



# Changing Systems, Transforming Lives:

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028



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## An Acknowledgement to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in Canada

In the spirit of and based on the principles of truth and reconciliation, the Government of Canada commits to working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples. This means meaningfully addressing the ongoing impacts of colonization as we attempt to support an increased understanding of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis worldviews. It also requires an expanded awareness of the responsibilities all people on this land have for repairing and forging more equitable relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities across this land.

Tabled in 2019, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* included 231 calls for justice. Call 15.2 explicitly asks Canadians to, “Decolonize by learning the true history of Canada and Indigenous history in your local area. Learn about and celebrate Indigenous Peoples’ history, cultures, pride, and diversity, acknowledging the land you live on and its importance to local Indigenous communities, both historically and today.”

Our efforts to advance anti-racism can only be truly realized with recognition of the unjust consequences of colonialism, our continued commitment to decolonization, and striving to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Given systemic racism’s historical and ongoing impact on the colonization of Indigenous Peoples, we bear the duty of maintaining the memory of the dispossession of Indigenous lands and the responsibility to take action to ensure equity, safety, and respect for Indigenous Peoples. This includes acknowledging and addressing the root causes of the violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and additional sexually and gender diverse (2SLGBTQI+) people. Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028, and other related efforts demonstrate that the Government of Canada recognizes the work it needs to do to ensure equity, safety, and respect for Indigenous Peoples and is committed to acting.

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the lands on which many of us live, work and gather, including the digital infrastructure enabling our work, are on the traditional territories of various Indigenous nations across the country. We acknowledge that our national headquarters in Gatineau, Quebec, are on the unceded and un-surrendered traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe People. This is a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial.

We acknowledge the importance of co-developing solutions with Indigenous partners, and the importance of self-determination and of supporting Indigenous-led actions. We respect the enduring presence and longstanding ties that Indigenous Peoples have to this land where we reside, and where we may have come and settled. In recognition of the many and different territorial lands that each reader may be coming from, we encourage you to do your research and learn about the territory on which you reside. Explore how you can recognize the history of settler expansion and uplift the equity and sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples in your own way. We all share in the responsibility as Canadians to maintain respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

## Message from the Prime Minister



In Canada, no matter what our faith is, where we were born, what colour our skin is, or what language we speak – we should have every opportunity to fulfill our potential. Unfortunately, that has historically often not been the case.

Indigenous Peoples<sup>1</sup> and people of African descent were enslaved on this land. Laws were passed to assimilate Indigenous Peoples, including the Indian Residential School system, which the House of Commons unanimously recognized as genocide of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>2</sup> Discriminatory laws and government practices were passed targeting Asian communities - including the

*Chinese Exclusion Act* (also referred to as the *Chinese Immigration Act*) and the internment of Japanese Canadians - and excluding Jewish survivors fleeing Nazism during the Second World War. The passengers of the steamship *Komagata Maru* came to our shores looking for a better future in Canada, only to be denied food, water and medical aid – and after two months of confinement – were forced to return to India, where many were killed under British rule. While we delivered an official apology in 2016, the *Komagata Maru* incident remains a dark chapter in Canada’s history. Members of the No. 2 Construction Battalion, Canada’s first battalion of African descent, faced systemic racism and discrimination, and until our official apology in 2022, had their recognition of service ignored. We have seen former governments target marginalized faith-based communities with dangerous rhetoric, policies, and the politics of fear.

We can work to build a better future, with diverse communities and inclusive spaces. It’s why in 2019, we launched *Building a Foundation for Change: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy*., In partnership with communities across the country, the strategy was a landmark initiative to build a fairer Canada. We took action to combat online hate, address disinformation, and create meaningful partnerships with Indigenous Peoples. It’s time to take another step forward.

With *Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028*, we’re putting forward an ambitious, comprehensive plan to make Canada more diverse, inclusive, and prosperous. That means encouraging voices with different experiences to lead and ensuring those voices are reflected in federal policies, programs, and services. This is part of our larger work to build more homes and keep them affordable, invest in quality health care, reform our justice system, and make our streets safer in partnership with communities.

We want the federal government to reflect the Canada it serves – because the more voices and perspectives we have at the table, the better the decision making.

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada

## Foreword from the Minister



Diversity is at the heart of what it means to be Canadian. From coast to coast to coast, Canadians of different backgrounds and lived experiences, races, and religions enrich our communities and shape our country. If diversity in Canada is a fact, inclusion is a shared responsibility and equity is the law.

Since 2015, our government has been very deliberate in making the choice to be inclusive. We have taken unprecedented measures and worked with partners and communities to tackle racism, in all its forms, including:

- Investing nearly \$100 million into Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022, with \$70 million allocated directly to communities;
- Creating the Black-Led Philanthropic Endowment Fund and launching the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative, representing a \$400 million investment to support vibrant Black communities and combat anti-Black racism from coast to coast to coast;
- Hosting national summits on antisemitism and Islamophobia;
- Appointing Canada's first Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia<sup>3</sup>, and two Special Envoys on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism<sup>4</sup>;
- Creating the National Day of Remembrance of the Québec City Mosque Attack and Action against Islamophobia;
- Creating the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Despite those important milestones, racism and racial discrimination remain an unacceptable daily reality for too many Canadians. Since the launch of Canada's first Anti-Racism Strategy, the world has experienced several tragically impactful events, which have resulted in devastating consequences right here in Canada. The deadly Islamophobic terrorist attack on a Canadian Muslim family in London, Ontario in June 2021 shook the country to its core, leaving lasting scars in London and on Muslim communities beyond. The murder of George Floyd in the United States sparked worldwide outrage about the deadly impacts that systemic racism has on so many innocent lives. We experienced a significant rise in anti-Asian sentiment throughout the coronavirus pandemic, clearly indicating that prejudice is not buried in our history but is a lived reality for so many. The death of Joyce Echaquan reminded us of the brutal legacy of colonialism and how it still perpetuates in the very systems that are supposed to protect people. Finally, since the events of October 7, 2023, we have seen unprecedented levels of hate towards Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian communities right here in Canada.

These events have left lasting marks on the fabric of our society and the trust we have in each other within our communities. Undeniably, they have put our values of tolerance, empathy, and

inclusivity to the test. These events and their subsequent consequences underline how important and relevant the fight against racism and hate remains. Considering these challenges, it is imperative that we strengthen our whole-of-government approach to combating racism in all its forms.

To that end, I am pleased to present *Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028*.

The heart of the Strategy lies within communities across the country, by working with them and investing in them. It was developed through extensive engagement with community leaders, researchers, and organizations. Informed by the invaluable insights of thousands of Canadians with lived experience of racism and religious discrimination, it aims to make a marked difference in the lives of Indigenous Peoples, as well as Black, racialized, and religious minority communities.

This Strategy is an action-oriented approach to federal leadership designed to drive results in critical areas such as employment, health, economic empowerment, and public safety. It will explore anti-racism legislative options, invest in communities, and improve frameworks for delivering results, accountability, and institutional capacity-building through measurable outcomes.

This Strategy will adapt to the evolving needs of communities experiencing racism and discrimination, ensuring that our government responds effectively to their changing realities, while recognizing the unique challenges each community faces.

As Canadians, each of us bears a responsibility to confront racism and discrimination wherever it persists. This Strategy marks another stride in our collective journey to be united and build a more equitable and inclusive Canada, together.

We have faced tests in the past, and I am confident that we will overcome these challenges together as a country. Because there is always more that unites us than divides us.

The Honourable Kamal Khera,  
Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities

## Executive Summary

In 2019, the Government of Canada released *Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022*. This Strategy laid the groundwork for demonstrating federal leadership and empowering communities.

Building on the lessons and accomplishments from the first Strategy, *Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028* is developed based on robust evidence and input from people and communities with lived experience of racism. It aims to tackle systemic racism and make our communities more inclusive and prosperous.

### Approach

*Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028* aims to tackle systemic racism by removing barriers and making systems more inclusive – especially for marginalized communities. In the long-term, this is about building a Canada where everyone can reach their full potential – with equality, equity and fairness.

That starts with better aligning, better designing, and better implementing new and existing federal initiatives to address inequalities. There are over 70 programs, policies, services, and laws in place or in development, across 20 organizations in the Government of Canada. To make these more inclusive and better reflect the diversity of Canada, we will collaborate with provincial, territorial, and international governments, as well as First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners, and cities and communities across Canada.

This Strategy acknowledges the diverse needs and distinct realities of various peoples and communities by avoiding a one-size fits all approach.

For many, racism is often connected to other forms of oppression, such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, caste-discrimination, ableism, and discrimination based on language. These different types of discrimination can intersect and make the experience of racism even more severe and painful. The Strategy aims to address these intersections and tackle the unique challenges they present.

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 takes a comprehensive, holistic approach by addressing all aspects of society that contribute to systemic racism. Recognizing that multiple factors, including the widening of racial disparities over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, contribute to the perpetuation of racism, the Strategy targets four priority areas within federal jurisdiction. The Strategy also includes collaboration with all sectors of society and draws upon different fields of knowledge and expertise.



## Priority Areas and Actions

The Strategy prioritizes action in the following four priority areas:

1. Promoting economic, social, and cultural empowerment
2. Advancing racial equity in immigration, health, and housing systems
3. Driving justice, law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety systems reform
4. Using international engagement to inform advancement on racial equity and inclusion at home

Additionally, underpinning this work to advance on these four priorities are actions to enable a federal public service that is free from racism and is equitable and inclusive.

To deliver results across these four priority areas, the government will:

- **Establish systems and explore legislation** to boost accountability and make systems more inclusive
- **Prioritize and support communities** as experts in combatting racism by placing their voices at the centre of decision-making and providing necessary resources
- **Strengthen relationships** between orders of government, with national and international partners, to drive progress and create positive change in Canada

The Strategy will deliver concrete and measurable outcomes that reduce racial disparities and uphold the dignity of individuals who have experienced racism. It seeks to make a marked difference in the lives of Indigenous Peoples, as well as Black, racialized, and religious minority communities by working with and investing in those communities. This Strategy reflects the Government of Canada's ongoing and deliberate commitment to promoting inclusivity by embracing and celebrating diversity and delivering fairness for every generation.

## The Rationale

### Unprecedented Public Recognition of Racial Inequity in Canada

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When Canada's previous Anti-Racism Strategy was launched in 2019, opinion polling showed that less than half of Canadians believed racism was a problem.

Since 2020, in reaction to the discovery of unmarked graves of Indigenous children, racial inequities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and underscored by global movements like Black Lives Matter and the response to the tragic murder of George Floyd, over 60% of Canadians now recognize that systemic racism exists, according to a poll by the Association for Canadian Studies and Léger.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, preexisting racial inequalities were exacerbated. According to Statistics Canada, 51% of visible minorities reported a major or moderate financial impact of the pandemic, compared with 29% of people who are not visible minorities.<sup>5</sup> Over one-third (36%) of Indigenous participants reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on their ability to meet financial obligations or essential needs compared to 25% among non-Indigenous participants.<sup>6</sup> Data shows that a higher incidence of overqualification and underemployment among Black populations has contributed to earnings gaps.

Black men and women earn less than their non-racialized counterparts of the third generation or more. The earnings gap is most pronounced among Canadian-origin Black men, at -\$16,300, and least among African-origin Black men, at -\$8,500. Similarly, Canadian-origin Black women earn -\$9,500 less, and Caribbean-origin Black women -\$1,300 less compared to their non-racialized counterparts of the same generation.<sup>7</sup>

A large portion of the wage gap observed between Black populations and non-racialized third-generation populations (the reference population) remains unaccounted for by the socioeconomic factors included in the analysis.

Similar trends are observed among other racialized populations. Using Canada's Official Poverty Line for comparison, the study found that out of 11 racialized groups analyzed, 10 had higher poverty rates than the White population, with this gap not significantly diminishing across successive generations.<sup>8</sup>

It should be noted that for most of the racialized population, experiences of racism are widespread. According to the General Social Survey on Victimization, among individuals of Chinese origin aged 15 and older, 29% have encountered discrimination or unfair treatment in their daily lives.<sup>9</sup> Project 1907, a grassroots initiative tracking racism against Asian-origin individuals in Canada, reported a 47% increase in racist incidents towards Asian communities from 2020 to 2022. Incidents involving children and adolescents under 18 saw a 286% rise, while

racist occurrences targeting Black individuals increased by 339%. Additionally, there was a 132% increase in reports of online hate and racism.<sup>10</sup>

Racism and racial and religious discrimination are exacerbated by overlapping forms of discrimination based on such considerations as sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, disability, age, and religion. For instance, [recent statistics](#) indicate that religiously motivated hate crimes are on the rise in Canada. There has been a 67% increase in police-reported hate crimes from 2020 to 2021. Most recently, the attack by Hamas on Israel on October 7, 2023, and the ensuing Israel-Hamas conflict has exacerbated the increasing rates of antisemitism and Islamophobia reported in recent years; there has been a sharp increase in police-reported hate crimes and incidences targeting places of worship, synagogues, mosques, schools and communities across the country.<sup>11</sup> Research suggests that sexual minority people (those who stated their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, or otherwise not heterosexual) experience violence at a greater prevalence than heterosexual people. This has also been noted among transgender people when compared to cisgender people<sup>12</sup> and is even more pronounced among LGBTQ2S Indigenous women, who are more likely (86%) to experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime compared with non-LGBTQ2S Indigenous women (59%).<sup>13</sup> Finally, Indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to face violence than non-Indigenous women and face a homicide rate seven times higher than non-Indigenous women.<sup>14</sup> As Canada continues to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing levels of income inequality, [reported by Statistics Canada in July 2023](#), risk further exacerbating racial inequities. That is why [Blueprint for Transformation: The 2023 Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty](#) calls on the Government to take the necessary steps to take urgent steps to curb poverty, particularly groups most affected by racial discrimination.<sup>15</sup>

In the past few decades, the number of racialized people in Canada has increased at a much faster rate than the population as a whole. Evidence shows that racialized populations are an overwhelmingly younger population than non-racialized people<sup>16</sup>. According to Statistics Canada's 2021 Census data, there were 1.8 million with an Indigenous identity (First Nations, Inuit, Métis) in the country in 2021, representing 5.0% of the total population.<sup>17</sup> 2021 Census data also shows that racialized people made up 26.5% of the total population.<sup>18</sup> This number has been projected to further increase, with Statistics Canada's Centre for Demography's detailed demographic projections indicating that by 2041, the Canadian racialized population would reach 16.4 million to 22.3 million, making up 38.2% to 43.0% of the total Canadian population.<sup>19</sup> However, according to recent Angus Reid data, half of Canadians (51%) say that being White is a source of privilege in Canada.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, two in five Canadians (38%) say they face discrimination in Canada, and disaggregated data shows these proportions rise to 50 per cent among Indigenous respondents, and 78 per cent among visible minorities.<sup>21</sup> Bold action to address lasting systemic barriers is needed now more than ever as Canada's population continues to become more diverse.

## What We Heard

Between 2019 and 2024, the government extensively engaged Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority communities, partners, and stakeholders from a variety of different sectors.

### Public Engagement

Shaping Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 involved the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat leading engagement and commemoration activities, reaching people across the country. This included:

- **15 town halls**
- **2 national summits** on antisemitism and Islamophobia
- **1 national youth forum** on anti-Black racism
- **21 roundtables**
- an **online questionnaire** on racism and discrimination, open to people in Canada

Their feedback was clear: systemic racism and racial discrimination is a threat to the collective wellbeing, prosperity, safety, and security of Canada. They repeated the concern that white supremacist and far right organizations spread disinformation and create divisions against and within equity-deserving populations. They expressed a need to better embed anti-racism in federal programs, services, and policies, as well to pass legislation. Communities advocated for an anti-racism lens to be applied to the design, assessment, and implementation of federal initiatives. They indicated that the next federal anti-racism strategy should track results. Lastly, they indicated the government should report publicly on results. Emphasis was also placed on adopting harm reduction, trauma-informed, holistic approaches to policymaking and delivery and on addressing systemic racism, spanning and connecting a variety of areas, such as housing, immigration, justice, health, and employment. There was consensus that a coordinated, horizontal approach is needed to remove barriers and ensure full and equitable participation of diverse equity-deserving populations in all spheres.

### Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Previous Strategy

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 expands on [\*Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022\*](#), launched in 2019. It represented an investment of nearly \$100 million and focused on the following three pillars:

- Demonstrating Federal Leadership
- Empowering Communities
- Building Awareness and Changing Attitudes

The [Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat](#) (the Federal Secretariat) was created out of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022 to lead a whole-of-government approach in addressing racism. In addition to coordinating federal action and driving the overall Strategy, it was created to work with federal departments and agencies to address the effects of systemic racism and discrimination. This meant helping federal institutions to identify and coordinate responsive initiatives, identifying gaps, assisting in developing new initiatives, and considering the impacts of new and existing policies, services and programs on communities and Indigenous Peoples.

Additionally, recognizing that it is essential to support collective community initiatives and responses, where communities are best placed to effect change, Canadian Heritage delivered over \$91.1 million in funding through the Anti-Racism Action Program and Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program to enable communities to utilize their expertise in addressing racism, and allowing them to draw on their lived experiences to tailor initiatives to their circumstances.

### **Key Actions to Date**

- Creation of the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat
- Funding of 174 projects under the new Anti-Racism Action Program
- Funding of 292 projects under the Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program
- Establishing a community-to government policy recommendations pipeline
- Piloting of an Anti-Racism Framework for the federal public service
- Creation of the COVID-19 and Equity-Seeking Communities Taskforce with Women and Gender Equality Canada
- Funding for Statistics Canada to collect more disaggregated data under the 2020 General Social Survey on Social Identity
- Development of new and innovative tools for data collection and analysis
- Co-developed a definition of anti-Asian racism with Asian community organizations and experts through extensive consultation
- Declaration on the [North American Partnership for Equity and Racial Justice](#) at the North American Leaders' Summit (NALS) in January 2023 in Mexico City
- Official announcement of the [Canada-Mexico Action Plan](#) by PM Trudeau and Mexico's President Lopez-Obrador on the margins of the North American Leaders' Summit in January 2023, including a pillar on anti-racism
- Supporting over 10 federal departments in developing new policies, programs, services, and legislation from an anti-racism perspective
- New investments in the Canadian Race Relations Foundation

An evaluation of the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Program and *Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022* was conducted by Canadian Heritage and covered the period from 2017-2018 to 2021-2022. As part of the evaluation, data was collected and analyzed from a range of sources including a survey and interviews with federal organizations and external stakeholders. The [full report](#) informed the development of *Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028*.

The evaluation identified the need for stronger federal coordination. In particular, feedback from federal partners indicated a desire for more integrated coordination and communication with other federal departments and anti-racism units.

External stakeholders also highlighted gaps and needs including:

- Enhanced federal efforts on anti-Islamophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Black racism, in particular
- Less focus on eurocentric Canadian history and more focus on the history of Indigenous Peoples and the long history of specific racialized communities in Canada and their experiences
- Specific action on hate and disinformation

Financial supports through grants and contribution programs for community-based efforts were also seen as critical. According to interviews with stakeholders, there is a continuing need to provide funding supports to organizations serving diverse communities in combatting racism and promoting inclusion.

## Select Achievements during Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022

### Funding for projects

- From 2022-2024, Association Canadienne Française de l'Ontario-Stormont, Dundas et Glengarry received project funding for Tous ensemble - Akwé:kon skátthne. The project organizes learning and discovery activities where non-aboriginal and Mohawk francophone youth explored a variety of themes, including discrimination, equity and leadership. These activities are intended to nurture an awareness of the other's culture. At the end of the project, the young leaders organize and host a day of celebration and cultural exchange with hundreds of young people from both communities. Activities were held from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2024, in Akwesasne, Cornwall and the counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. A joint school-community committee was set up to guide and supervise the entire project, plan, and promote activities, and recruit young people.
- From 2022-2024, People of the Dawn Indigenous Friendship Centre Inc. received project funding for Through our eyes: Signs and Stories. The project aims to create fuller, more accurate representations and narratives about Indigenous culture in Newfoundland and

Labrador. The project prioritizes youth and empowers them to share their culture with other youth and the community at large. It includes the creation of Indigenous Youth Councils which lead activities in their respective schools to showcase a number of Indigenous activities and introduce non-Indigenous students to these aspects of their culture. The project also includes the showcase of Indigenous culture through interactive displays in public buildings and through digital resources, such as film, photography and music. These activities bring Indigenous culture to the forefront of the community and allow all people in the area the opportunity to learn about the history and contribution of Indigenous peoples in a largely Indigenous area.

- From 2019-2020 to 2022-2023, York University received program funding to carry out a project to enable two Toronto-area school boards as well as Asian Canadian, African Canadian and Indigenous artists to widen attitudes and perspectives regarding anti-racism education and community involvement. This was achieved via a suite of arts and artificial intelligence (AI) in-person and virtual workshops in the school boards that were held on community engagement, multiculturalism, and anti-racism. AI Apps were designed with the school boards and IBM on cultural colour visual recognition, culturally enhanced natural language understanding and virtual assistant. Asian Canadian, African Canadian, and Indigenous artists shared best practices to overcome social and cultural barriers.

### **Oversampling of the 2020 General Social Survey – Social Identity (GSS-SI)**

- The GSS-SI is a survey of the general population conducted every five years. The key components of the survey include the following topics: social networks, civic participation and engagement, knowledge of Canadian history, appreciation of national symbols, shared values, confidence in institutions, and trust in people.
- The 2020 cycle also covered people's possible experiences of discrimination before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Thanks to funding from Canadian Heritage, the sample size of the 2020 cycle almost doubled to oversample six racialized groups (i.e., Black, Arab and West Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Latin American, Chinese). This additional sample allowed for more targeted policy analysis with respect to the experiences of some racialized groups.

### **Production of analytical papers**

- Statistics Canada produced a series of four analytical products based on new and existing social, economic, and justice data to provide concrete evidence of the challenges experienced by racialized communities, Indigenous Peoples, and religious minority communities.
  - [“The weekly earnings of Canadian-born individuals in designated visible minority and White categories in the mid-2010s”](#)

- [“Perceptions of and experiences with police and the justice system among the Black and Indigenous populations in Canada”](#)
- [“The relative earnings of individuals in designated visible minority categories in Canada across four workplace sectors”](#)
- [“The neighbourhood ties of long-term residents in lower-income neighbourhoods”](#)

### **Funding for the Canadian Legal Problems Survey**

- Canadian Heritage invested funds in the development of the *Canadian Legal Problems Survey 2021*.
- The *Canadian Legal Problems Survey* collects data on the experiences of middle and low-income Canadians with the civil justice system, and the challenges they face in 19 categories of concern (e.g., housing, immigration, consumer debt, family, employment, health).
- An analysis titled [“Experiences of serious problems or disputes in the Canadian provinces”](#), 2021, based on the 2021 *Canadian Legal Problems Survey*, presented findings on self-reported serious problems or disputes experienced by people living in Canada’s provinces in the three years prior to the survey.

### **Creation of an Anti-Racism Framework**

- The Federal Secretariat ramped up its whole-of-government leadership role, including by developing an Anti-Racism Framework with the help of several federal departments and agencies.
- The purpose was to offer a series of intersectional, anti-oppression racial equity tools to better equip federal organizations to remove systemic barriers and biases in areas such as policymaking, procurement, communications, and grant making.
- Federal organizations including 16 departments, central agencies and anti-racism and equity units, piloted the Anti-Racism Framework.
- Under the new Strategy, the Anti-Racism Framework will move beyond the pilot phase to address systemic barriers, and identify gaps in government, as well as to generate positive outcomes for all people in Canada, particularly those with daily lived experiences of racism.

### **An Undeniable Turning Point: COVID-19 and Increased Global Awareness of Racism**

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing racial inequities that disproportionately affect Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority populations in Canada.

In Canada and around the world, mobilization around and coverage of shocking, racially motivated incidents received heightened coverage. This includes the tragic death of a First



Nations woman, Joyce Echaquan; the deadly terror attack on a Muslim family in London, Ontario; and the identification of hundreds of unmarked graves and potential burial sites of Indigenous children on the grounds of former Indian Residential Schools. The murder of George Floyd at the hands of law enforcement also contributed to a ubiquitous recognition of racism around the world.

Most recently, unprecedented global tensions arising from the Israel-Hamas conflict post October 7, 2023, have resulted in a significant increase in hate crimes and incidents across Canada leaving Jewish, Muslim, Palestinian, and Arab communities feeling unsafe. Altogether, these events underline the need for a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to addressing racism and discrimination.

## The Strategy – Fairer, More Inclusive Federal Leadership

*Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028* builds on the previous Anti-Racism Strategy with new initiatives and is a fresh and more comprehensive way forward to eliminating systemic racism and discrimination. It is a four-year action-oriented plan for change that is built on a set of guiding principles and four thematic priority areas, all the outcome of extensive community engagement.

It proposes a whole-of-government undertaking centred on changing the federal system to help transform the lives of millions across Canada who are disadvantaged by racism. This approach focuses on removing the systemic barriers and the legacy of white supremacy and colonialism in federal institutions. These factors continue to limit the ability of Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority populations to live a life of dignity in which their rights and freedoms are fully respected.

Combatting racism is a shared responsibility which involves concrete action by provinces and territories to address racial discrimination in their respective jurisdictions. This Strategy will see active engagement with provinces and territories to work towards a fairer, and more inclusive Canada.

### Vision

An inclusive, equitable society free of racism where everyone can fully and meaningfully participate and thrive in all economic, cultural, social, and political spheres.

For the federal government to work more effectively with diverse communities, including Indigenous partners, to eliminate systemic racism and improve the quality of life of populations facing racism and discrimination in Canada.

## Priorities

1. Promoting economic, social, and cultural empowerment
2. Advancing racial equity in immigration, health, and housing systems
3. Driving justice, law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety systems reform
4. Using international engagement to inform advancement on racial equity and inclusion at home

These priorities are supported by efforts to foster an equitable, diverse, and inclusive federal public service free from racism.

## Execution

To deliver transformative change across the four priority areas, the government will:

- Set up systems within our institutions and explore legislation to drive accountability and results
- Prioritize and support communities as experts in eliminating racism
- Strengthen relationships between different orders of government, with national and international partners, to drive progress and create positive change in Canada

### Guiding Principles

#### ***Nothing About Us Without Us***

Ensure that communities most affected by racism are active collaborators in implementing the Strategy.

#### ***Trauma and Violence-Informed***

Establish safety, empathy, and compassion when supporting communities with lived experience of racism.

#### ***Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppression, and Intersectionality***

Address how people's lives are shaped by intersecting identities and multiple forms of oppressions.

#### ***Flexibility***

Maintain the capacity to offer rapid responses to the evolving self-defined needs of communities.

#### ***Integrated, Holistic Approach***

Center the work on understanding and addressing how interlocking systems perpetuate racism.

#### ***Evidence-Based and Data-Driven***

Ensure that all action is informed by community voices, disaggregated data, and the academic research.

#### ***Honouring Unique Histories and Intergenerational Harms***

Recognize the experiences of racism as well as the historic achievements of populations targeted by racism.

The Strategy draws insight from the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report*, including 94 Calls to Action (June 2015); the *Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Women and Girls*, which included 231 recommendations; the *International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*; the United Nations *International Decade for People of African Descent* (2015-2024), which focuses on 3 key pillars of activity affecting Black communities (Justice, Recognition and Development); the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (September 2007) (PDF version); the Government of Canada's implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (June 2021); and the *Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus)* analytical process.

### **A Community-Driven and Intersectional Approach**

The Strategy is centred on the critical need to ensure that the voices and experiences of diverse populations targeted by racism drive its delivery whilst acknowledging the common thread of white supremacy and colonialism that runs through experiences of systemic racism. As such, it recognizes that various communities and peoples experience systemic racism in different ways, and that collaboration is crucial for implementation of the Strategy across Canada. It acknowledges how the distinct histories of diverse populations inform the different ways in which social, economic, and political inequalities shape everyday life in the Canada of today.

To avoid a “one size fits all” method, the Strategy uses an intersectional community-centred approach. Similarly, racism is addressed by considering the different ways it affects Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority communities. This also requires addressing the ways in which multiple forms of racism are compounded by other forms of oppression. These include sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, caste-discrimination, ableism, and discrimination based on belonging to an official language minority community.

## Anti-Indigenous Racism

The Strategy acknowledges the unique relationship that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have with the Crown, as articulated in s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. It also recognizes how the tragic history of colonialism, displacement, genocide, language loss, Indian Residential Schools and the *Indian Act* are part and parcels of systems of white supremacy that continue to undermine the wellbeing and opportunities of Indigenous Peoples today. In fact, Indigenous participants in town halls hosted between 2020 and 2022 reiterated that the unique legislative structure of the *Indian Act*, which provided legal grounding for the establishment of Indian Residential Schools, is a critical element of the specific racial harm experienced by many Indigenous Peoples today. Systemic anti-Indigenous racism accounts for the fact that compared to non-Indigenous People, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis experience poorer social, economic, and political outcomes than their non-Indigenous counterparts<sup>22</sup>. This includes disproportionately poorer health outcomes, fewer educational opportunities, inadequate housing, higher levels of children taken into government care, lower income levels, and higher rates of unemployment. It also involves, higher levels of incarceration, higher death rates among women, children and youth, and higher rates of suicide. At the onset of this Strategy, the Federal Secretariat, working with Canadian Heritage, will co-develop, as committed to through the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#), with National Indigenous Organizations, Indigenous federal employee networks, as well as other First Nations, Inuit, and Métis urban, rural and northern organizations, a federal approach specifically tailored to tackling anti-Indigenous racism. It will reflect the Calls to Action and the Calls for Justice.

## A Decolonized Approach

The Strategy will use caution in deploying the terms 'Aboriginal or Indian', given these terms may be grounded in a colonial worldview. In addition, drawing from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and the 231 Calls for Justice from the Final Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the Strategy will give particular attention to addressing the distinct ways in which Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, and persons with disabilities experience anti-Indigenous racism. The Strategy recognizes that a community-driven and intersectional approach is required to eliminate institutionalized and systemic racism afflicting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in Canada.

- Indigenous Peoples experience racism differently than other communities. As a result of historical and ongoing colonization and displacement Indigenous Peoples experience poorer health, lower levels of education, inadequate housing, lower income levels, higher rates of unemployment, higher levels of incarceration, higher death rates among children and youth, and higher rates of suicide compared to the rest of the population of Canada.
- Discrimination was more common among Indigenous populations than among populations who are both non-Indigenous and non-visible minority (33% versus 16%). More specifically, 44% of First Nations had experienced discrimination in the 5 years preceding the survey, as had 29% of Inuit and 24% of Métis.
- While Indigenous Peoples make up approximately 5% of the Canadian population, they represent over 31.6% of its prison population. Half of the female population in federal prisons are Indigenous. Indigenous females in custody represent 43.2% of all in-custody females, though that number reached 50% for the first time on April 28, 2022.

## Anti-Black Racism

Anti-Black racism has a four-hundred-year history in Canada. It emerged in this country as part of a worldwide history of forcibly removing human beings, with distinct identities, languages, and cultures, from the African continent and subjecting them to slavery across the American continent and beyond. To justify this trade in enslaved peoples, a pernicious ideology was developed, which suggested that Black people were at the bottom rung of an oppressive and socially constructed racial hierarchy. This ideology was then embedded in laws, political institutions, and social and cultural systems in Canada and elsewhere to maintain Black people in a state of permanent servitude. In Canada, and abroad, Black people resisted, and alongside similar-minded allies, contributed to the abolishment of slavery in British North America and around the world. Nonetheless, in Canada, anti-Black racism and white supremacy persisted in legal segregation, denial of land to Black loyalists and maroons in Nova Scotia, separate schools, and restrictive immigration policies. Even after the passage of Human Rights legislation and the introduction of the Charter in 1982, anti-Black racism continues to be embedded within public institutions and other systems in Canada. The disproportionately higher rates of incarceration,<sup>23</sup> the higher unemployment rates,<sup>24</sup> the lower levels of wealth,<sup>25</sup> and the unequal access to philanthropic dollars,<sup>26</sup> despite comparable levels of education to the Canadian average, are symptomatic of anti-Black racism.<sup>27</sup> The Federal Secretariat will collaborate with diverse Black community organizations, experts, and Black federal employee networks, on the development of a federal approach to combat anti-Black racism. The approach will reflect the principles of the *United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent* as well as the Black-

### A Black-Centric Focus

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 will give particular attention to addressing how anti-Black racism and the unequal treatment of Black people is entrenched and normalized within our society. The Strategy recognizes that racism often becomes invisible in federal institutions, policies, and practices - making it difficult to uproot and eradicate. The history of anti-Black racism is unique and stems from the legacy of colonialism and slavery. Black Canadians and their communities are diverse, and they face unique challenges relative to those of other racialized communities, which are compounded by such factors as misogyny, homophobia and transphobia, Islamophobia, and ableism. As a result, the strategy will deploy particular attention to dismantling and eradicating racism embedded in systems and policies that harm Black people in Canada from an intersectional perspective.

- Stemming from the historic and continued impacts of colonialism and slavery, Black Canadians face unique challenges relative to those of other racialized communities. For example, anti-Black racism in employment perpetuates and exacerbates exclusion from professional networks and lack of access to meaningful employment opportunities, resulting in continued gaps in earning, despite the presence of Black people in Canada from the beginning of its settlement by European powers.
- Black people are also over-represented in Canada's prison system, making up 9.2% of the federal prison population, even though they make up only 4.3% of the population.
- In Canada, four in ten (41%) Black Canadians reported experiencing discrimination based on their race or skin colour, which is approximately 15 times higher than the proportion among the non-Indigenous, non-racialized population (3%). A considerably higher proportion of Black people experienced discrimination in 2019 than in 2014 (46% versus 28%).

centric Lens developed by Employment Social Development Canada, alongside the Federal Secretariat, to embed Black community-focussed considerations in policy development.

## Racialized and religious minority communities

In addition to Indigenous Peoples and Black people, systemic racism also affects the lives of countless members of Asian, Latin American, Arab, Jewish, Muslim, Palestinian, Sikh, Hindu, and other racialized and religious minority communities in Canada. Anti-Asian racism, for example, is rooted in the historical and ongoing discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by peoples of Asian descent, based on others' assumptions about their ethnicity and nationality. Persons of Asian origin are subjected to specific overt and subtle racist tropes and stereotypes at individual and systemic levels, which lead to their ongoing social, economic, political and cultural marginalization, disadvantage and inequitable treatment. Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews, the rhetorical and physical manifestations of which are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. Antisemitism is rooted in centuries of persecution and genocide committed against Jewish people spanning several continents. Islamophobia includes racism, stereotypes, prejudice, fear or acts of hostility directed towards individual Muslims

### Manifestations of Racism

The relationship between religious minority communities and racism often involves misconceptions and misrepresented data that negatively impacts adherents of distinct faith groups. The cumulative effect of these narratives has ranged from perceptions of intolerance, negative stereotyping, and discrimination to physical manifestations involving the significant loss of lives. The Strategy addresses the ways in which racism is entrenched and normalized within our institutions. Eliminating systemic actions that perpetuate unequal access to opportunities readily enjoyed by most people living in Canada will feature prominently in the Strategy.

- In Canada, people of South Asian (38%) and Chinese (36%) origin and people from racialized groups (32%) have personally experienced discrimination due to race or ethnicity from time to time if not regularly.
- Antisemitism and racism are intertwined and cannot be understood in isolation of the other. As shown, for example, by the growing incidents of assaults against Jews, synagogues defaced with graffiti, and demonstrations featuring explicitly antisemitic signs and slogans, antisemitism has become increasingly normalized in mainstream society.
- Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have exacerbated barriers for Muslims. Implicit biases need to be addressed as there is a distinct link between attacks against mosques, individuals and families, and the negative stereotypes of Muslims in the media.
- Among police-reported hate crimes targeting a religion in 2021, the Jewish and Muslim populations continue to be among the most frequent targets, accounting for 13% and 16% of crimes against a religious group. Following the global tensions arising from the Israel-Hamas conflict post October 7, 2023, antisemitic and Islamophobic violence have increased in Canada.

or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, anti-Muslim hate can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic, and societal level. Furthermore, negative perceptions about racialized newcomers of all backgrounds, insufficient settlement services, and barriers to accessing services such as affordable childcare and employment networking opportunities make it difficult to secure employment. This speaks to the importance of advancing inclusion for populations who face intolerance due to their combined ethnic and religious identities, recognizing that experiences can vary even within an ethnoreligious community. The Federal Secretariat will collaborate with Canadian Heritage's Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Branch, the Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia and the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, as well as Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, and Asian federal employee networks on tackling racism against racialized communities and religious minorities, including anti-Asian-Racism.

## Intersectionality

The Strategy recognizes that people have multiple and diverse identity factors that intersect to shape their perspectives and experiences. In this, it adopts an intersectional approach that acknowledges the ways in which people's experience of racism is shaped by their multiple and overlapping characteristics and social locations. Together, they can produce a unique and distinct experience for that individual or group, for example, creating additional barriers for some and/or opportunities for others. For example, an August 2022 study conducted in Quebec by the Association for Canadian Studies found that 53% of Muslim women and 38% of Muslim men reported high levels of exposure to prejudicial remarks and discrimination. Thus, anti-racism efforts must be pursued using an intersectional approach which recognizes how racialization is affected by such things as ableism, trans and homophobia, and misogyny.

The intersectional lens will be decolonizing in intent. It will acknowledge the extent to which intersecting forms of oppression, such as homophobia and transphobia, are the legacy of laws, practices, and worldviews of colonial powers that ruled in Canada and abroad. The harm done to Indigenous Peoples whose gender identities and sexualities did not conform with colonial ideologies and practices, is well-documented, notably through the [Calls for Justice](#) (PDF version) of the [Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#). It is also mirrored by the historical harms of colonization and other forms of oppression experienced by racialized and religious minority members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities at home and abroad. As such, the Strategy will seek to empower communities, build bridges across intersections, and counter efforts to weaponize these intersections to feed disinformation and polarize our society. It will also reflect the Gender-Based Analysis Plus priorities of the government in ensuring that gender is adequately addressed across all aspects of the Strategy, from an intersectional perspective.

## Priorities and Associated Actions

Over three years of extensive engagement, diverse persons with lived experience of racism, stakeholders, and partners expressed a desire to have Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 go beyond social participation, employment, and justice, which were prioritized areas under Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022. They indicated that for it to be successful, the government must address racism from a social determinants of health perspective. This means addressing the variety of interlocking factors that affect a person's life. For many, the pandemic demonstrated the extent to which systemic racism is rampant across several spheres of society. They called for a new federal anti-racism strategy to take a whole-of-society approach to address the range of factors that perpetuate systemic racism today, across a variety of areas, using all the tools at the disposal of the federal government. This means working with all sectors of society and leveraging all disciplines.

### Promoting economic, social, and cultural empowerment

A commitment to ensuring the full participation of all people in Canada in the social, political, civic, and economic spheres of society must include access to tangible opportunities. The legacy of slavery, colonialism, segregation, and the government's past policies towards Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority communities remain. It has resulted in lasting systemic barriers in the social, political, civic, and economic spheres of society. In turn, these barriers have had profound, persistent and inter-generational negative impacts on these distinct populations. Subjecting generations to unequal access and lack of opportunities has led to employment barriers, and precarious financial instability. It has also led to misrepresentation and elimination of voices and experiences in the arts and culture industry and eradication or extinction of language and culture. Growing levels of income inequality are also signs that the post-pandemic period may further exacerbate racial inequities.

**The Government of Canada is committed to addressing this issue through a variety of existing and soon-to-come initiatives including:**

- Fostering equity in economic opportunities and employment for all communities such as the 50-30 Challenge and the Black Entrepreneurship Program – *Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada*
- Working with federally regulated industries and workplaces such as financial institutions to boost employment and managerial opportunities for under-represented equity groups – *Innovation, Science and Economic Development*
- Taking action on labour, training, and skills development, including opportunities to create inclusive workplaces, where all employees are treated with dignity and respect – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
- Co-developing solutions with community stakeholders to address Black and Indigenous priorities in science and innovation and include capacity funding – *Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada*



- Providing opportunities for and equitable representation of equity-deserving communities in the arts and cultural industry through grants and contributions funding – *Canadian Heritage*
- Conducting an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Review of departmental programs to identify and remove systemic barriers to accessing programming for equity-deserving communities, and support sectors in developing their own approaches to improve equity, diversity and inclusion – *Canadian Heritage*
- Working with provinces and territories to build a Canada-wide system of early learning and childcare (ELCC) through new investments in the ELCC Infrastructure Fund – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
- Continue implementing Canada’s First Poverty Reduction Strategy and *Poverty Reduction Act* (legislation that sets out poverty reduction targets, establishes the Market Basket Measure as Canada’s Official Poverty Line, and establishes the National Advisory Council on Poverty) – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
- Working with provinces and territories, Indigenous partners, and stakeholders to develop a National School Food Policy and to explore how more Canadian children can receive nutritious food at school. This policy would complement other investments that reduce poverty and food insecurity, such as the Canada Child Benefit, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement, and the newly expanded Canada Workers Benefit – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
- Implementing the [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#) – *Women and Gender Equality Canada*
- Advancing [Canada’s Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#) – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
- **Taking continued action related to the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples through such things as:**
  - the continued implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration Act* – *led by Justice Canada*
  - addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls national inquiry recommendations – *led by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada*
  - advancing Indigenous language revitalization – *led by Canadian Heritage*
  - recognizing geographical place names that have origins in Indigenous languages – *led by Natural Resources Canada*
- Working with provincial and territorial partners to address derogatory and misogynistic geographical place names across the country – *Natural Resources Canada*
- **Advancing continued action related to the empowerment of Black communities, including through:**
  - the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
  - the Black-led Philanthropic Endowment Fund – *Employment and Social Development Canada*
  - the development of a Federal Action Plan for Black Communities – *Employment and Social Development Canada*

- Pursuing continued action related to the empowerment of religious minority (faith and belief) communities, including support for the work of the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism and the Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia – *Canadian Heritage and Global Affairs Canada*
- Deepening understanding and preparing to respond to the government supported legislation requiring the development of a national strategy to assess, prevent and address environmental racism and to advance environmental justice – *Environment and Climate Change Canada*
- Creating opportunities for economic empowerment of diverse communities in the natural resources sector – *Natural Resources Canada*
- Providing opportunities for an equitable representation of the Canadian population in the scientific community – *Natural Resources Canada*
- **Improving data collection, enhancing data disaggregation, and generating statistical products that support the goals of Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 through:**
  - the establishment of an expert advisory committee on ethno-cultural and immigration statistics – *Statistics Canada*
  - the development of analytical portraits of the six major racialized groups in Canada along demographic, economic and social dimensions – *Statistics Canada*
  - an update of the social inclusion framework featuring improved intersectional insights of Social Inclusion Framework data with new indicators and reference years – *Statistics Canada*
  - the development of a conceptual framework on racism and discrimination, defining best practices when researching racism, hate and discrimination – *Statistics Canada*
  - and the [\*Disaggregated Data Action Plan\*](#), a whole-of- government approach to strengthen the government’s efforts to address systemic racism and gender gaps, leading to better and more equitable decision-making for all Canadians – *Statistics Canada*

### **Advancing racial equity in immigration, health, and housing systems**

Indigenous Peoples, members of Black communities, racialized, and religious minority communities must have fair and equitable access to healthcare. This means ensuring quality and culturally safe trauma-informed healthcare services, from any health professional, anywhere they are and any time they need it. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the extent to which adverse health outcomes are driven by the social and structural determinants of health. This included different forms of systemic racism embedded in health systems across Canada. The Government of Canada is committed to addressing this including through new health funding to provinces and territories announced in February 2023. The goal is to improve health care services for Canadians and ensure equal access for equity-deserving groups and individuals. This also includes dedicated funding to address unique challenges Indigenous Peoples face when it comes to fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health care services, in addition to other funding committed to addressing anti-Indigenous racism including through the [Addressing Racism and](#)

Discrimination in Canada's Health Systems Program as well as a new Indigenous Health Equity Fund.

In the area of housing, both prices and rent have increased dramatically over the past few years. While core housing need impacts one in ten households in Canada, certain households have higher incidences of core housing need including recent refugees and immigrants, racialized groups on housing costs, Indigenous Peoples, youths, seniors, women-led one parent households and other groups prioritized under the National Housing Strategy. Higher shelter costs result in reduced money and resources for other necessities like food and utilities or to save for future emergencies. Limited access to affordable housing and housing security is also linked to lower life satisfaction and poor mental health. Similarly, the treatment of racialized migrant workers and others with precarious immigration status, including those who are members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities, as well cases of unequal treatment of Black and other racialized immigration applicants over the course of the pandemic, has brought public attention to systemic racism in the Canadian immigration system. Despite Canada having formally abandoned a race-based immigration selection system, stakeholders and partners across the country are raising the alarm that racial discrimination persists.

**The government is taking the following actions to help dismantle systemic barriers in health systems and make them more inclusive:**

- Support mental health interventions for underserved populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 – *Public Health Agency of Canada*
- Continue to support the development and implementation of anti-racism policy and programs for Canada's health systems including cultural safety training of health professionals, students, management, and leaders of healthcare organizations – *Health Canada and Indigenous Services Canada*
- Gain a better understanding of health inequalities to improve equity in health care access, quality, experience, and outcomes – *Health Canada*
- Introduce distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation – *Indigenous Services Canada*
- Provide community-based funding to generate culturally-relevant knowledge and evidence and deliver programs that address mental health and its determinants for Black Canadians, including anti-Black racism – *Public Health Agency of Canada*

**The following actions are being taken to address systemic racism in the immigration system:**

- Identify and address institutional bias and racism in immigration decision-making and risk management, including through the review of advanced analytics and automated systems – *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*
- Continue to contribute funding for Immigration and Refugee Legal Aid – *Justice Canada*
- Provide additional training for Canada Border Services Agency and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada officers – *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*

**The following actions are being taken to address systemic racism in settlement and integration:**

- Strengthen culturally relevant integration services – *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*
- Integrate an anti-racism lens into the assessment of grants and contributions proposals – *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*
- Fund delivery of re/settlement services that promote anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion – *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*
- Continue to advance foreign credential recognition programs and policies – *Employment and Social Development Canada*

**The following measures are being taken to address the systemic barriers in infrastructure and housing:**

- Address and support people experiencing homelessness within the populations in the most vulnerable situations– *Infrastructure Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*
- Continue federal support for emergency housing needs – *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*
- Improve housing outcomes for those in greatest need through a national housing strategy – *Infrastructure Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*
- Collaborating with provinces and territories through the Open Forum on Homelessness and through the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Forum on Housing to effectively address the housing and homelessness challenges faced by the populations in the most vulnerable situations — *Infrastructure Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*
- Align federal policies and programs to address critical housing and homelessness issues through a socio-economic systems approach – *Infrastructure Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*
- **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to continue to support key initiatives including:**
  - Provision of \$500 thousands the establishment of Black Community Technical Housing Resource Centre, which aims to provide assistance, advice, and support to Black-led and Black-serving organizations interested in the field of housing
  - Supporting Black-led organizations to build housing for Black Canadians through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund
  - Providing Solutions Labs funding and expertise to help solve complex housing problems and develop housing solutions for Black and other racialized communities
  - Providing funding through the Shared Equity Mortgage Provider program (SEMP) to help deliver an estimated 200 affordable homes to first-time homeowner Black families in the Greater Toronto Area
  - Funding Housing Supply Challenges focused on racialized and equity communities
  - Advisory and subject-matter expertise support for FutureBUILDS' BIPOC Real-Estate Development Incubator

## Driving justice, law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety systems reform

Canada's justice system must keep all people in Canada, their families, and communities safe while promoting fairness. However, systemic racism in the criminal justice system has resulted in the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples, Black people, members of Muslim communities, as well as other historically marginalized communities. Evidence has also pointed to the persistence of racial profiling by law enforcement<sup>28</sup> and disproportionate surveillance by intelligence agencies<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, new domestic and global threats to national security, including foreign interference and transnational white-supremacist and hate networks, are emerging and targeting diasporic communities. This highlights the need to ensure that public safety, law enforcement, and intelligence are adequately tailored to address the specific needs of different racialized and religious minority communities in meaningful, culturally responsive ways.

**The Government of Canada is committed to addressing this through a variety of initiatives existing and soon-to-come including:**

- Addressing systemic anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism in the criminal justice system – *Justice Canada*
- Development of an [Indigenous Justice Strategy](#) – *Justice Canada*
- Creation of Canada's first [Black Justice Strategy](#) – *Justice Canada*
- Enhancing legal support for equity-impacted communities (including but not limited to Impact of Race and Culture Assessments) – *Justice Canada*
- Review of changes in the criminal justice system and sentencing reforms, and reduce reliance on mandatory minimum penalties – *Justice Canada*
- Providing legal Services and Supports for Racialized Communities (Justice Partnership and Innovation Fund) – *Justice Canada*
- Leading the development of an action plan to combat hate – *Canadian Heritage*
- Working to ensure that law enforcement, security, intelligence, and defence systems operate in a bias-free way – *National Defence*
- Enhancing law enforcement, security, intelligence, and defence communities' capacity to address internal racism and discrimination through continuous education, training, tools, and reporting – *National Defence*
- Developing an RCMP Race-Based Data Collection Framework to address systemic racism and ensure better outcomes for Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities in Canada – *Royal Canadian Mounted Police*
- Work towards integrating a racial equity lens in operations to change attitudes and behaviours – *National Defence*
- Increase transparency in policy decision-making and processes at National Defence through regular and focused reviews – *Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and National Defence*
- Address racial bias in AI and security-driven algorithms – *Public Safety Canada and National Defence*
- Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools – *Justice Canada*

- [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) and the [Federal Gender-Based Violence Strategy](#) – *Women and Gender Equality Canada*

## Using international engagement to inform advancement on racial equity and inclusion at home

Global awareness on issues of equity and racial justice has increased expectations for collective action, including internationally. At the same time, hostile state and non-state actors are working across borders to use disinformation to engineer a global backlash against anti-racism, human rights, democracy, and diversity. They are also pushing for countries to adopt policies and laws to push back against racial justice and equity initiatives worldwide, including in Canada. Strategic collaborations with multilateral and international agencies as well as our international allies will help generate concrete actions to inform advancement of racial equity and inclusion at home.

### The following actions are underway:

- Work through bilateral and multilateral partnerships and mechanisms, such as the United Nations, to support inclusion and respect for diversity to combat antisemitism and address systemic racism in Canada - *Global Affairs in collaboration with Canadian Heritage and Employment and Social Development Canada*
- Engage with the UN Permanent Forum for People of African Descent to combat global anti-Black racism as well as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to combat anti-Indigenous racism – *Employment and Social Development Canada, Global Affairs Canada and, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada*
- Develop a Canadian handbook on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism and adopt the IHRA definition of antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination – *Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism*
- Develop a Canadian Guide on Islamophobia and addressing the safety and security needs of Muslim communities – *Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia*

## Advancing Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service

2021 and 2022 witnessed a renewed effort to address systemic racism and discrimination in the federal public service. This effort is centred on a drive to make concrete and long-lasting changes that ensure more equitable, diverse, and inclusive federal public service. Supported by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, departments are striving to increase diversity among senior leaders of the public service and establish a culture of inclusiveness that combats racism and addresses systemic barriers. The Public Service Commission of Canada is working with departments to support a successful implementation of recent changes to the *Public Service Employment Act* which aims to identify and address bias and barriers in hiring for equity-deserving groups. Furthermore, a review of the *Employment Equity Act* has been pursued by the

Minister of Labour, which applies to the Federal Public Service and other federally regulated organizations.

As well, helping to drive change from within are national groups such as the Visible Minorities Champions and Chairs Community (VMCCC), the Anti-Racism Ambassadors Network (ARAN), and the Community of Federal Visible Minorities (CFVM). Several employee networks, as well as department-specific equity-based groups, are taking action and demonstrating leadership, including the Champions and Chairs Circle for Indigenous Peoples (CCCIP), the Federal Black Employees Caucus (FBEC), the Black Executives Network (BEN), the Network of Asian Federal Employees (NAFE), the Jewish Public Servants Network (JPSN), the Muslim Federal Employees Network (MFEN), the Sikh Public Servants Network (SPSN), the Indigenous Federal Employees Network (IFEN) and the Pride Service Public Network (PSPN).

**The Government of Canada is advancing on the following initiatives:**

- Several Departments have created or have commitments to create Secretariats or Units to help lead work on advancing anti-racism and anti-discrimination – e.g., *Employment and Social Development Canada*
- Reviewing people management policy and guidance with an anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion lens, in consultation with employee networks – *Privy Council Office, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and National Defence*
- Conducting an independent evaluation to identify and provide recommendations to redress Indigenous Services Canada’s internal processes, procedures and practices that contribute to discrimination, as identified by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal – *Indigenous Services Canada*
- Continuing to drive change to advance anti-racism and equity within the federal public service and federal institutions, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Canadian Armed Forces – *National Defence*
- Monitoring and overseeing progress in anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the core public administration and separate agencies – *Privy Council Office, Employment and Social Development Canada, and National Defence*
- Supporting the Director of Anti-Racism Implementation (DARI) at the Department of National Defence to examine racism and discrimination within the Defence Team as well as identify and support measures to increase the representation and advancement of Indigenous, Black and racialized Defence Team members throughout the organization – *National Defence*
- **Advancing work on the public service’s areas of focus on anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion to address systemic barriers and foster inclusive workplaces, through the following initiatives and approaches:**
  - The [Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service](#) – *Privy Council Office*
  - The Action Plan for Black Employees in the Public Service – *Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat*
  - The [Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#) – *Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat*

- The Self-Identification Modernization Project – *Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat*
- The *Many Voices One Mind: A Pathway to Reconciliation Report Action Plan* – *Indigenous Services Canada*
- Engaging a panel of experts to seek recommendations on the development and implementation of a Restorative Engagement Program through consultation with key networks and stakeholders on how to address systemic issues and affect organizational change – *National Defence and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat*
- The GBA Plus Engagement Process – *Women and Gender Equality Canada*

## Government Levers to Make Systems Fairer and More Inclusive

The Strategy lays out federal action against racism and discrimination in Canada, with a strong focus on driving federal institutions towards results across the four thematic priority areas:

1. Promoting economic, social, and cultural empowerment
2. Advancing racial equity in immigration, health, and housing systems
3. Driving justice, law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety systems reform
4. Using international engagement to inform advancement on racial equity and inclusion at home

This will be achieved with strengthened accountability, transparent reporting, institutional capacity-building, and investing in community expertise. Working with communities and academia is key to delivering success.

### **Strategic Objective 1: Set-Up Institutional Systems and Legislative Options to Drive Accountability and Results**

- **Action 1: Explore Legislation**
  - Following the recommendations from many stakeholders across Canada, the government will explore legislative options to enhance federal efforts to eliminate racism, discrimination, and hate.
- **Action 2: Establish an Anti-Racism Framework**
  - The Anti-Racism Framework will be developed to help federal organizations to embed anti-racism considerations across the government, identify systemic barriers, and improve existing and future policies, programs, and services.
  - It will offer public servants a rigorous method to understand the impacts of their decisions on populations affected by racism, and design effective initiatives that close the equity gaps affecting Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority communities.



- The Federal Secretariat at Employment and Social Development Canada will work closely with departments and agencies to support and strengthen their capacity to conduct analysis and propose policies, in ways that boost the quality of life of and establish equitable opportunities for diverse populations with lived experience of racism.
- Results will also be achieved through the provision of advice on relevant memorandum to Cabinet by the Privy Council Office and the Federal Secretariat. The Federal Secretariat will also assist individual departments and agencies in addressing barriers to success or negative impact of federal initiatives.
- **Action 3: Deliver a Mechanism to Report Publicly on Government Anti-Racism Outcomes**
  - The government will report publicly on the performance of departments by using reports provided through such mechanisms, tools, and resources, as a new Anti-Racism and Combatting Hate Results Framework developed by Statistics Canada, with support from Canadian Heritage.
  - This work will be done in collaboration with communities and academia to develop common indicators and key metrics to measure performance and impact. These tools will enhance accountability, governance, and transparency.
  - Information collected will be publicly communicated and provide transparency and accountability regarding the application of anti-racism principles to policy development and delivery, and other business lines.
  - Reports will be produced at the program level and flagged when issues are identified, as is currently done. Moreover, an annual Anti-Racism Report Card will track federal performance in this area.
- **Action 4: Create a Ministerial Advisory Council and Enhanced Governance and Accountability Mechanisms**
  - The Ministerial Advisory Council, supported by Canadian Heritage, will be established comprised of academia, experts, community members and grassroots organizations.
  - It will advise the federal Minister on emerging and evolving anti-racism issues. In addition, a new Deputy Minister's Policy Committee on Anti-Racism will be created to strengthen alignment of key federal anti-racism initiatives across government.
  - Canadian Heritage will strengthen accountability measures to drive transparency, building trust with communities, and developing and delivering an Anti-Racism Report Card to demonstrate progress on the implementation.

## **Strategic Objective 2: Prioritize and support communities as experts in eliminating racism**

- **Action 1: Establish Strong Anti-Racism Community Investment Programs**

- Canadian Heritage will modernize its existing anti-racism funding programs to invest more effectively in communities making a difference in combating systemic racism.
  - The Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism grants and contributions programs will be used, alongside transfer payments, as levers to support communities as change agents, working towards building more inclusive, more equitable, and more prosperous communities for all.
  - The grants and contributions process will be redesigned and modernized to simplify the application experience and reduce systemic barriers to success for organizations led by and/or serving Indigenous Peoples, and Black, racialized, and religious minority communities.
- **Action 2: Consolidate the Community to Government Policy Recommendation Pipeline**
    - The Federal Secretariat at Employment and Social Development Canada, complemented by outreach to stakeholders on race relations led by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, will continue its strategic community engagement and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority populations living in Canada.
    - This engagement will continue to provide the government with a pipeline of policy recommendations from populations with lived experience of racism. The Federal Secretariat will use the information gathered to identify systemic racial barriers and gaps and emerging challenges.
    - The Federal Secretariat will use the information collected to work with departments to develop new initiatives and help them consider the impacts of new and existing policies, services, and identify impacts of programs on Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized, and religious minority communities. The government will share recommendations from publicly consulted communities in Annual Reports on the performance of the Strategy, through the Federal Secretariat.
  - **Action 3: Establish a Digital Knowledge and Resource Portal**
    - A new online anti-racism portal, built and maintained by the Department of Employment and Social Development Canada, will provide internal and external stakeholders at all levels with access to a wide range of anti-racism tools and resources. The portal will be built incrementally.
    - Over time, it will empower community stakeholders, partners, and populations with lived experience of racism to share knowledge, provide recommendations, identify best practices and feedback, as well as access information on federal funding and Governor-in-Council appointment opportunities.
    - It will provide access to disaggregated data products as they are released by Statistics Canada. The portal will also help increase transparency regarding the work and results achieved under the Strategy. This will include access to a central

repository housing reports on the performance and the impact of the Strategy, as well as video and other content related to specific activities.

### **Strategic Objective 3: Strengthen relationships between different orders of government, with national and international partners, to drive progress and create positive change in Canada**

- **Action 1: Engage Provinces, and Territories and National Indigenous Organizations, including the creation of a new forum for Ministers responsible for Multiculturalism, Diversity and Inclusion**
  - Building upon the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Network of Officials Responsible for Multiculturalism, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (FPTORMIA), Canadian Heritage will establish a new FPT forum at the Ministerial level that serves to enhance collaboration and potential synergies with other orders of governments to address systemic racism, inclusion, equity, and multiculturalism.
  - Additionally, engagements with National Indigenous Organizations, regional Indigenous organizations and First Nations band councils will also be pursued. Using existing fora, the focus will be on exploring common areas of interest, sharing information on successful anti-racism initiatives, and identify new areas for collaboration.
  
- **Action 2: Collaborate with Municipalities and Indigenous Organizations**
  - Through its working relationship with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, the Federal Secretariat will have an opportunity to engage municipalities to enhance intergovernmental efforts to combat systemic racism, discrimination, and hate.
  - This will include focusing on identifying new areas for collaboration, sharing information, and discussing ways to develop common anti-racism indicators. Similar efforts will be pursued with regional Indigenous organizations and First Nations band councils to identify ways to better collaborate in eradicating anti-Indigenous racism across the country.
  
- **Action 3: Collaborate with our International Allies**
  - Federal departments, in collaboration with Global Affairs Canada, will work with bilateral and multilateral partners and mechanisms to advance racial equity and inclusion in Canada, including through the protection of human rights and democratic values. Engagements will include, but are not limited to, high-level forums, sharing best practices and research.

## Evaluation Approach

The activities funded through the Strategy will be subject to an evaluation conducted by the Evaluation Services Directorate of Canadian Heritage within five years of the launch of the new Strategy. The timing of the evaluation will be approved as part of a future departmental five-year evaluation plan. The evaluation will be planned and conducted in collaboration with federal partners to ensure a whole-government approach. The scope of the evaluation, the issues to be addressed, and additional data collection methods, including the need for a public opinion survey, will be defined later. The scope of the evaluation and the issues will consider risks and the analysis of evidence-based performance data collected annually.

## Conclusion

*Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028* is about making a better, fairer, more inclusive Canada where everyone can fully participate and thrive.

It highlights the important work that must be taken across government to better reflect the diversity of Canada in every policy, program, system, and organization. We must acknowledge the distinct expertise in communities across the country. We must all work together towards the common goal of eliminating systemic racism.

This approach reflects the feedback and expertise of thousands of people with lived experience of racism and religious discrimination across the country. Their insight is helping us better align the design and delivery of federal initiatives with the goal of eliminating systemic racism and guaranteeing the human rights and wellbeing of populations experiencing racism in Canada. Through the Strategy, [new institutional levers](#) are being introduced to enable the government to deliver sustained and transformative change more effectively for populations. The levers, which include new governance, institutional capacity, exploring legislative options, and reporting mechanisms, will help address racial bias in the judicial system, foster economic empowerment and enable greater collaboration with provincial and territorial counterparts. This approach is being delivered jointly and collaboratively with the populations most affected by systemic racism, discrimination, and hate. Ultimately, the Strategy is focused on closing the racial gap and making Canada more inclusive for everyone.

# Appendix 1: Glossary

Words matter when it comes to promoting inclusion and eliminating discrimination. The following working definitions enable us to have a common understanding of a word or subject.

<p><b>Anti-Asian Racism</b></p>	<p>In Canada, anti-Asian racism refers to historical and ongoing discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by peoples of Asian descent, based on others’ assumptions about their ethnicity and nationality. Peoples of Asian descent are subjected to specific overt and subtle racist tropes and stereotypes at individual and systemic levels, which lead to their ongoing social, economic, political, and cultural marginalization, disadvantage, and unequal treatment. This includes perceptions of being a “Yellow Peril,” a “Perpetual Foreigner,” a “Model Minority,” “exotic,” or “mystic.” These stereotypes are rooted in Canada’s long history of racist and exclusionary laws, and often mask racism faced by peoples of Asian descent, while erasing their historical contributions to building Canada.</p> <p>The term <i>Asian</i> encompasses a wide range of identities that the term Asian obscures. While all may experience being “otherized,” specific experiences of anti-Asian racism vary. Some are constantly being perceived to be a threat, some face gendered exotification and violence, some are more likely to be subjected to online hate and racist portrayals in the media, while others face Islamophobia and other forms of religious-based discrimination.<sup>30</sup></p>
<p><b>Anti-Black Racism</b></p>	<p>Anti-Black racism includes prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement. Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies, and practices, such that</p>

	<p>anti-Black racism is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger white society. Anti-Black racism is manifested in the legacy of the current social, economic, and political marginalization of Black people in Canada in society such as the lack of opportunities, lower socio-economic status, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.<sup>31</sup></p>
<b>Antisemitism</b>	<p>Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.<sup>32</sup></p>
<b>Colonialism</b>	<p>A practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism — as found in Canada — is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations, and to extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land. Everyone living in Canada today receives varying privileges or consequences from settler colonialism; however, White people are significantly advantaged by settler colonialism.<sup>33</sup></p>
<b>Disaggregated Data</b>	<p>In the context of race-based data, disaggregated data consists of breaking down composite ("aggregate") categories such as "visible minority" into component parts, such as Black, Chinese, Arab etc.<sup>34</sup></p>
<b>Discrimination</b>	<p>Treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them, or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their race, citizenship, family status, disability, sex, gender or other personal characteristics.<sup>35</sup></p>
<b>Equity</b>	<p>Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences</p>

	within groups of individuals, and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life. <sup>36</sup>
<b>Intersectionality</b>	Acknowledges the ways in which people's lives are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and social locations, which, together, can produce a unique and distinct experience for that individual or group, for example, creating additional barriers or opportunities. <sup>37</sup>
<b>Islamophobia</b>	Includes racism, stereotypes, prejudice, fear or acts of hostility directed towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic and societal level. <sup>38</sup>
<b>Race</b>	Race is a "social construct". This means that society forms ideas of race based on geographic, historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors, as well as physical traits, even though none of these can legitimately be used to classify groups of people. <sup>39</sup>
<b>Racialization</b>	The process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics. <sup>40</sup>
<b>Racism</b>	Racism is any individual action, or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify discrimination. <sup>41</sup>
<b>Social participation</b>	Involvement in meaningful activities (social, cultural, physical, educational, recreational, etc.) that increase one's sense of belonging and well-being.
<b>Systemic or Institutional Racism</b>	Consists of patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for racialized persons.

	<p>These appear neutral on the surface, such as racialized and colourblind norms and standard ways of operating, but nevertheless, have an exclusionary impact on racialized persons, which lead to racially biased outcomes and experiences.<sup>42</sup></p>
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## Appendix 2: The Legislative and Policy Context

In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt an official Multiculturalism Policy, which was later enshrined in law in the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988). The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* is a cornerstone of our nation's legal and values-based framework, also complemented by legislation such as the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (1977). This framework enshrines protections from discrimination, and a commitment to promoting the full participation of people in Canada in the social, political, civic, and economic spheres of society. Increasing political polarization and the rise of racism, discrimination, and hate challenge the realization of these commitments, and it is the duty of the government, and all people in Canada, to uphold these rights and freedoms. Canada is also signatory and party to the *International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*.

### **The Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have a special constitutional relationship with the Crown. This relationship, including existing Aboriginal and treaty rights, is recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The government recognizes that Indigenous self-government and laws are critical to Canada's future, and that Indigenous rights and perspectives must be incorporated in all aspects of this relationship. Part of that work relates to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*: a comprehensive international human rights instrument on the rights of Indigenous Peoples that affirms and sets out a broad range of collective and individual rights that constitute the minimum standards to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and to contribute to their survival, dignity, and well-being. On June 21, 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* received Royal Assent and came into force. This Act, through the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan*, provides a roadmap for the Government of Canada and Indigenous Peoples to work together to implement the Declaration based on lasting reconciliation, healing, and cooperative relations. An important part of this work involves not only implementing the Act but also fulfilling Canada's commitment to implement the 231 Calls for Justice, presented in the report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

### **The International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024)**

Black individuals and communities have been on Canadian soil for over 400 years. Arriving first as explorers with a knowledge of First Nation languages, and then as enslaved people alongside Indigenous Peoples who were brutally exploited by European settlers, Black people have grown to now encompass over 1.6 million people and are actively contributing to fields as varied as science and finance, academia, medicine, and arts, despite confronting the brunt of systemic anti-Black racism. In January of 2018, the Government of Canada announced that it was officially recognizing the *International Decade for People of African Descent* and committing to advance its objectives, which include recognition, justice, and development. This was, in part, a response

to the recommendations from the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, established in 2002, and upon concluding its mission to Canada, exhorted the federal government to do more to combat anti-Black racism. Since 2018, the government has invested hundreds of millions of dollars to address the ways in which systemic anti-Black racism has undermined the rights and freedoms of Black communities, in entrepreneurship, philanthropy, capacity-building, procurement, mental health, justice, and several other areas.

## **Canada and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance**

The IHRA is made up of government officials and experts from 35 countries. It is guided by the principles identified in the [Stockholm Declaration](#). Its objectives include:

- supporting Holocaust education, remembrance and research in member countries and around the world
- promoting the development of civil society through an annual grant program
- working in partnership with other international organizations to support these principles and objectives

Canada contributes to and benefits from the IHRA's work to combat antisemitism and to strengthen, advance, and promote Holocaust education, research, and remembrance. In June 2022, Canada sent a delegation to Stockholm, Sweden to participate in the first in-person plenary meeting since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The head of the Canadian delegation to the IHRA is Canada's Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism.

## **The Sustainable Development Goals**

In 2015, Canada joined all United Nations Member States in adopting ambitious goals for sustainable development, as outlined in [Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The 2030 Agenda centres on a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), encompassing social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Taken together, the SDGs aim to improve the lives of all people, while protecting the planet and bringing about greater prosperity and a more inclusive and just society. The Government of Canada tracks overall progress on the SDGs through the Canadian Indicator Framework, which is a vehicle for Canada to track and report on progress toward each of the SDGs, and identify areas for further action, including in reducing inequality, peace, justice and strong institutions, as well as sustainable cities and communities.

## Appendix 3: The Federal Anti-Racism Ecosystem

Federal departments and agencies, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, along with the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, and the Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia will be key partners in shaping the Federal Eco-System on addressing racism and discrimination in Canada.

<p><b>Federal Departments and Agencies</b></p>	<p>Canadian Heritage and Employment and Social Development Canada will provide horizontal leadership and a framework for which departments and agencies can collaborate in a coordinated and coherent manner. Key departments and agencies include Canada Border Services Agency; Canadian Security Intelligence Service; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada; Department of National Defence; Global Affairs Canada; Health Canada; Indigenous Services Canada; Innovation, Science and Economic Development; Justice Canada; Public Health Agency of Canada; Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; and Statistics Canada. These partners will work with Canadian Heritage to advance work on anti-racism under the five thematic areas to guide action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Racism-free, equitable, diverse, accessible, and inclusive federal public service and federal institutions;</li> <li>2. Justice, law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety systems reform;</li> <li>3. Racial equity in immigration, public health, and housing systems;</li> <li>4. Economic, social and cultural empowerment; and</li> <li>5. Racial equity and inclusion internationally and multilaterally.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat (the Federal Secretariat)</b></p>	<p>The Federal Secretariat coordinates federal action by working with federal institutions on implementing their anti-racism commitments, identifying systemic barriers and gaps, and guiding the development of policies, services, and programs. It will promote the use of an</p>

	<p>Anti-Racism Framework across government to strengthen the capacity of federal institutions to address racism, discrimination, and unintended biases. The Federal Secretariat is guided by the “nothing about us without us” principle that centres the voices and experiences of Indigenous peoples, Black, Asian, Arab, Latin American, Muslim, Jewish, and other racialized and religious minority communities in policy development. This work supports longer-term whole-of-government actions to address racism and discrimination in Canada. Through its horizontal work, the Federal Secretariat is providing expertise as well as leadership and guidance to other departments on issues relating to combating racism from an intersectional perspective, in areas as varied as policy, program, communication, laws, and international issues.</p>
<p><b>Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF)</b></p>	<p>The CRRF has the mandate to facilitate the development, sharing and application of knowledge and expertise, to contribute to the elimination of racism in Canadian society. CRRF’s origins are in the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement of 1988, after which the National Association of Japanese Canadians contributed \$12 million, which was matched by the Government of Canada to create an endowment fund of \$24 million to establish the organization. The work of the CRRF is distinct from and complements the federal government’s work under Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028. The Foundation is a Crown corporation, under the portfolio of Canadian Heritage, and operates at arm’s length from government. The CRRF focuses on raising public awareness of the causes and manifestations of racism in Canada. It is a source of information, providing perspective and research data to contribute to the elimination of racism.</p>

	<p>CRRF’s key achievements include co-chairing a National Hate Crimes Task Force, organizing anti-racism workshops across Canada, directing more than \$2.5 million towards 189 community groups and non-profit organizations through the National Anti-Racism Fund to promote equity and increase public awareness on systemic racism, gathering more than 30 youth leaders from across Canada for the inaugural Anti-Racist Youth Lab, leading research to identify gaps in support services for victims of hate crimes and designing policy recommendations to address those gaps and leading virtual anti-racism workshops across Canada.</p> <p>It works with all orders of government, the private sector, and civil society and is active in supporting a number of the action pillars identified in the Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028, particularly those under the justice, law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety systems pillar. The CRRF supports continued engagement of Black Canadians from coast to coast by facilitating their participation in delegations to the UN Permanent Forum meetings. Canadian Heritage’s Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Branch and the CRRF work together to share application information, program details, ensuring complementarity of funding.</p>
<p><b>Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism</b></p>	<p>The mandate of the Special Envoy has both an international and a domestic role. Domestically, the Special Envoy provides guidance and advice to advance the federal government’s efforts to combat antisemitism and hatred. She also works with Canadian institutions and stakeholders, promotes public awareness and understanding of Jewish communities in their diverse and intersectional identities in Canada, promotes Holocaust education, remembrance, and research, and encourages the adoption and</p>

	<p>implementation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. Internationally, the Special Envoy is the head of the Canadian delegation to IHRA, a role through which she reinforces Canada’s leading role in combatting antisemitism and hatred abroad. She also works with international partners to strengthen and promote Holocaust education, remembrance, and research worldwide, and advocates for a broader international adoption of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.</p> <p>Budget 2022 provided \$5.6 million over five years, and \$1.2 million ongoing, to support the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism.</p>
<p><b>Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia</b></p>	<p>The Special Representative has a domestic role and is supported by Canadian Heritage. The mandate of the Special Representative is to combat Islamophobia and promote awareness of the diverse and intersectional identities of Muslims in Canada. The Special Representative will serve as a champion, advisor, expert, and representative to the Canadian government. She will advise relevant ministers, engage diverse stakeholders, promote public awareness and understanding of Muslim communities in Canada, and support efforts, including by the provinces and territories, to inform the development of policies, legislation, programs and resources and tools to fight systemic racism, anti-Muslim hate and Islamophobia.</p> <p>Budget 2022 provided \$5.6 million over five years, with \$1.2 million ongoing, to support the Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia.</p>

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- <sup>1</sup> [Enslavement of Indigenous People in Canada.](#)
  - <sup>2</sup> [MPs back motion calling on government to recognize residential schools program as genocide | CBC News](#)
  - <sup>3</sup> [Prime Minister announces appointment of Canada’s first Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia | Prime Minister of Canada \(pm.gc.ca\)](#)
  - <sup>4</sup> [The Honourable Irwin Cotler | Prime Minister of Canada \(pm.gc.ca\) and Prime Minister announces new Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism | Prime Minister of Canada \(pm.gc.ca\)](#)
  - <sup>5</sup> [Statistics Canada - Portrait of Canadian Society: Experiences during the pandemic](#)
  - <sup>6</sup> [Statistics Canada - Economic impact of COVID-19 among Indigenous people](#)
  - <sup>7</sup> [Statistics Canada - Education and earnings of Canadian-born Black populations](#)
  - <sup>8</sup> [Statistics Canada - Poverty among racialized groups across generations](#)
  - <sup>9</sup> [Statistics Canada - Experiences of discrimination in daily life among Chinese people in Canada, and their perceptions of and experiences with the police and the justice system](#)
  - <sup>10</sup> [Anti-Asian racism across Canada: Two years into the pandemic, March 2022 \(PDF format\)](#)
  - <sup>11</sup> [Ottawa Police: Annual Hate Crimes data show a 13% increase in reporting to police; Vancouver Police Department: Israel-Hamas war fuels increase in hate crimes, protests in 2023; Toronto Police Service: Combatting Rise in Hate Crime](#)
  - <sup>12</sup> [Statistics Canada: Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018](#)
  - <sup>13</sup> [Statistics Canada: Intimate partner violence: Experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women in Canada, 2018](#)
  - <sup>14</sup> [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#)
  - <sup>15</sup> [Blueprint for Transformation: the 2023 Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty](#)
  - <sup>16</sup> [Statistics Canada: Changing demographics of racialized people in Canada](#)
  - <sup>17</sup> [The Canadian census: A rich portrait of the country's religious and ethnocultural diversity](#)
  - <sup>18</sup> [Statistics Canada: Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population](#)
  - <sup>19</sup> [Canada in 2041: A larger, more diverse population with greater differences between regions](#)
  - <sup>20</sup> [Angus Reid Institute - Two-in-five Canadians say they face discrimination based on their ethnicity or race](#)
  - <sup>21</sup> [Angus Reid Institute - Two-in-five Canadians say they face discrimination based on their ethnicity or race](#)
  - <sup>22</sup> [Ontario Human Rights Commission: Right to Read Inquiry Report: First Nations, Métis and Inuit experiences](#)
  - <sup>23</sup> [Canadian Civil Liberties Association: Anti-Black Racism in Canada's Justice System-Factsheet \(PDF format\)](#)
  - <sup>24</sup> [Statistics Canada - Canada’s Black population: Education, labour and resilience](#)
  - <sup>25</sup> [Canadian family offices: The Black wealth gap in Canada](#)
  - <sup>26</sup> [Unfunded: Black communities overlooked by Canadian philanthropy \(PDF format\)](#)
  - <sup>27</sup> [Statistics Canada: A labour market snapshot of Black Canadians during the pandemic](#)
  - <sup>28</sup> [Canadian Civil Liberties Association: Racial profiling](#)
  - <sup>29</sup> [Systemic Racism in Policing: Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security \(PDF format\)](#)
  - <sup>30</sup> [Government of Canada, “Addressing Anti-Asian Racism.” The definition was co-developed with diverse Asian community leaders and is available from the \[Addressing anti-Asian racism\]\(#\) webpage](#)
  - <sup>31</sup> [Government of Ontario, “A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan” \(PDF format\)](#)
  - <sup>32</sup> [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance “\[Working Definition of Antisemitism\]\(#\)”.](#)
  - <sup>33</sup> [Government of Canada, “\[Building a Foundation for Change: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022\]\(#\)”](#)
  - <sup>34</sup> [Ibid.](#)
  - <sup>35</sup> [Ontario Human Rights Commission, “\[Teaching human rights in Ontario – A guide for Ontario schools\]\(#\)”.](#)
  - <sup>36</sup> [Ibid.](#)
  - <sup>37</sup> [Government of Canada, “\[Building a Foundation for Change: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022\]\(#\)”.](#)
  - <sup>38</sup> [Ibid.](#)
  - <sup>39</sup> [Ibid.](#)
  - <sup>40</sup> [Canadian Race Relations Foundation, “\[CRRF Glossary of Terms\]\(#\)”.](#)
  - <sup>41</sup> [Government of Canada, “\[Building a Foundation for Change: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022\]\(#\)”.](#)
  - <sup>42</sup> [Ontario Human Rights Commission, “\[Policy and guidelines on racism and discrimination\]\(#\)”.](#)