

## **A decade of Nisga'a self-government: A positive impact, but no silver bullet**

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Within indigenous circles First Nation self-government is a very high goal. However, this goal is rarely put to empirical test, as few First Nations have signed comprehensive self-government agreements. In 2010, the Frontier Centre for Public policy commissioned a professional polling firm to conduct phone surveys of residents of the Nisga'a Nation, a community that has enjoyed relative autonomy from the Indian Act for over 10 years. The surveys asked Nisga'a residents to gauge governance and services since the treaty's enactment. The survey sampled nearby Tsimshian residents as a control group. The study involved more in-depth questioning of a smaller sample of "key informants". Nisga'a respondents report improved governance in some areas, but not in others. Drawing from the study, this paper looks at wider issues of whether self-government advances First Nation communities.