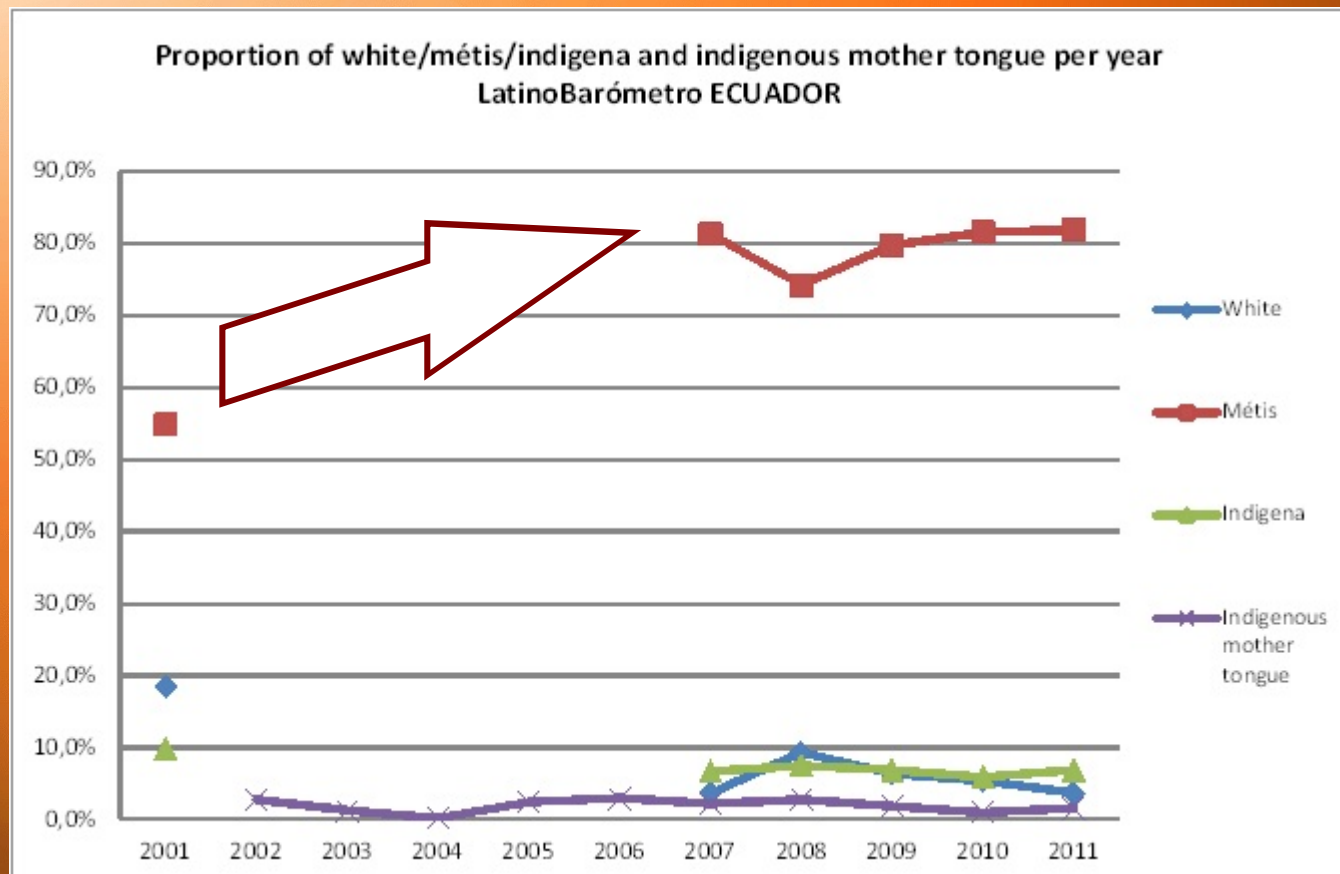Proportion of Do not know - no answer - including none in 2001

- The proportion of non response varies greatly with time, with wording (2001 vs others), and between countries.
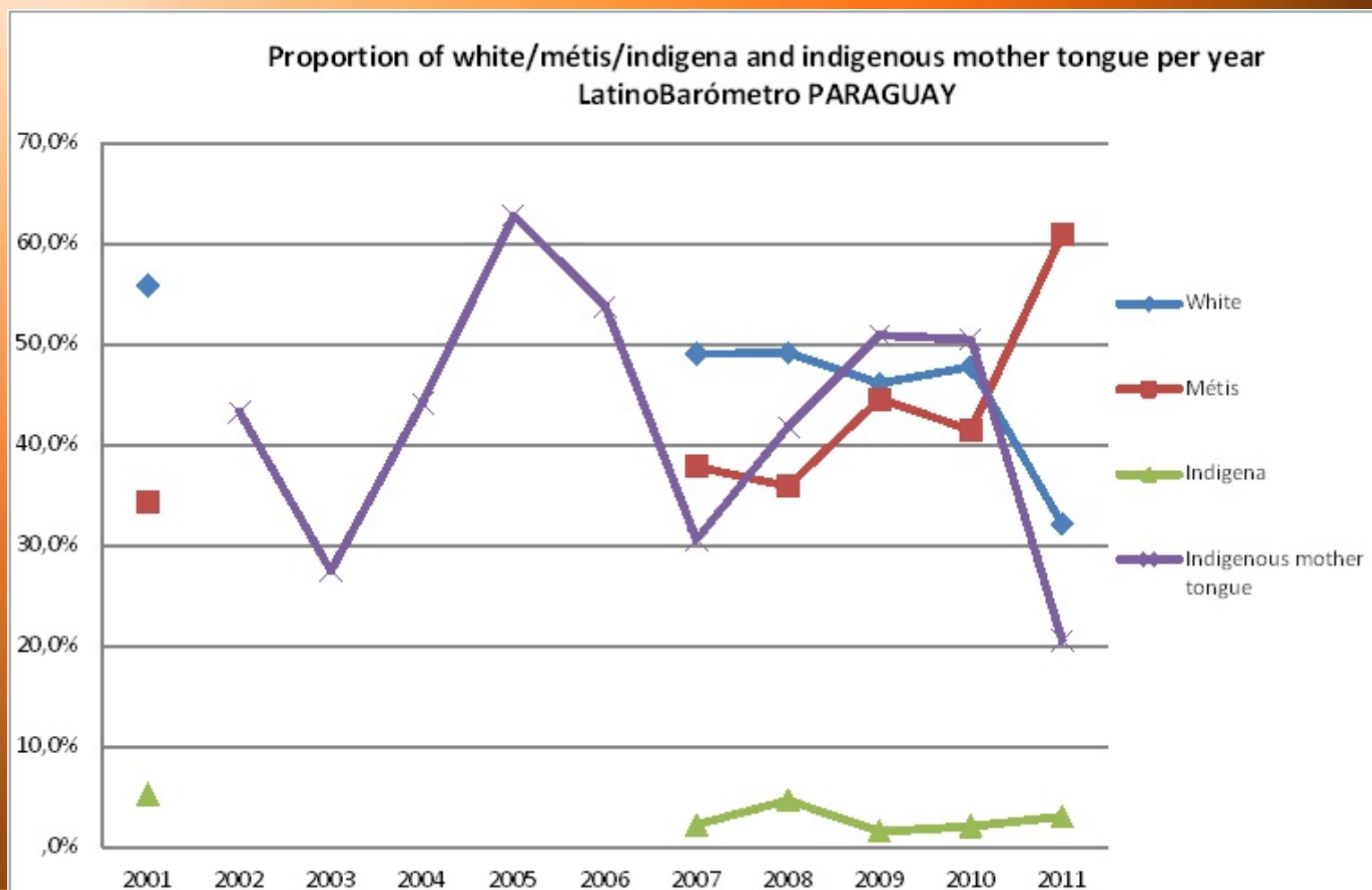
- And it can be as high as 34% (Paraguay 2008)

Example of variability: Bolivia

Proportion of white/métis/indigena and indigenous mother tongue per year
LatinoBarómetro BOLIVIA

Example of variability: Ecuador

Proportion of white/métis/indigena and indigenous mother tongue per year
LatinoBarómetro ECUADOR

Legend: White, Métis, Indigena, Indigenous mother tongue

Example of variability: Paraguay

Proportion of white/métis/indigena and indigenous mother tongue per year
LatinoBarómetro PARAGUAY

Legend:
- White
- Métis
- Indigena
- Indigenous mother tongue

Example of variability: Guatemala

Proportion of white/métis/indigena and indigenous mother tongue per year
LatinoBarómetro GUATEMALA

So what are we measuring?

- The proportion of respondents who do not answer the question on "race" is high in some countries.

- The proportion of each group varies over time in many countries.

- Proportions also vary according to question wording and category options that are offered.

- It is the only socio-demographic impressionistic indicator, based on "feelings".
  - Even the answers to mother tongue vary more than what would be expected given the sampling method and size.
  - LatinoBarometro does not allow for multiple identities.

What about inequalities?

- Overall,
  - The proportion of respondents identifying as Indigenous slightly decreases over time and
  - The proportion identifying as Meztizo slightly increases.
  - Those identifying as Indigenous tend to be less educated and wealthy than Whites.
  - While Mestizos do not differ that much from Whites.

- Perhaps people tend to identify more as Mestizo when their way of life, living conditions, are more similar to those who identify as Whites.

- Therefore, the difference between Indigenous people and "White" people tend to be inflated, thus presenting an image of Aboriginals as all poor, not educated, etc.

Canada, a case study

Census long form / National Household Survey

- Canada's Census - long form (1/5 HH in 2006)-National HH Study (1/3 HH in 2012) have 4 questions related to Aboriginality:
  - **Origins**: What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors? *An ancestor is usually more distant than a grandparent.*
    - *For example, Canadian, English, French, Chinese, Italian, German, Scottish, East Indian, Irish, Cree, Mi'kmaq (Micmac), Métis, Inuit (Eskimo), Ukrainian, Dutch, Filipino, Polish, Portuguese, Jewish, Greek, Jamaican, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Chilean, Salvadorean, Somali, etc*
  - **"Identity"**: Is this person an Aboriginal Person, that is North American Indian, Métis or Inuit (Eskimo)? (If yes go to...)
  - **Group Membership**: Is this person a member of an Indian Band/First Nation?
  - **Legal Status**: Is this person a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada.
- The number of persons identifying as Aboriginal has increased by around 20% every Census since 1981.

Canada, a case study
Aboriginal People Survey (APS)

- APS is a post-Census survey
  - Conducted about six months after the Census,
  - Among all people who have declared having either aboriginal ancestors, an aboriginal identity, an Indian legal status or being member of an Indian Band (tribe).

- The indicators are similar to those asked in the Census but,
  - Two major differences (2006):
    – Origins: Do you have ancestors who belong to one of the following aboriginal group ? NA Indian, Métis, Inuit.
    – Question on status asked before Band mbership (reverse of Census).
  - Major difference 2012 vs 2006: question on origins not asked, those who did not identify as Aboriginal were dropped.

- **Note that NA Indian people living on First Nations' communities are excluded. They represent about 50% of all the NA Indian.**

Canada, a case study
Census long form and Aboriginal People Survey (APS)

- Therefore, we have panel data (twice the same measure)
  - For 2006, with 4 indicators
  - For 2012, with 3 indicators.

- And we can examine the level of variability, i.e., the proportion of people who change their answers from one survey to the next
  - According to indicator: origin (2006), identity, legal status, membership
  - According to category: NA Indian, Métis, Inuk

- We can examine who, in which context, is more likely to change answers.

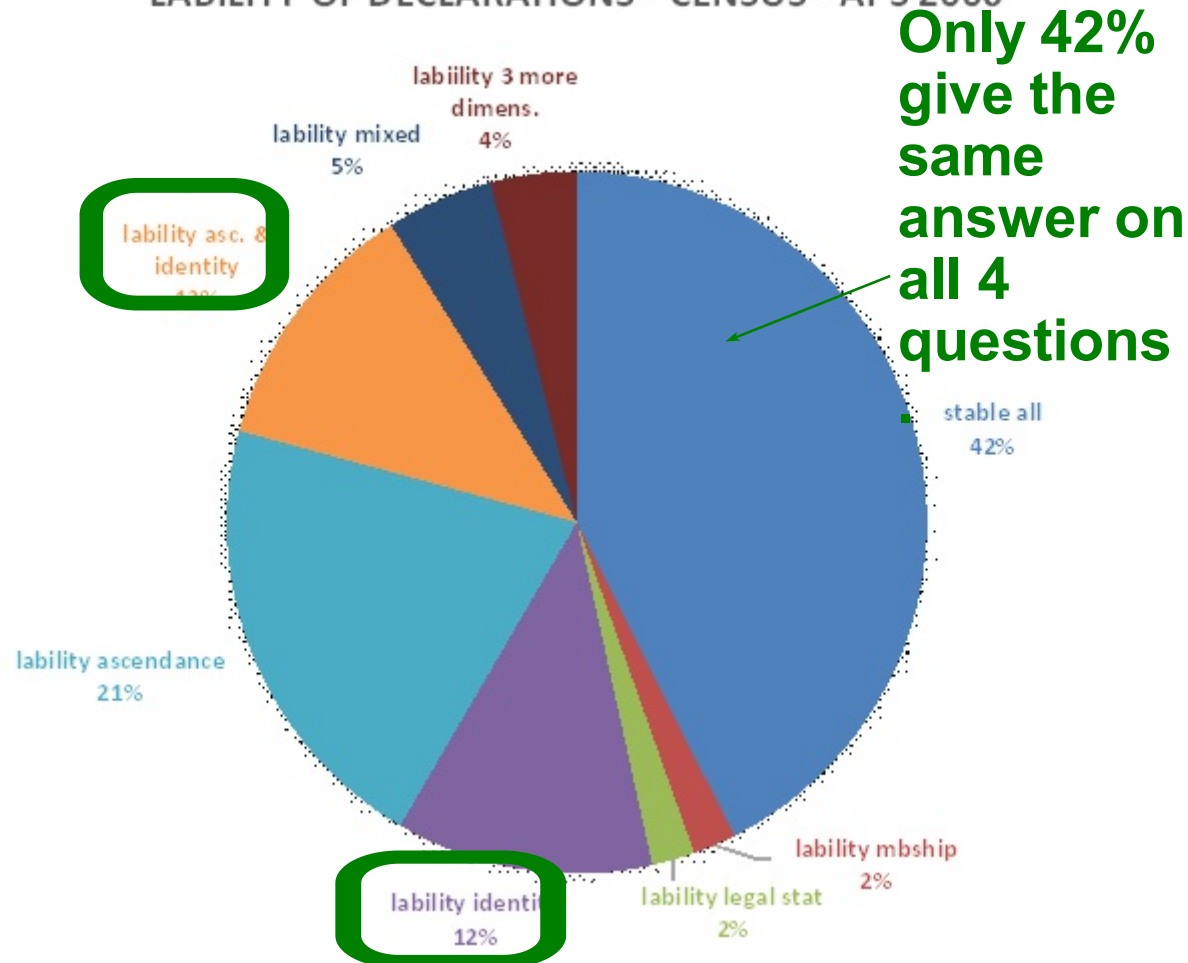- We can examine the impact of the variability on the conclusions of studies on socio-economic inequalities.

Canada, a case study

Estimates of populations 15 years & older in the APS

- 2006 (N: 29523): N Aboriginals:
  - according to answer in the Census: 634,140;
  - according to answer in the APS: 749,200 **(+18.1%)**

- 2012 (N 20716):N Aboriginals:
  - according to answer in the Census: 652,300;
  - according to answer in the APS: 795,178 **(+21.9%)**

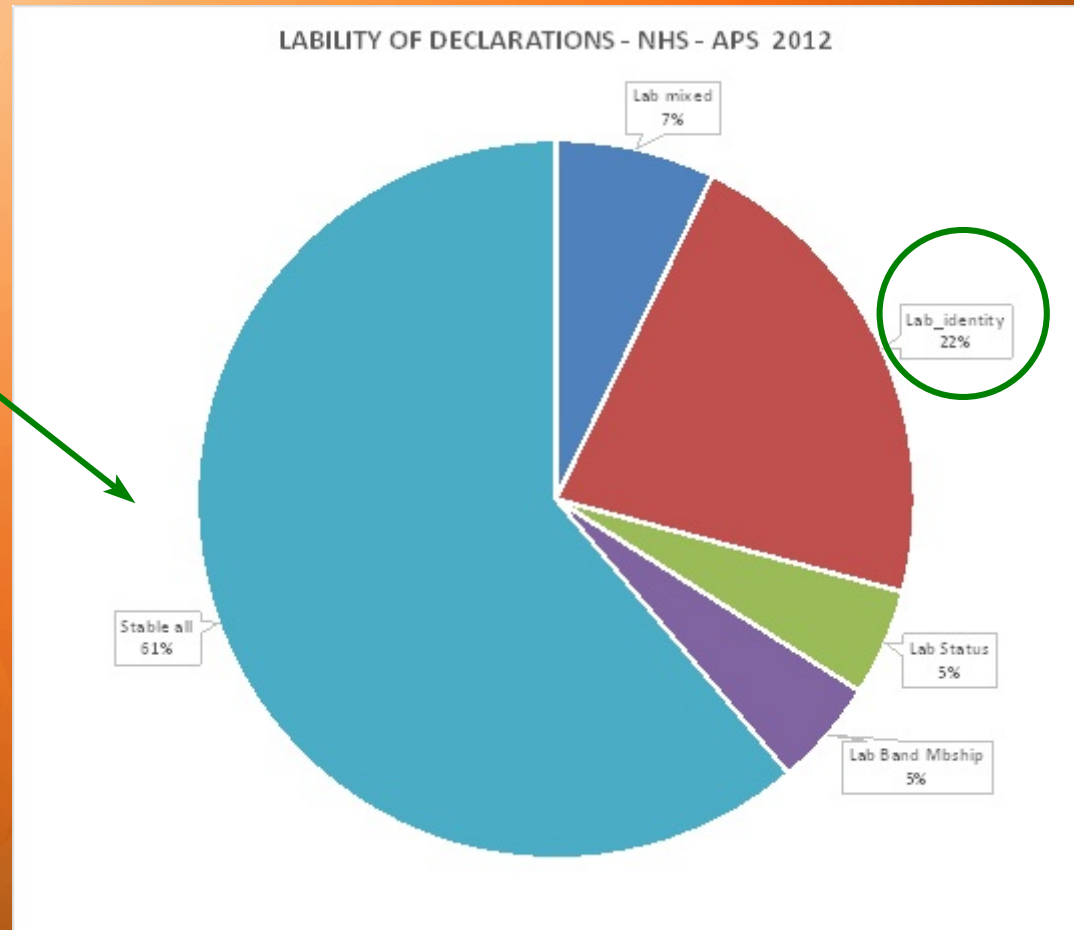- Increase 2012 vs 2006: APS: 6.1%; Census: 2.9%

The level of variability in answers to 4 indicators - 2006

LABILITY OF DECLARATIONS - CENSUS - APS 2006

Only 42% give the same answer on all 4 questions

- labiility 3 more dimens. 4%
- lability mixed 5%
- lability asc. & identity
- stable all 42%
- lability ascendance 21%
- lability identi 12%
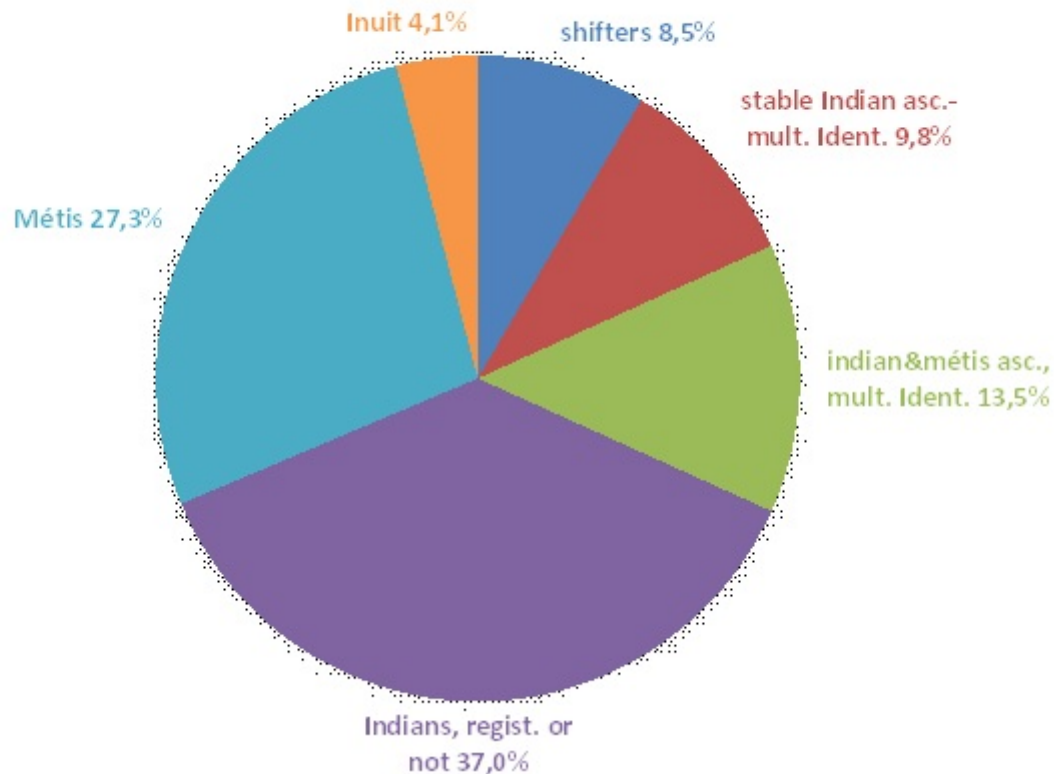- lability legal stat 2%
- lability mbship 2%

Therefore,

- **In 2006...**
  - Variability in answers
    - To origins is very high (38.8% in 2006)
    - To self-identification is very high (28.2%),
  - Variability is substantial even on more precise questions like:
    - Legal status (8.2%)
    - Membership in Band (7.5%).

- In 2012,variability is also high despite changes in the methodology.
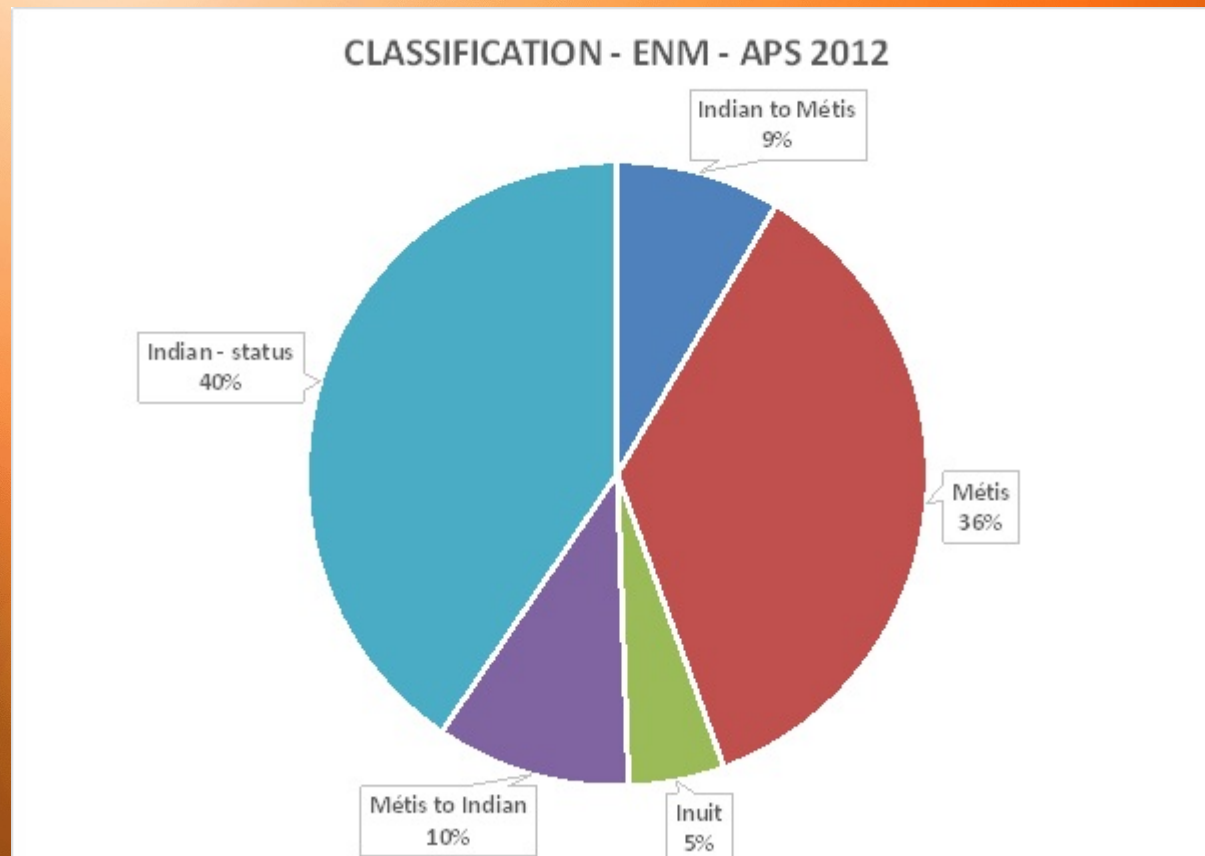 - Identity: 26.5%
  - Status: 9.8%
  - Membership in Band:10.4%

The level of variability according to "category" -- 2006

LABILITY OF DECLARATIONS - CENSUS - APS 2006

Inuit 4,1%
shifters 8,5%
stable Indian asc.-mult. Ident. 9,8%
Métis 27,3%
indian&métis asc., mult. Ident. 13,5%
Indians, regist. or not 37,0%

- **32% are either**
  - **Shifters -- from Métis to Indian or reverse.**
  - **Multiple identities -- Métis, Indian & no aboriginal identity -- with stable answers on origin.**

The level of variability according to "category" -- 2012

CLASSIFICATION - ENM - APS 2012

- Indian to Métis 9%
- Métis 36%
- Inuit 5%
- Métis to Indian 10%
- Indian - status 40%

- **19% are Shifters**
  - **from Métis to Indian**
  - **or reverse.**

Who are they?

Total variance explained by predictors - 2006

	According	to	indicator	According	to	category
Nord	Total	20-59 only	without Inuit>	Total	20-59 only	without Inuit>
Age & sex	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%
+ Schooling	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	2.3%	2.4%	1.4%
+ Income	1.5%	1.4%	1.6%	2.6%	2.7%	1.6%
+ rural-urban	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	9.2%	9.2%	2.9%
+ Region	4.7%	4.6%	4.6%	19.9%	19.7%	12.1%

- The main predictors of category variability are related to where you live: More or less urban, and above all, region of the country,
  - Related to history of intermix between populations.
- Much more variance explained in variability according to categories than indicators.
  - Inuit's stability has to be taken into account.

Who are they - 2006

Variability according to categories compared to being a NA Indian (odds ratio of being in a region vs North & BC)
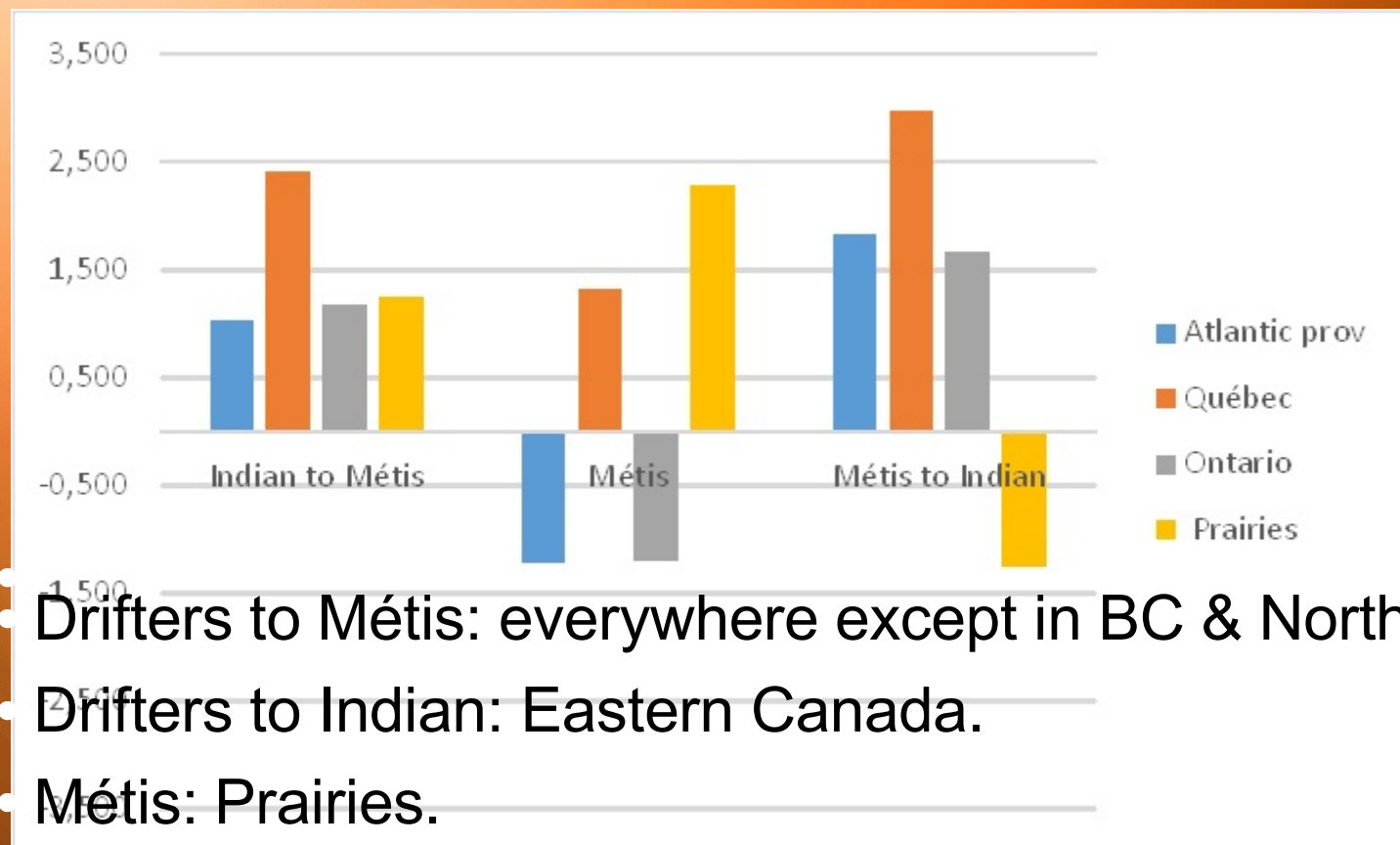

Drifters & Métis in the Prairies

Multiple origins, identities: Eastern Canada

Who are they?

Total variance explained by predictors - 2012

	According	to	indicator	According	to	category
Nord	Total	20-59 only	without Inuit>	Total	20-59 only	without Inuit>
Age & sex	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%
+ Schooling	1.0%	1.2%	1.0%	2.8%	3.8%	1.3%
+ Income	1.4%	1.6%	1.4%	3.5%	4.6%	1.9%
+ rural-urban	2.5%	2.8%	2.1%	13.9%	15.5%	3.0%
+ Region	11.8%	11.9%	12.1%	24.3%	25.9%	10.5%

- As in 2006, the main predictors of category shifts are related to where you live: More or less urban, and above all, region of the country.

- Much more variance explained in variability according to categories than indicators.
  - Inuit's stability has to be taken into account.

Who are they -- 2012?

Variability according to categories compared to being a NA Indian (odds ratio of being in a region vs North & BC)

- Drifters to Métis: everywhere except in BC & North.
- Drifters to Indian: Eastern Canada.
- Métis: Prairies.

Comparing with LatinoBarometro

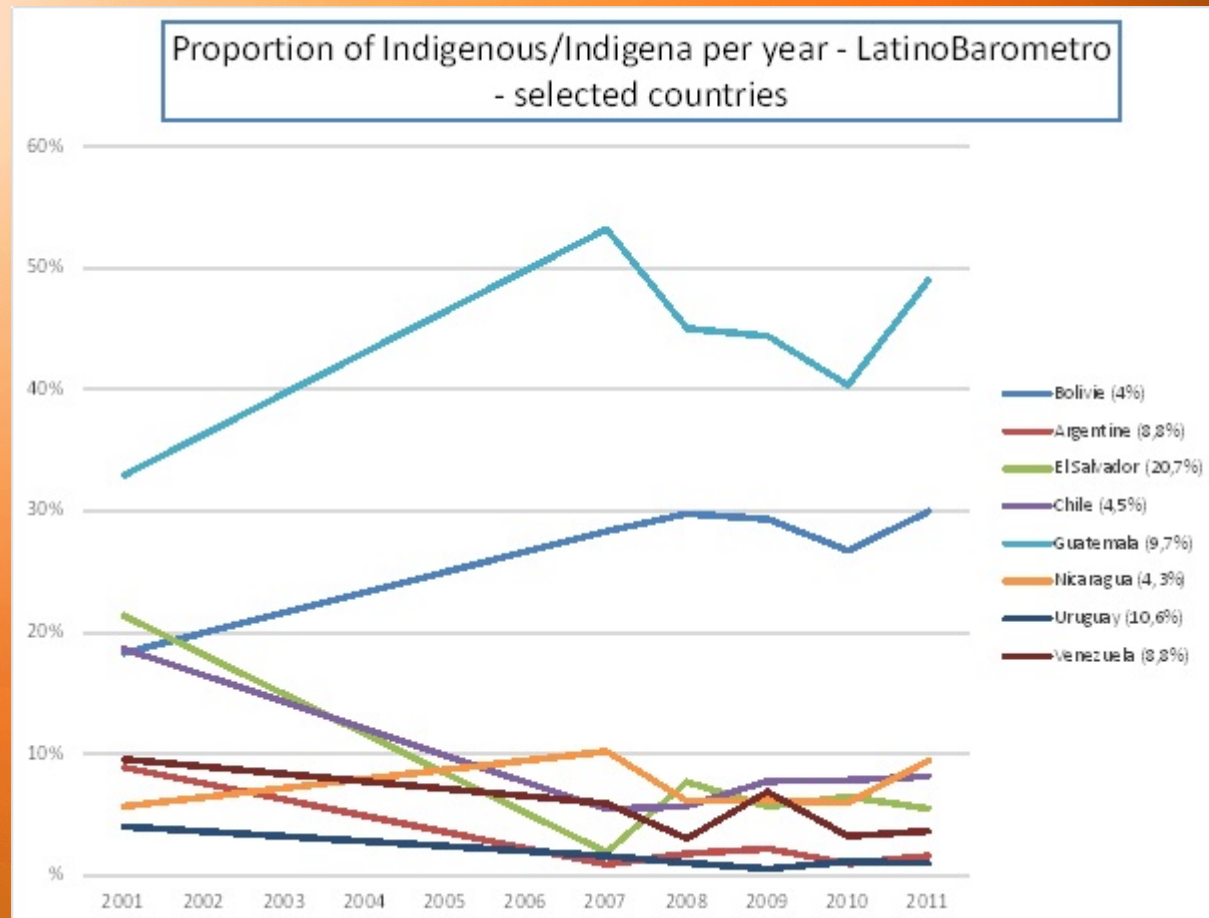**What are the characteristics of those who change their answers?**

- Those who change declarations,...
  - Tend to be more educated and wealthier

- They are also more likely to be living in urban areas.

- Note: In Canada, until the 1960's, an Indian who ended up with a University degree was "emancipated", i.e. not subject to Indian Act any more.

Conclusion: What should we do?

- Should we measure ethnicity, what are we measuring finally?
  - Does it feed "folklorization" of who Aboriginals are, hiding the variability within the group?
  - Does it help evaluate and fight inequalities or
  - Does it contribute to hide the inequalities that should be dealt with?
- If access to education is the core of inequalities, what are the reasons for this situation?
  - "Being" an Aboriginal or living in regions where education is hardly accessible?
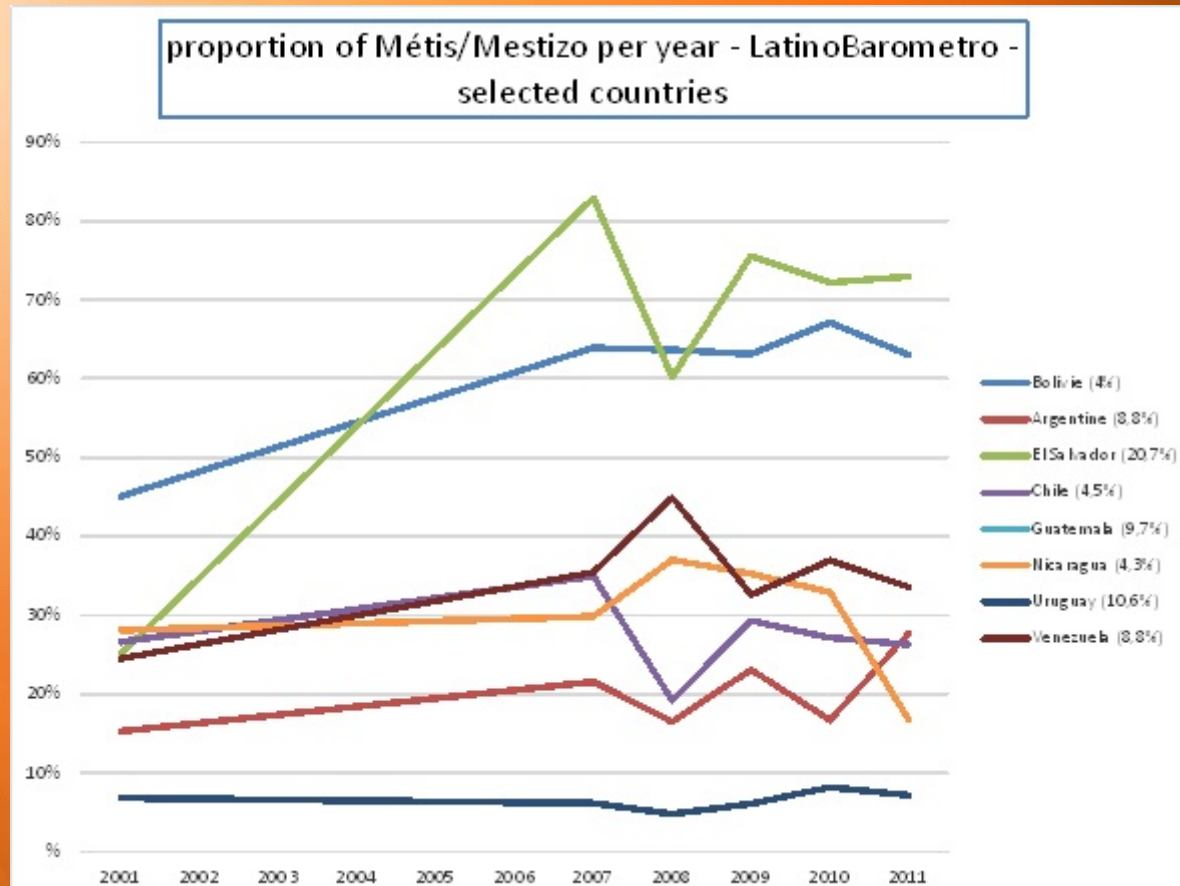
Extra slides

What are the estimates?

Proportion of Indigenous/Indigena per year - LatinoBarometro - selected countries

- Bolivie (4%)
- Argentine (8,8%)
- El Salvador (20,7%)
- Chile (4,5%)
- Guatemala (9,7%)
- Nicaragua (4,3%)
- Uruguay (10,6%)
- Venezuela (8,8%)

- The proportion of each group varies much with time, and with different wordings (2001 vs others).

Whataretheestimates?
LatinoBarometro, 2001, 2007-2011

proportion of Métis/Mestizo per year - LatinoBarometro - selected countries

- Theproportionofeachgroupvariesmuchwith time,andwithdifferentwordings(2001vsothers)

What are the estimates?

proportion of White/Blanco per year - LatinoBarometro - selected countries

- The proportion of each group varies much with time, and with different wordings (2001 vs others).