



Race relations in Canada **2021**

A survey of Canadian public
opinion and experience

Final Report

**Environics
Institute**
For Survey Research



Canadian
Race Relations
Foundation

Fondation
canadienne des
relations raciales

The study was conducted by the Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

CANADIAN RACE RELATIONS FOUNDATION

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation was created in 1996 to reaffirm justice and equality for all in Canada. The mandate of the Foundation is to facilitate throughout Canada the development, sharing, and application of knowledge and expertise to contribute to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canadian society.

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The Environics Institute for Survey Research sponsors relevant and original public opinion and social research related to issues of public policy and social change. It is through such research that organizations and individuals can better understand Canada today, how it's been changing, and where it may be heading.

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Contents

Introduction	1
Executive Summary	5
State of race relations in Canada	9
Perceptions of racial discrimination	19
Indirect experience with racial discrimination	31
Personal experience with discrimination and racism.....	37
COVID-19 pandemic and racism.....	41
Local policing	53



Introduction

Background

Canada is an ethnically and racially diverse society, with more than four in ten residents either first or second generation in the country. In comparative terms, Canada is among the most welcoming of countries when it comes to acceptance of such diversity. The 2018 Gallup World poll puts Canada at the top of 140 countries in citizens rating their community as a good place for ethnic and racial minorities. And in historical terms, race relations in Canada are the most positive in the country's history – a far cry from previous eras, which included explicit discrimination against those who were not white and Protestant, be it French, Irish, Chinese, Jewish, East Indian, Black or Indigenous.

At the same time, racism and discrimination against those who look different remain an underlying reality in Canada. People with racialized identities and backgrounds face ongoing challenges, both at a personal and an institutional level. In particular, the legacy of colonialism and the government's assimilationist policies toward First Nations, Métis and Inuit people still makes itself felt in various ways, most recently with the discovery of unmarked graves of children at residential school sites. The country's jails and prisons continue to have a significant overrepresentation of Canadians who are Black or Indigenous.

There is the desire or tendency to see the state of race relations in Canada today as either good or bad, but the reality is that there is no single story. Some see a positive story of dramatic improvements from previous generations, the expanding inclusion of Canadians from different races in all walks of life, employment equity policies, and the establishment of anti-racism offices in governments. Others see a negative story of persistent systemic racism that continues to oppress the lives and opportunities of racialized individuals and communities. Both realities exist, and perspectives are based on personal experience, anecdote, media reporting and political agendas. There is no easy way to reconcile these perspectives, but what can help is credible, empirically-based evidence about the current situation, and how progress is or is not being made over time. This includes measuring the collective beliefs, attitudes and experiences of Canadians, both racialized and not.

The research

RACE RELATIONS IN CANADA 2019 SURVEY. In 2019, the Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, conducted a landmark national survey to address this evidence gap. The purpose was to establish new benchmark indicators of race relations across Canada from the perspective of its citizens, and to provide the foundation for monitoring progress over time. The primary focus of this research was on public attitudes, perceptions and experiences as they pertain to relevant dimensions of race relations, and in particular, from the perspectives of Canadians across ethnic and racial backgrounds.

This research is intended to generate credible, independent, empirically-derived evidence that is broadly accepted across Canadian sectors and communities. Such information can serve as point of common ground that brings different stakeholders together, and also as a means of measuring progress (or the lack of progress) over time. It provides information metrics to be used by organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors that are working to reduce racism both internally and in broader society.

RACE RELATIONS IN CANADA 2021 SURVEY.

Since 2019, the landscape of race relations has changed significantly. In May 2020, the tragic death of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer launched an unprecedented movement of anger, political advocacy, and renewed attention to racism and racial violence across the USA and around the world. In Canada, the fight for justice and respect for Indigenous Peoples continues to evolve, and in May received a fresh jolt with the discovery of 215 unmarked graves of Indigenous children at the Kamloops Indian Residential School in B.C. As well, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the existence of anti-Asian sentiment in many parts of the country.

In this context, the Environics Institute and the Canadian Race Relations Foundation – with the financial support of Pfizer Canada – conducted the next wave of this research program. The new survey identifies how Canadians' perspectives and experiences have changed (or not) over

the past two years, and addresses new themes of current relevance. The 2021 survey focuses on the following themes:

- Opinions about the general state of race relations in Canada and local communities;
- Perceptions of the extent and type of racial discrimination, generally and against one's own group;
- Personal experience with discrimination and racism;
- The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on racial discrimination; and
- Local policing and the need for reform.

As in 2019, the current survey is national in scope, and includes significant oversamples of the country's largest racial groups, in order to measure perspectives and experiences of both racialized and non-racialized Canadians. This research consisted of a survey conducted online between May 13 and June 11, 2021, with a sample of 3,698 Canadians, ages 18 and over. The sample was stratified to ensure representation by province, age and gender, according to the most current population statistics. In addition, oversamples were collected with individuals who self-identify as Chinese, Black, South Asian, East or Southeast Asian, or Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) to provide for sufficient representation of each group for analysis. The survey was conducted in English and French (as per respondent's preference).

About this report

The following sections of the report present the results from the survey, with a focus on comparisons across groups based on their ethnic and racial backgrounds, as well as by selected population characteristics (e.g., region, gender, household income, age cohort). The current results are compared with those from the 2019 survey to identify how perspectives and experiences have changed (or not) over the past two years. Finally, the report includes selected references to comparable American data where relevant.

Detailed data tables are available under separate cover, which present the results for all survey questions by population demographics and other relevant characteristics (see the study project page at www.environicsinstitute.org). All results are presented as percentages unless otherwise noted.

Acknowledgements

This research was made possible with the support from a number of individuals and organizations. The Environics Institute would like to acknowledge the substantive contributions of its lead partner, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (Mohammed Hashim, Sharon Pun, Angela Lee, Kimberly Bennett), and the generous financial support provided by Pfizer Canada. Appreciation is also extended to the research team at Maru/Blue (Rachel Spence, Deepakkumar Maurya, Balakrishnan V.) who managed the sample design and fieldwork. Finally, we offer our thanks to the 3,698 individuals across Canada who took the time to share their perspectives and experiences, which collectively inform our understanding of the state of race relations in our country today.

Notes about terminology

The term “race” is problematic from a number of perspectives, including the fact that there is no consensus on exactly what it refers to. But the term is widely used in the context of relations between people from different backgrounds and physical characteristics (e.g., culture, ethnicity, history and skin colour), and as a way to define parts of society that face systematic challenges (racialized people).

In this report, the terms “race”, “race relations” and “racialized” are used for purposes of editorial clarity, with full acknowledgement of the limitations they contain. Reference to specific populations or groups are based on terminology used by Statistics Canada, and where relevant are described as “people” (e.g., Black people, South Asian people). The notable exception is in the case of Indigenous Peoples, which is capitalized and in plural to reflect the diversity and status of these populations in Canada. This term refers to individuals who are First Nations, Métis and Inuit; the first two are specifically identified in the report where relevant. The Inuit subsample is too small to report on.

The survey included a question from the Canadian census in which respondents were asked to self-identify based on their ancestral origins or cultural background, from a list of categories plus additional space to specify another response (respondents could select more than one category). Some of these identity categories were used in subsequent survey questions to ask about specific groups in the Canadian population (e.g., Black, Chinese, Latin American, white).



Executive summary

This latest research once again confirms the reality of racism in Canada. A significant proportion of the population experiences discrimination because of their race or ethnic background at least occasionally, if not more often, and has witnessed other people encounter similar treatment. Racial discrimination takes place across a range of settings, such as public spaces, in the workplace, in stores, and at school and university. And this is, by far, most widely experienced by Canadians who are Indigenous or Black, although it is by no means uncommon among those with other racialized identities.

There has also been notable change in public perspectives about race in Canada since the first survey two years ago, undoubtedly the result of high-profile incidents of racial injustice in the U.S. and Canada that have prompted renewed scrutiny of policing, institutional policies and the historical record. Broad public awareness and recognition of racism has expanded over the past two years, especially as it is affecting people who are Black or Indigenous, but also the Chinese community due to anti-Asian sentiments arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. And there is increasing appreciation of the systemic basis of discrimination in terms of racialized Canadians being treated less fairly than white people across a range of settings, such as when dealing with the police. Notably, however, the frequency with which racialized people report personal experiences with discrimination has remained largely unchanged since 2019, suggesting that it is awareness of racism in society rather than the problem itself that has undergone the most change.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of, and increased the daily stress experienced by, many Canadians (especially youth and those with precarious incomes), but does not appear to have disproportionately affected racialized people in terms of their health, overall life satisfaction and access to needed health care services. At the same time, Indigenous and Black Canadians express lower confidence in the safety and effectiveness of vaccines and, for this and possibly other reasons, have greater hesitation about getting vaccinated. As well, the research confirms an increase in anti-Asian discrimination, with many who are

Chinese or of other Asian backgrounds reporting racially-motivated harassment in various forms (people feeling uncomfortable around them, being subjected to slurs and jokes, feeling physically threatened); treatment that has long been experienced by other racialized groups, notably those who are Black or Indigenous.

The injustices and challenges of racism notwithstanding, it is not a major fault line in Canadian society at this point in time. Despite growing recognition of the problem, Canadians are more likely than not to believe that race relations are generally good in terms of how people from different groups get along and in the equality of opportunity for people with different racial backgrounds. And a majority remain optimistic that progress toward racial equality will happen in their lifetime, although such optimism has diminished somewhat over the past two years, especially among racialized Canadians. Race relations in this country may now be at an important juncture, and the next two years might well prove to be a critical period of reckoning.

The following are key findings from the research.

Summary of key findings

STATE OF RACE RELATIONS IN CANADA. A clear majority of Canadians believe that race relations in this country are generally good, both in terms of how well people from different groups get along with one another and the extent to which people from all races have equal opportunities to succeed in life. Moreover, views are comparatively more positive when the focus is on race relations in one's own local community. But opinions about the state of race relations are now less positive than in 2019, with somewhat fewer now describing them as generally good. This worsening change has occurred across the population, and racial and ethnic groups, but most notably among Black Canadians who, along with Indigenous Peoples, are the least likely to describe race relations as good in their description of race relations today (although, even among these groups, the positive outweighs the negative on most indicators).

While the public assessment of race relations as they are today has deteriorated from that expressed two years ago, there has not been a comparable shift in how Canadians believe race relations have changed over the past decade. As in 2019, opinions are divided among those who see improvement, those who see setbacks, and a plurality who maintain little has changed. Notably, however, racialized Canadians (especially those who are Chinese, South Asian or Black) are now more likely than before to say that equal opportunities for all groups to succeed have worsened over time.

A majority of Canadians are optimistic that progress toward racial equality will happen in their lifetime, but here as well a positive outlook has weakened since 2019. This downward shift in optimism is evident across the population, but most notably among racialized Canadians, especially those who are Indigenous or Chinese. Optimism about the future of racial equality is now most widespread among Quebecers, South Asians and newcomers to Canada, and least so among Indigenous Peoples (especially those who are Métis).

AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. The reality of racism in Canada is widely acknowledged, and by a growing proportion of the population. As in 2019, Indigenous Peoples and Black people are most commonly seen by other Canadians to experience racial discrimination on an ongoing basis, and this view has strengthened noticeably over the past two years; relatively few now maintain that such mistreatment of these groups rarely or never happens. The most significant change since 2019 is a jump in the perception of discrimination against Chinese people (with seven in ten now saying this happens at least sometimes, if not often), likely due to reports of rising anti-Asian sentiment resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic being linked to China. Perceptions of racial discrimination against Chinese people in Canada is now comparable to that believed to be experienced by people who are South Asian (unchanged since 2019) or Middle Eastern, and to a lesser extent those with backgrounds from East and Southeast Asian countries.¹ By comparison,

Canadians are least apt to say that Latin American people experience racial discrimination on an ongoing basis.

In terms of racism directed at one's own group, large majorities of Indigenous Peoples and Black people say others in their own group experience ongoing discrimination and unfair treatment in Canada today, with smaller proportions reported by members of other racialized groups. Perceptions of ongoing discrimination have increased noticeably since 2019 among Black and Chinese people, as well as among first-generation Canadians, with smaller increases among those who are South Asian and those who identify with another racialized group.² Those who are Black or First Nations are also among the most likely to say they have witnessed discrimination of other people in their own racial group (although such reports have changed little since 2019) and that such treatment has a significant negative impact on the people they are close to.

Canadians tend to see racism as a function of the prejudiced attitudes and actions of individuals rather than systemic inequities in the country's laws and institutions, but this perspective has shifted a bit toward the latter perspective since 2019. Systemic racism is most widely recognized as affecting Indigenous Peoples and Black people, and in both cases this view has strengthened noticeably over the past two years, as is also the case for the treatment of Chinese people, and to a lesser extent those who are South Asian. Systemic racism (and indeed racism in general) is much less likely to be seen as affecting Canadians who are East/Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern or Latin American.

As well, there is a growing belief among Canadians that racialized people are treated less fairly than those who are white in specific settings and circumstances, especially when dealing with the police, but also in the workplace, in the courts, in stores and restaurants, and when receiving health care services. Such racial bias is most likely to be seen as affecting Indigenous Peoples and Black people, especially in situations involving the police, but increasingly in terms of receiving health care services.

¹ The 2021 survey included questions about society's treatment of three new racialized groups in Canada: Middle Eastern people, people with backgrounds from East and Southeast Asia, and Latin American people.

² "Another racialized group" denotes Canadians surveyed with racial identities other than those highlighted and oversampled in the survey (e.g., white, Black, Indigenous, South Asian, Chinese). These respondents are grouped together because there are insufficient numbers in each to identify for analysis purposes.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM.

Discrimination and mistreatment due to one's race is a common experience in Canada. One-fifth of the population report that this happens to them regularly or from time to time, with another quarter indicating it occurs but very rarely. Such treatment is most widely reported by those who are Black or First Nations, and to a lesser but still notable extent by those who are South Asian, Chinese, East or Southeast Asian, or Métis, and even by a significant minority of those who identify as white. Since 2019, there is no change in the frequency of such reported experiences for the population as a whole, but it has increased noticeably among South Asian and Chinese people, and by only a small amount among those who are Black, while decreasing among Indigenous Peoples. Across the population, personal experience with racism is most apt to be reported by Canadians 18 to 29 years of age, first generation living in the country, or those with precarious incomes. Men and women are equally likely to report such discrimination.

Racism is encountered across a number of public settings, most commonly in the workplace, on the street, in stores and restaurants, and at school or university. Reported experiences by setting for the population as a whole are unchanged from 2019, but have increased among Chinese people in their encounters in the workplace, in stores and restaurants, and when using public services; and among South Asian people when using public services, and in dealing with the police and the courts.

Canadians who experience racial discrimination are affected to varying degrees; some report that they are bothered quite a bit and others insist not at all. Negative impacts are most likely to be experienced by those who are Black or First Nations, as well as women, second-generation Canadians and those with precarious incomes. As was the case in 2019, three in ten racialized people say they downplay their racial background from time to time (if not regularly), with this practice most widely reported by those who are Indigenous or South Asian.

IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have had little impact on Canadians' self-assessment of their own general health (as compared to that reported in 2019), but has more negatively affected their mental health and well-being. This latter change is evident across the population, but a decline in mental health

status is most pronounced among Canadians with limited education and precarious incomes, as well as those who are Black or First Nations (although Black Canadians continue to be more likely than other groups to report their mental health to be excellent or good). Experiences of daily stress (e.g., feeling nervous, depressed, lonely, having trouble sleeping) are most widely reported by Canadians ages 18 to 29, and those with lower household incomes, but does not vary as significantly across racial groups. At the broadest level, the pandemic has not had a significant impact on Canadians' level of overall life satisfaction, which has diminished only marginally since 2019 across the population and within most of the groups covered in this analysis.

Over the course of the pandemic, a majority of Canadians who required health care services say they were able to access what they needed all or most of the time. But this experience has been much more common for older Canadians than younger ones, with education and household income also noted as important factors. In terms of needing health care services in the future, Canadians express the most confidence in obtaining emergency care at a hospital, followed by non-emergency care with a family doctor or health clinic, and the least confidence in getting services for mental health and counselling. Once again, age and household income are important factors in shaping expectations for future access to services, while by comparison, racial identity makes much less of a difference both in obtaining health care over the previous year and expressing confidence in future access. Among the small proportion of Canadians who reported that they or someone in their household tested positive for COVID-19, most describe the care they received as excellent or good, with similar experiences indicated among both racialized and non-racialized people.

Canadians express a range in their level of concern about contracting the COVID-19 virus, with strong concern most evident among Asian Canadians (especially those who are East or Southeast Asian), as well as those who are first-generation and those with precarious incomes. One in ten reports having either avoided getting tested or downplaying possible symptoms, with these actions most common among younger Canadians, as well as those who are Indigenous or Black. Seven in ten Canadians say they have been vaccinated, with this rate highest among Asian people, and lowest among those who are Black or who

have low household incomes. Among Canadians not yet vaccinated, a majority say they will do so, compared with just over one in ten who do not plan to get vaccinated or remain unsure; this latter group is most likely to include those who are Black, Indigenous or another racialized group, as well as Quebecers, rural residents and those with precarious incomes. Not surprisingly, getting inoculated against COVID-19, or intending to do so, is closely linked to one's level of confidence in the safety and effectiveness of vaccines.

Apart from the impact that COVID-19 and lockdown measures have had on the mental health and economic well-being of many Canadians, the pandemic has also led to a rise in anti-Asian sentiment because of the virus's origin in China. Significant minorities of Chinese, and East or Southeast Asian Canadians, report encountering racially-motivated harassment since the pandemic outbreak, in the form of people acting uncomfortable around them, being subjected to slurs and jokes, and fearing someone might threaten or physically attack them. Moreover, this type of anti-Asian discrimination is recognized by others, with a majority of Canadians expressing the belief that Chinese Canadians are now experiencing more racial mistreatment than before the pandemic. But it is not only Asian Canadians who report racially-motivated harassment since the pandemic began. Such experiences are also commonly reported by other racialized people, especially those who are Black or First Nations.

On the positive side, a notable minority of Canadians from each racial group also say they have had others openly express support for them as a member of their race or ethnicity since the pandemic began, with this most commonly reported by those who are Black or First Nations.

LOCAL POLICING. Canadians as a whole are generally positive about the job performance of their local police force, as measured across five dimensions of service. The strongest ratings are given to how police treat people in respondents' own racial/ethnic group and how well police protect people generally from crime, with somewhat lower ratings given for using appropriate force for each situation, responding to disturbances caused by someone having a mental health crisis, and holding officers accountable when misconduct occurs. Not surprisingly, perspectives on local police performance vary by racial and ethnic group, especially in relation to how one's own group is treated: white Canadians are the most likely to say their local police are doing an excellent or good job on this dimension, while this much less apt to be the case among those who are Black or First Nations. Across the population, positive performance ratings of local police are most evident among older Canadians, and least so among those 18 to 29 years of age or those with precarious incomes.

With attention now being given to how policing needs to be reformed (if not "defunded"), the Canadian public is divided on the extent to which such change is necessary. Four in ten say what is needed is for police to do a better job of how they currently operate, while a one-third believe fundamental change is required, and another three in ten do not offer a clear opinion either way. This absence of consensus extends across the population, as well as across ethnic and racial groups, but the balance of opinion tips toward fundamental reform among Canadians who are Black, First Nations or South Asian, as well as among those ages 18 to 29 or those with precarious incomes.



State of race relations in Canada

The survey explored Canadians' views about the general state of race relations in the country, including how this has changed over the past decade and what the prospects are for future progress. Comparisons are made with the survey conducted in 2019 to identify how opinions have changed in light of events such as the killing of George Floyd just over one year ago.

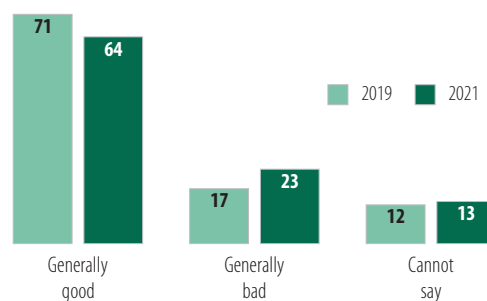
How well people from different backgrounds get along

Two-thirds of Canadians believe that people from different racial groups generally get along, but this view is somewhat less prevalent than it was two years ago. Indigenous Peoples and Black Canadians are least apt to believe this is the case, but the decline since 2019 is evident across most of the population.

CURRENT STATE OF RACE RELATIONS. How do Canadians believe people from different racial backgrounds get along with each other? Almost two-thirds (64%) describe such relations as generally good, compared with 23 percent who say they are generally bad – the positive view outweighs the negative by almost three-to-one, with another 13 percent unable to say either way. But opinions on this question are less positive than they were in 2019 (when the margin was 71% generally good versus 17% generally bad).

This decline in perceptions that different races are getting along is evident across the population, but most noticeable among Canadians who are Black (49%, down 23 percentage points from 2019), as well as those who are South Asian or “another racialized group” (down 11 in each), B.C. residents (down 12), those who are second generation in Canada (down 12), and those who have experienced racial discrimination on a regular or occasional basis (down 15).³

How well people from different races get along in Canada 2019 - 2021



Q.16

Do you think race relations in Canada are generally good or generally bad in terms of how well people from different races get along with each other?

³ “Another racialized group” refers to respondents who do not identify as white or in one of the oversampled racialized groups. There are not sufficient numbers among any of these racialized groups to identify them as a group for analysis purposes, and so they are combined into one group generally labelled as “other racialized.”

In 2021, the groups most likely to express a positive response to this question include those who are Chinese and South Asian (70% each), first-generation Canadians (69%), and those with the highest levels of education (68%) and income (69%). Least apt to hold this view are Canadians who are Black (49%) or Indigenous (51%), as well as those without a high school diploma (53%) and who have precarious incomes (54%).⁴ Notably, opinions on this question do not vary across age cohorts.

HOW RACE RELATIONS HAVE CHANGED. When asked how this aspect of race relations has changed over the past 10 years, opinions continued to be mixed and with little change since 2019. Close to three in ten (28%) say that how different races in Canada get along has improved over time (down 4 points), compared with almost as many (25%, up 1) who maintain they have worsened. A plurality (41%, up 2) continues to believe it has stayed about the same.

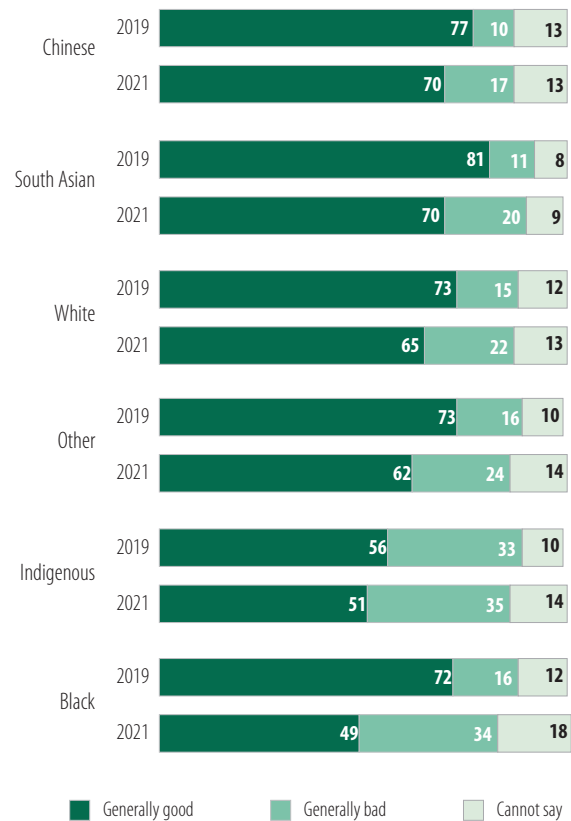
As was the case in 2019, those most likely to see improvements in race relations include Atlantic Canadians (37%), those ages 18 to 29 (38%) and South Asians (35%), as well as newcomers to Canada (arriving in Canada in the past 10 years (39%)). A worsening trend is most apt to be identified among Albertans (33%), and those who have experienced discrimination on a regular or occasional basis (36%); it is in these groups where perceptions have declined the most over the past two years. By comparison, Indigenous Peoples are now less likely than before to believe this aspect of race relations has either improved or worsened, and more apt to say they have stayed the same (41%, up 10; although Métis continue to be less positive than First Nations).

Those who believe that race relations *have improved* over the past decade (28% of Canadians) were asked to specify (unprompted) in what ways things are getting better in terms in how people from different racial groups get along. The results are largely similar to those recorded in 2019, with most responses falling into one of three themes:

- More openness and acceptance in Canadian society (29%) (e.g., *more tolerance, greater respect and support for others, more open-minded, less racism, more acknowledgement of issues*);

How well do people of different races get along in Canada?

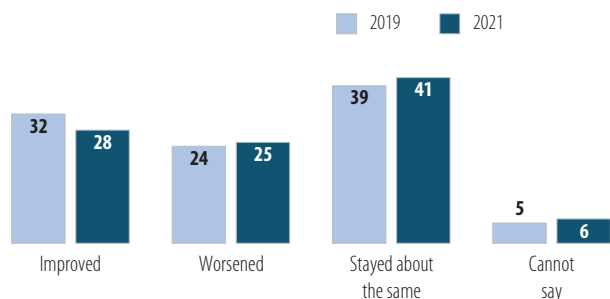
2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.16
Do you think race relations in Canada are generally good or generally bad in terms of how well people from different races get along with each other?

Have relations between different races changed over the past decade?

2019 - 2021



Q.17
Over the past 10 years, do you think race relations in Canada have improved, worsened, or stayed about the same in terms of how well people from different races get along?

⁴ Precarious income is defined in this survey as those who report that their total household income is not enough and they are having a hard time. Five percent of the survey sample fits into this category.

- Greater diversity and interaction between groups (17%) (e.g., *more cultural diversity, people living and working together, more integration, learning about other cultures*); and
- Education and other initiatives (14%) (e.g., *education and diversity training, social media reporting*).

Notably, four in ten (41%) who perceive an improvement in how different races get along do not offer any reasons for this view (up from 36% in 2019).

Responses to this question are more similar than different among Canadians, and across ethnic and racial groups. Identification of the first theme (more openness and acceptance) has declined noticeably since 2019 (down 9 percentage points) across most groups, especially among Canadians who are white and those without post-secondary education. In contrast, Indigenous Peoples (especially those who are First Nations) are now more likely than before to identify each of the three themes.

Canadians who believe that the way in which different races in Canada get along has *gotten worse* over the past decade (25% of the population) cite a number of themes very similar to those mentioned in 2019:

- More discrimination/racism (33%) (e.g., *more discrimination generally, anti-Asian sentiment, people being more vocal than before, Islamophobia*);
- Populism/right-wing ideologies (15%) (e.g., *Donald Trump influence, government policies, white supremacy*);
- Media/social media influence (8%);
- Worsening attitudes/social acceptance (7%) (e.g., *people pushing their culture on others*); and
- Too many immigrants (5%) (e.g., *immigrants not integrating, discrimination against whites*).

Responses to this question are broadly similar to those recorded two years ago, with a few notable changes. The emphasis given to worsening attitudes/social acceptance is new in 2021, while significantly fewer now mention too many immigrants (down 14 points since 2019) and conflicts over religion (down 6). Black survey participants are now much less likely than before to cite more discrimination and racism (34%, down 11). As with reasons for why race relations are getting better, among those who see the opposite there is a significant proportion (29%) that cannot say why they take this view (up 7 points from 2019).

In what ways have race relations between different groups changed in Canada?

2019 - 2021

	HOW IMPROVED?		HOW WORSENEED?		
	2019	2021	2019	2021	
More openness/acceptance	38	29	More discrimination/racism/less tolerance	28	33
Greater diversity/more interaction	16	17	Populism/right-wing ideologies	18	15
Education/awareness initiatives	12	14	Media/social media	8	8
Other	9	6	Worsening attitudes/social intolerance	*	7
Cannot say	36	41	Too many immigrants/lack of integration	19	5
			Conflict over religion	6	<1
			Other	12	14
			Cannot say	22	29

Q.18

In what way do you think that things are getting [better/worse] in terms of how well people from different races are getting along?

Do people from different backgrounds have equal opportunities?

Canadians are more likely than not to believe that people from all races have equal opportunities to succeed in life, but this view has also weakened across most of the population. Black and First Nations Peoples, along with women overall, are now least likely to be positive about this aspect of race relations.

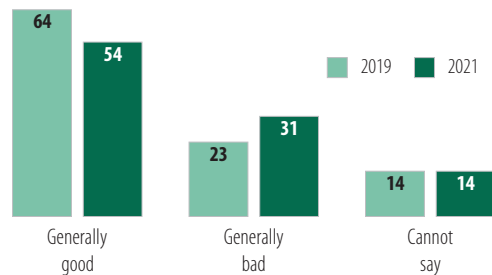
CURRENT STATE OF RACE RELATIONS IN TERMS OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED. Compared with how people from different racial groups get along, to what extent do Canadians believe that they all have an equal chance of succeeding in life? Just over half (54%) say such opportunities are generally good, compared with three in ten (31%) who maintain they are generally bad. As with the “getting along” measure, the gap between good and bad has narrowed since 2019, in this case by roughly 10 percentage points.

This downward shift has taken place across the population, most noticeably among women, Canadians ages 65 plus, second-generation Canadians, and those who are South Asian or Black (but this shift is also evident among those who are white and top income earners).

Across ethnic and racial groups, white Canadians are the most likely to believe that conditions are generally good for everyone to succeed in life (57%, versus 30% generally bad), while this view is least apt to be shared among those who are Black (40% generally good, versus 45% generally bad) or First Nations (39%, versus 51%). A large discrepancy now appears between men (63% good, versus 27% bad) and women (46%, versus 36%).

How well people from different races have equal chance to succeed in life

2019 - 2021

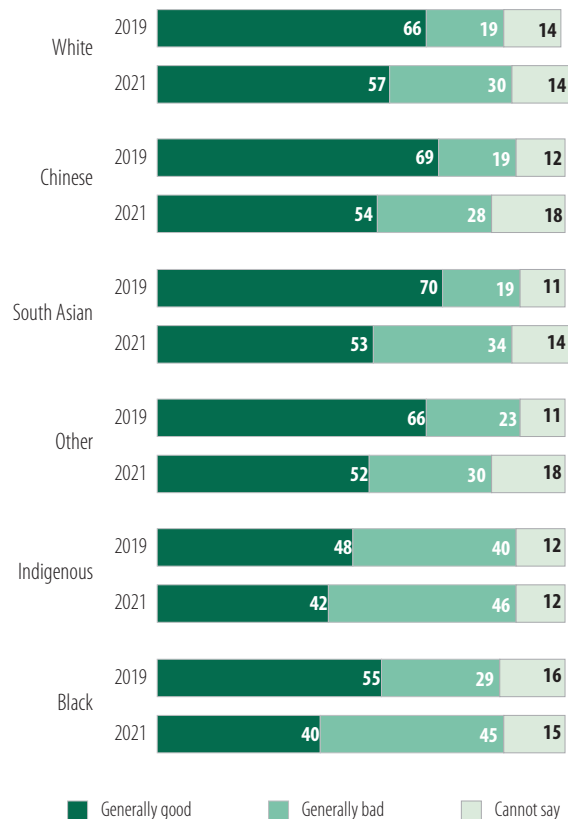


Q.19

Do you think race relations in Canada are generally good or generally bad in terms of people from all racial backgrounds having an equal chance to succeed in life?

How well people of different races have chance to succeed in life

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.19

Do you think race relations in Canada are generally good or generally bad in terms of people from all racial backgrounds having an equal chance to succeed in life?

HOW HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED CHANGED. As with perspectives about different racial groups getting along, there is no consensus among Canadians about how they believe that opportunities for everyone to succeed have changed over the past 10 years. As in 2019, one-third (33%) now believe such opportunities have improved over time, compared with fewer than one in five (18%) who say they are now worse, while a plurality (43%) continues to maintain there has been little change.

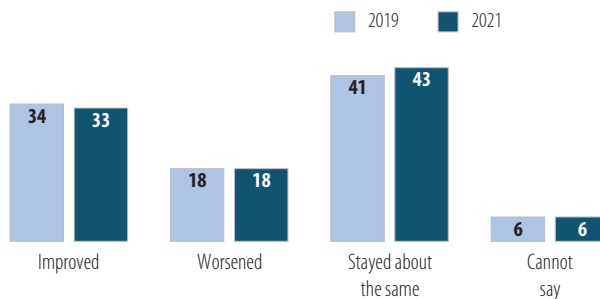
At a national level, these results are essentially unchanged from two years ago, but there is a divergence between racialized and non-racialized Canadians: Opinions remain stable among those identifying as white, while deteriorating among racialized groups, especially Chinese, South Asians and Black Canadians.

Opinions on this question do not vary significantly across the Canadian population. A positive view about equal opportunities is somewhat more evident among residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (38%), and Canadians under 45 years of age (36%), as well as those who are third-generation (36%) or white (35%). Those most apt to see such opportunities as now worse than before include Canadians who have experienced discrimination due to race (30%) and Indigenous Peoples (28%).

Those who say opportunities for all racial groups to succeed in Canada **have improved** over time (33% of the population) give a number of reasons, most of which fall into one of five themes:

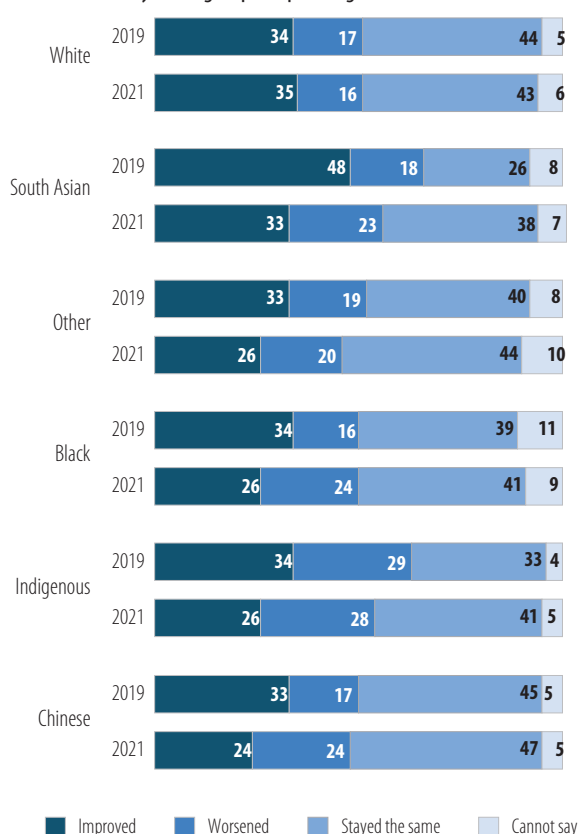
- Equal or better opportunities (22%) (e.g., *improving workplace diversity, more job opportunities, success is based on merit*);
- Greater awareness and education (19%) (e.g., *people speaking out against racism, better access to education/scholarships, younger generation is more aware*);
- More acceptance and inclusiveness (12%) (e.g., *greater tolerance, less racial bias and discrimination*);
- Multiculturalism/growing diversity (12%) (e.g., *immigrants becoming the norm, more ethnic role models, Canada is taking care of its immigrants*); and
- Programs, laws and policies (6%) (e.g., *training programs in place, laws against racism*).

Have the opportunities for everyone to succeed in life changed over the past decade? 2019 - 2021



Q.20
Over the past 10 years, do you think race relations in Canada have improved, worsened, or stayed about the same in terms of people from all racial backgrounds having an equal chance to succeed in life?

Have the opportunities for everyone to succeed in life changed over the past decade? 2019 - 2021 By racial groups responding



Q.20
Over the past 10 years, do you think race relations in Canada have improved, worsened, or stayed about the same in terms of people from all racial backgrounds having an equal chance to succeed in life?

Results for this question are largely similar to those recorded in 2019. There is now somewhat greater emphasis on equal opportunities and greater awareness/education (especially noted by Indigenous Peoples), and less on multiculturalism/growing diversity. On both surveys, more than one-third (35%) could not offer reasons for why they believe that opportunities to succeed across races have improved over time.

The smaller proportion of Canadians who believe that equal opportunities to succeed in life are *now worse* than before (18% of the population) cite similar reasons to those given in 2019, covering six themes:

- More discrimination and less tolerance (30%) (e.g., *anti-Asian sentiment, hate crimes against Black people, too much focus on racial differences*);
- Economic and workplace obstacles (11%) (e.g., *fewer opportunities, greater income disparities*);

- Populism and right-wing ideologies (10%) (e.g., *rise of white nationalism, government policies*);
- Reverse discrimination (6%) (e.g., *minority rights trumping others, fewer opportunities for white people*);
- Social media (5%) (e.g., *people becoming more vocal, social media putting out hate*); and
- Too many immigrants (5%).

These themes mirror those expressed in 2019, with increases in mentions of more discrimination/racism and economic/workplace obstacles, and fewer emphasizing populism/right-wing ideologies, reverse discrimination and too many immigrants. An increasing proportion (36%, up 7 points since 2019) do not offer any reasons for why they believe that people of all races are less likely than before to have an equal opportunity to succeed in life.

In what ways have opportunities to succeed changed? 2019 - 2021

	HOW IMPROVED?		HOW WORSENE?		
	2019	2021	2019	2021	
Equal/better opportunities	18	22	More discrimination/racism/less tolerance	25	30
Greater awareness/education	12	19	Economic/workplace obstacles	8	11
More acceptance/inclusiveness	12	12	Populism/right wing ideology/policies	13	10
Multiculturalism/growing diversity	18	12	Reverse discrimination	14	6
Programs/laws/policies	7	6	Social awareness	3	5
Other reasons	11	5	Too many immigrants	12	5
Cannot say	35	35	Other reasons	9	11
			Cannot say	29	36

Q.21

In what way do you think that things are getting [better/worse] in terms of people from all racial backgrounds having an equal chance to succeed in life?

Race relations in one’s own community

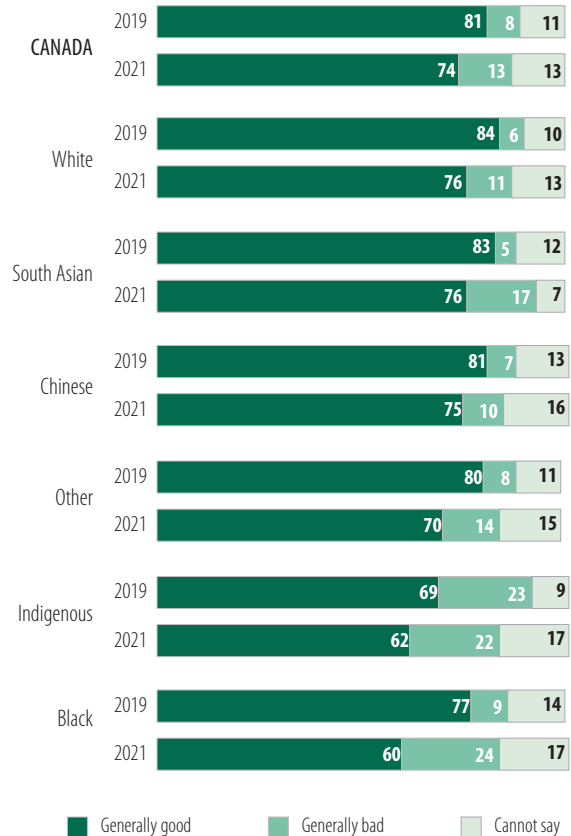
In comparison to views about the country as a whole, Canadians continue to be more positive about race relations in the community where they live. However, opinions are somewhat less positive than in 2019, especially among those who are Black or First Nations.

The previous questions focused on race relations in the country as a whole. When Canadians are asked to describe the situation as they see it in the community where they live, they tend to be more positive (as was the case in 2019). Three-quarters (74%) say relations are generally good when it comes to *how well people from different races get along in their community*, compared with 13 percent who believe they are generally bad, and a similar proportion (13%) that cannot say either way. While positive on balance, these results reflect a modest decline since 2019, when more than eight in ten gave a favourable response.

This decline in seeing people from different races in their community generally getting along is evident across the population in more or less the same degree, except in the case of Black Canadians, where the shift is more significant (down 17 percentage points since 2019). It is Black and First Nations people who are the least positive about this aspect of race relations locally, although in both cases the “generally good” proportion outweighs the “generally bad” by more than two-to-one (60% and 62%, versus 24% and 22%, respectively).

How well people from different races get along in your own community

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



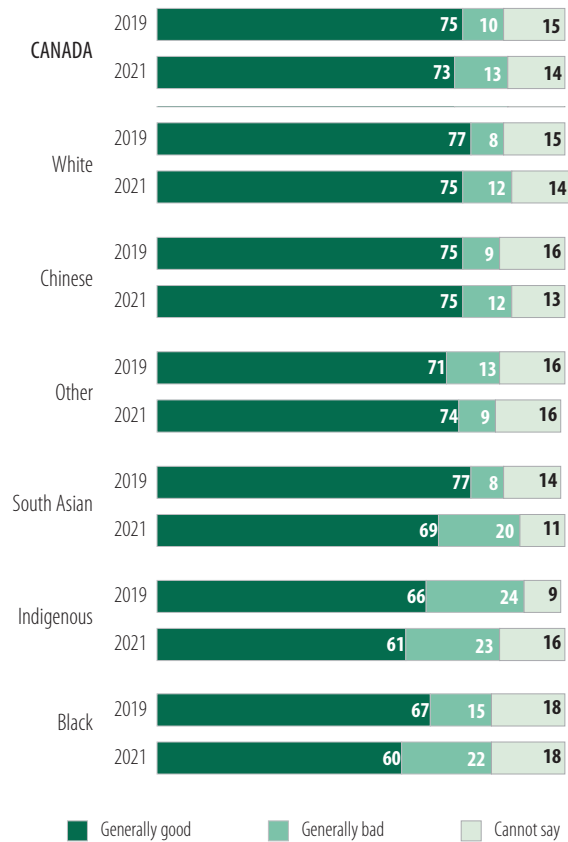
Q.22a

How would you describe the state of race relations in the community where you live in terms of how well people from different races get along?

Similarly, three-quarters (73%) of Canadians say race relations in their community are generally good as it pertains to *how well people from different backgrounds have an equal chance to succeed in life*, just slightly lower than the proportion expressing this view in 2019 (down 2 points). Compared to two years ago, some groups are now a bit more positive, while others have moved in the other direction; but there have been no significant changes over time. As with the question about how different groups get along locally, Black and First Nations Peoples stand out in terms of being less positive than before about equal opportunities to succeed; but, again, for both groups, the positive view continues to outweigh the negative by a notable margin.

How well people from different races have equal chance to succeed in your own community

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.22b

How would you describe the state of race relations in the community where you live in terms of how well people from all racial backgrounds have an equal chance to succeed in life?

Future of race relations in Canada

A majority of Canadians express optimism that progress toward racial equality will happen in their lifetime. This perspective has weakened somewhat since 2019 across the population, most notably among racialized groups, and especially those who are Indigenous or Chinese.

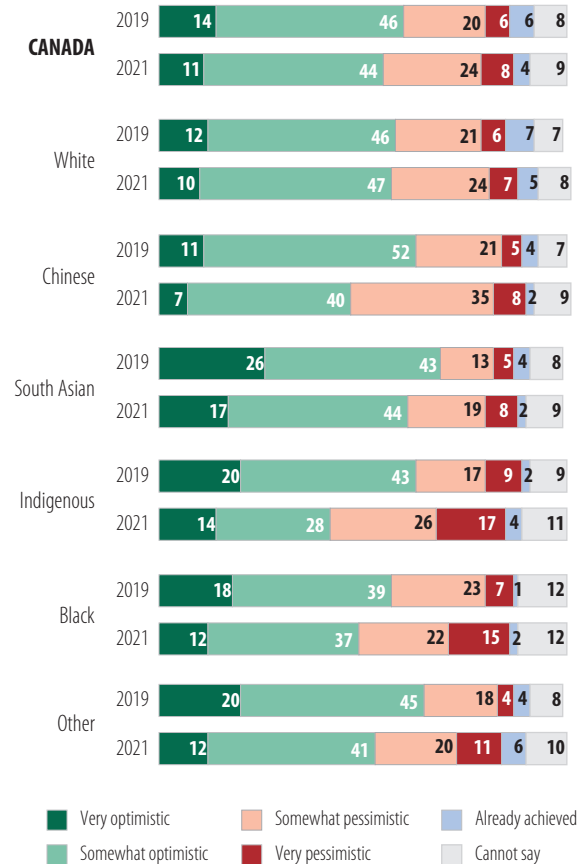
How do Canadians view the future in terms of the country making real progress toward racial equity? A modest majority say they are very (11%) or somewhat (44%) optimistic that all racialized people in Canada will be treated with the same respect as other people, in their lifetime, with this proportion down five percentage points since 2019. One-third are somewhat (24%) or very (8%) pessimistic about this outcome (up 6), while the remainder either say that such equality already exists (4%) or do not offer any response to the question (9%).

Canadians' optimism about future progress toward racial equality is now lower across the country, with declines evident in almost every identifiable group. But the most significant changes have been among racialized people, most notably Indigenous (down 21 points since 2019) and Chinese people (down 16), but also among South Asians (down 8), Black people (down 8) and those with other racialized backgrounds (down 12). By comparison, such optimism has declined marginally among white Canadians (down 1 point). There is now somewhat greater divergence in views on the future of race relations across racial populations in the country.

Canadians most likely to express optimism about prospects for racial equality include Quebecers (61%), those ages 30 to 44 (61%), South Asians (61%) and newcomers to Canada (64%). This view is least apt to be shared by Indigenous Peoples (42%, and especially Métis at 36%, versus 48% who are pessimistic).

Will all racialized people in Canada be treated with respect in your lifetime?

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.41

Thinking about the future, are you optimistic or pessimistic that all racialized people in Canada will be treated with the same respect as other people, in your lifetime?



Perceptions of racial discrimination in Canada

The survey examined Canadians' awareness, understanding and beliefs about the treatment of specific racial and ethnic groups in Canada (in broad terms and in specific situations), and how these have changed over the past two years. The research also probed attitudes about the extent to which racism is seen as systemic versus a function of individual prejudice.

Discrimination against specific groups

Canadians are most likely to see Indigenous Peoples and Black people as experiencing ongoing discrimination in the country; and this awareness has increased noticeably since 2019, especially with reference to Black people. But even more significant is the jump in perceptions of anti-Asian sentiment.

MOST FREQUENTLY TARGETED GROUPS. The survey asked Canadians to identify (without prompting) which racial group or groups they believe are most frequently the target of discrimination or unfair treatment in the country today. As in 2019, a number of groups are mentioned, but none by more than one-quarter of the population, and one in three cannot identify any.⁵

As in 2019, the two groups at the top of the list are Indigenous Peoples (26%), and Black or people of African descent (25%); both are more likely to be mentioned than before, especially in the case of Black people (up 9 percentage points). One in five Canadians identify Asian people as the target of discrimination, in most cases identified only as "Asian" (13%), with fewer specifically mentioning Chinese (4%), South Asians (3%) or East Asians (1%); this reflects a jump from 2019, when only seven percent considered Asians of any type to be such a target, with the uptick a result of anti-Asian sentiments stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, which some have blamed on China or Asia more generally.

No other group is mentioned by more than five percent of the population, and includes Muslims (5%, down 10 points), Arabs (5%, down 4), Caucasians or Europeans (4%, unchanged), and people of colour generally (4%, up 1). One-third (34%) do not identify any groups as frequent targets of discrimination (down 5).

Awareness of groups frequently targeted are notably similar across the country, as are the changes from two years ago noted above. Opinions vary by respondents' own racial group, but (as in 2019) much less so than might be expected. Indigenous Peoples and Black people are most likely to name their own group, but by no more than half in these populations (45% and 56%, respectively). Just over one-quarter (28%) of Asian respondents identify Asians (collectively or specifically) as frequent targets; and mention of one's own specific group is sparse among those who are Chinese (7%), South Asian (9%), and East or Southeast Asian (2%).

As in 2019, educational attainment plays a role in what groups are identified (unprompted) as frequent targets of racial discrimination in Canada. Those with a university degree are the most likely to mention Indigenous or Black people, although one-quarter in this education group cannot name any group.

Across the country, Canadians in Western provinces are the most likely to identify Indigenous Peoples (versus Black people), with this difference most noticeable in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The reverse pattern is evident in Central and Eastern Canada, and increased attention to the treatment of Black people since 2019 is most pronounced in Quebec and Atlantic Canada. Identification of Asians as frequent targets is most pronounced in B.C. (36%) and least so in Quebec (9%).

⁵ The survey allowed for multiple responses to this question, with most respondents identifying one or two groups.

Racial groups most frequently targeted for discrimination

2019 - 2021 Unprompted responses

	TOTAL		BY GROUP RESPONDING (2021)						
	2019	2021	White	Asian (net)	Chinese	South Asian	East/SE Asian	Indigenous	Black
Indigenous Peoples	23	26	26	21	21	18	25	45	26
Black/Africans	16	25	22	31	32	31	30	13	56
Asians (net)	7	20	18	28	26	28	33	17	19
Chinese	3	4	4	6	7	7	5	5	4
South Asian	4	3	3	5	2	9	2	6	2
Other	*	1	1	3	2	2	2	1	*
Muslims	15	5	5	5	3	6	5	3	4
Arabs	9	5	6	2	2	2	3	4	4
Caucasians/Europeans	4	4	5	2	1	1	3	4	*
People of colour	3	4	4	4	3	5	3	3	4
Other groups	6	6	5	5	3	5	5	5	5
None/cannot say	39	34	34	34	36	37	27	30	23

* Fewer than one percent

Q.26

Which ethnic or racial groups do you believe are most frequently the target of discrimination or unfair treatment in Canada today?

EXTENT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SPECIFIC GROUPS.

Canadians were also asked (in a prompted question) about the frequency with which each of seven racialized groups is the target of discrimination in the country today (four of these groups were repeated from 2019, and three are new). In all cases but one, a majority of Canadians say each group experiences discrimination due to race at least sometimes, if not often, and this view has strengthened noticeably in the case of Black, Indigenous and Chinese people.⁶

Of the seven groups, Canadians are most likely to say that **Indigenous Peoples** often experience discrimination (49%), with this proportion rising by 10 percentage points since 2019. Most of the remainder believe this happens sometimes (38%), while few maintain that Indigenous Peoples rarely or never encounter this type of mistreatment.

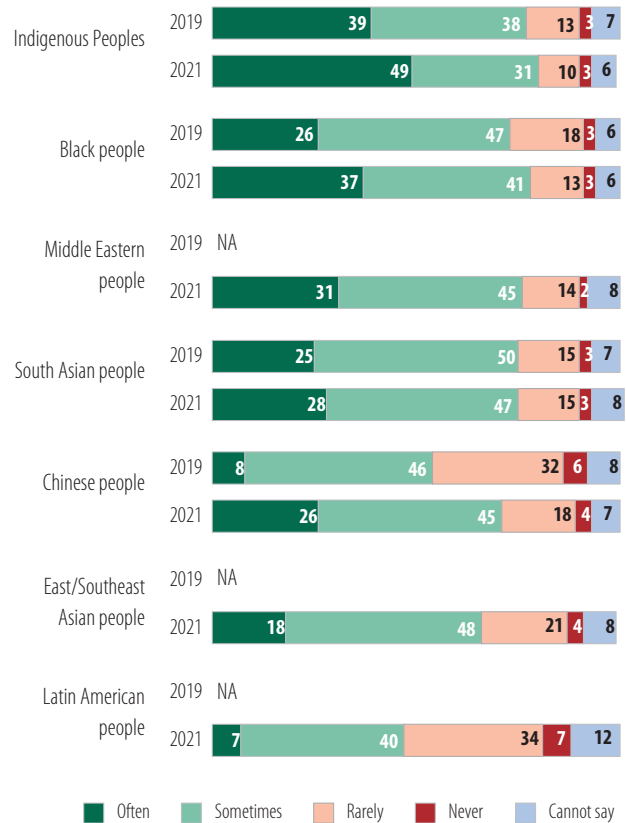
Increasing recognition of anti-Indigenous racism is evident across the country – except in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where this view was already above the national average. This increase since 2019 is most significant in Quebec, among women, Black people, second-generation Canadians and those without a high school diploma. As in 2019, Black people are among the most likely to say Indigenous Peoples often experience discrimination, with this opinion least evident among rural residents.

Close to four in ten (37%) Canadians believe that **Black** people regularly experience discrimination (up 11 points since 2019), with this increase evident more or less evenly spread across the population. Another four in ten (41%, down 6) say that Black people are mistreated at least sometimes, compared with only 16 percent (down 5) who maintain this happens rarely or never. The perception of regular mistreatment of Black people is now most prevalent among second-generation Canadians, and those who are East or Southeast Asian.

Fewer than three in ten (28%) say that **South Asian** people (from countries such as India and Pakistan) often confront discrimination, with relatively little change since 2019 (up 3 points). Compared to two years ago, this view has increased noticeably among British Columbians, Ontarians and Canadians ages 45 plus, as well as those who are white

Perceived frequency of discrimination against specific racial groups

2019 - 2021 By racial group assessed



Q.28a – f

For each of the following groups, please tell me whether you think they are often, sometimes, rarely or never the subject of discrimination in Canadian society today.

and second-generation in the country. The opposite trend has taken place among residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and among Canadians 18 to 29 years of age. First Nations (39%) individuals are the most apt to say that South Asian people often experience discrimination, with this view least evident among Quebecers (19%).

⁶ Respondents were not asked to rate the frequency of discrimination of their own racial group on this question. This was asked in a separate question that is covered later in the report.

The most significant change in the past two years is a jump in the perception of discrimination against **Chinese people** in Canada. One-quarter (26%) of Canadians now believe this group experiences discrimination often, up from only eight percent in 2019. This double-digit increase applies to every identifiable population subgroup, and is most substantial in B.C. (up 28 points) and among second-generation Canadians (up 25). This view of anti-Chinese treatment is most widespread in B.C. (39% say it happens often), and least so in Quebec (18%), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (18%) – although this reflects a 14-point increase in these provinces.

This year's survey included three new groups. Three in ten (31%) Canadians believe that **Middle Eastern people** often experience discrimination because of their racial or ethnic background, compared with one in six who maintain this rarely or never occurs.⁷ Frequent mistreatment of Middle Eastern people is most likely to be identified by Indigenous and Black individuals (38%, respectively), as well as among

Canadians ages 18 to 29 (40%). This view is least evident in B.C. (25%), and among men (24%) and Chinese people (21%).

Just under one in five (18%) say that **people from East and Southeast Asia** often experience discrimination, compared with one in four who say this rarely (21%) or never (4%) happens.⁸ As with other group assessments, it is Indigenous (24%) and Black (24%) respondents who are most apt to see this group as experiencing ongoing mistreatment; while, in this case, newcomers to Canada (12%) are least likely to hold this opinion.

Finally, very few (7%) Canadians believe that **Latin American people** in this country often experience discrimination, with most judging this to happen either sometimes (40%) or rarely (34%). This view is similar across the population; Black participants and those ages 18 to 29 are the only groups with more than 10 percent expressing this opinion.

⁷ Middle Eastern people were described in the survey as people from countries such as Iran and Syria.

⁸ This group is defined as people whose background is from such countries as Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Malaysia and Singapore.

Attitudes about other racial groups

Canadians are now more likely than two years ago to acknowledge the experience of racism in this country, especially as it affects those who are Indigenous or Black. Since 2019, however, the most significant change is an increasing awareness of discrimination against Chinese people.

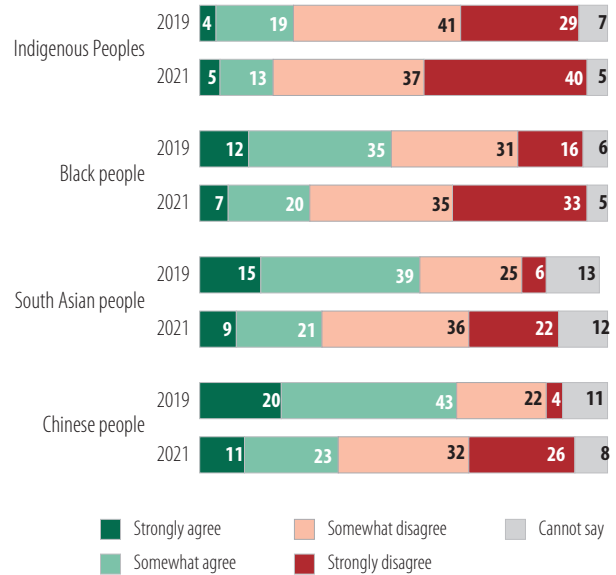
In addition to measuring public perceptions about racial discrimination, the survey also probed Canadian attitudes about racialized people to understand the extent of common stereotypes and prejudice that persist in the population, and how these may have changed over the past two years. The questions are drawn from the research literature on “symbolic” or “modern” racism, which is a contemporary and more subtle form of racism that focuses on racialized people as a group (rather than as individuals) and their place in society. The questions consist of “agree-disagree” statements, and are asked with specific reference to one of seven racialized groups in Canada (four of which are repeated from 2019, and three which are new).

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST [GROUP] IS NO LONGER A PROBLEM IN CANADA. When results for this question are combined across the seven racialized groups, Canadians as a whole are twice as likely to disagree (60%) than agree (29%) with this statement. This reflects a significant change from 2019, when opinions were evenly divided (47% agree, versus 44% disagree); and this broadening rejection of the premise that discrimination is no longer a problem has occurred for each of the four specific racial groups covered by the question in both surveys.⁹

Moreover, this shift in opinion can be seen across the population by roughly equal measure, by region, demographics and ethnic-racial background. The biggest changes since 2019 can be found among Quebecers (where agreement with the statement has declined by 26 percentage points) and those who are First Nations (also down 26). In 2021, agreement that discrimination against racialized Canadians is no longer a problem is lowest among Black people (21%), and highest among Quebecers (35%), men (35%), South Asians (35%) and newcomers to Canada (44%).

Discrimination against [group] is no longer a problem in Canada

2019 - 2021 By racial group assessed

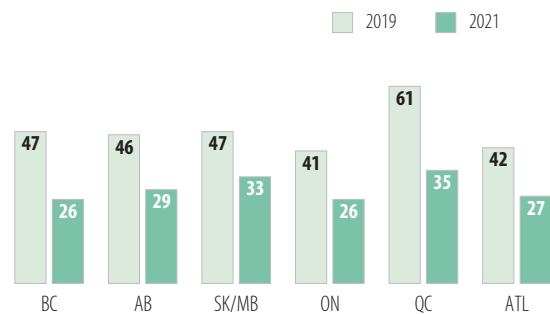


Q.23a

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: Discrimination against [GROUP] is no longer a problem in Canada.

Discrimination against [group] is no longer a problem in Canada

2019 - 2021 Strongly/somewhat agree, by province



Q.23a

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: Discrimination against [GROUP] is no longer a problem in Canada.

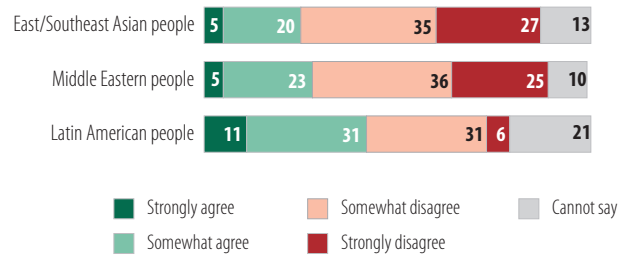
⁹ This change in public opinion was already evident in August 2020, based on another Environics Institute survey that included the same question.

As in 2019, opinions about discrimination no longer being a problem vary noticeably by the racialized group assessed.¹⁰ Agreement with the statement is lowest when applied to Indigenous Peoples (18% strongly or somewhat agree); this proportion has declined only marginally since 2019, but the proportion that strongly disagrees has jumped from 29 percent to 40 percent. Fewer than three in ten (27%) now agree that discrimination is no longer a problem for Black people (down 20 points), with the “strongly disagree” proportion doubling to 33 percent. Similarly, the proportion of Canadians who agree with this statement has also dropped significantly in the case of South Asian people (30%, down 24) and Chinese people (34%, down 29).

Among three racialized groups covered for the first time in 2021, roughly one in four Canadians agree with the statement about discrimination no longer being a problem as it applies to East or Southeast Asian (25% strongly or somewhat), and Middle Eastern (28%) people, with more than six in ten who somewhat or strongly disagree. By comparison, opinions about the treatment of Latin American people in Canada is more divided, with four in ten (42%) who strongly or somewhat agree with this statement, compared with 37 percent who somewhat or strongly disagree, and another 21 percent unable to offer an opinion.

Discrimination against [group] is no longer a problem in Canada

2021 By racial group assessed



Q.23a

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: Discrimination against [GROUP] is no longer a problem in Canada.

¹⁰ Respondents were not asked this question with reference to their own ethnic or racial group.

IT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND THE ANGER OF [GROUP] IN CANADA. As with the previous question, Canadians are now more appreciative than before of the impact of racism in Canada. More than half (54%) now agree strongly or somewhat with this statement about understanding the anger of racialized Canadians (combined across groups), up 10 percentage points from 2019. One in three (32%, down 9) disagree, with another 14 percent unable to say either way.

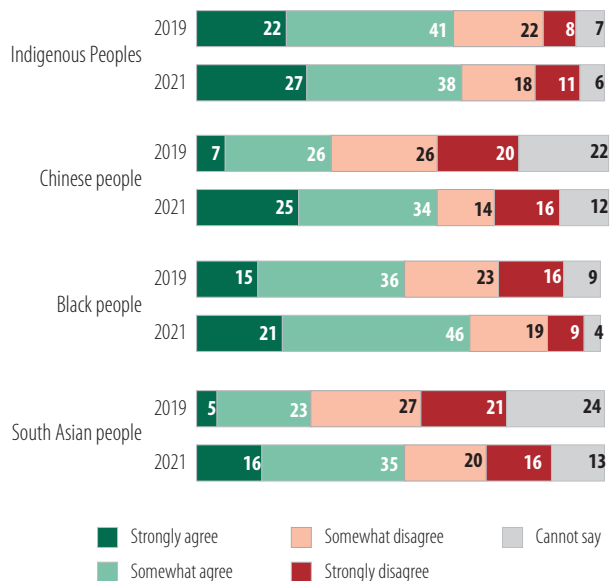
This change from two years ago is evident across the population by varying degrees, and most noticeably among residents of B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, as well as among Canadians who are white, Chinese or South Asian. Agreement with the statement is most widespread among Asian (62%) and Black (62%) people, as well as second-generation Canadians (62%), and least evident among Quebecers (42%, but up 7 points since 2019).

Across the racial groups assessed, agreement with the statement is most widespread as it applies to Indigenous Peoples, with two-thirds either strongly (27%) or somewhat (38%) in agreement; overall agreement is up from 2019 only marginally, but strong agreement is higher by five percentage points. Two-thirds of Canadians also agree strongly (21%) or somewhat (46%) about understanding the anger of Black people in Canada – in this case, up 16 points from two years ago.

The biggest change since 2019 is the proportion that agrees about understanding the anger of Chinese people in Canada, with six in ten now strongly (25%) or somewhat (34%) in agreement, (up 26 points), with strong agreement increasing more than three-fold. Agreement with the statement is also now higher in reference to understanding the anger of South Asian people, with more than half now strongly (16%) or somewhat (35%) in agreement, up 23 points since 2019.

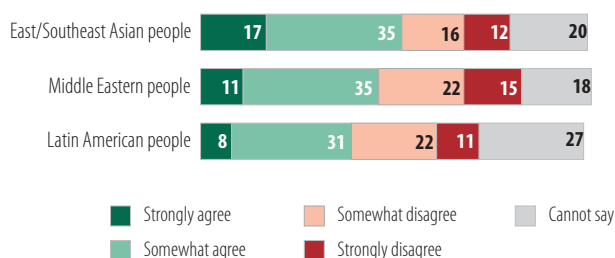
Among the other groups assessed, just over half strongly or somewhat agree with the statement in terms of East or Southeast Asian people (51%), with a somewhat smaller proportion in reference to Middle Eastern (46%) and Latin American (39%) people. In all three cases, relatively few express strong opinions (either agree or disagree), and a significant minority are unable to offer any.

It is easy to understand the anger of [group] in Canada
2019 - 2021 By racial group assessed



Q.23b
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: It is easy to understand the anger of [GROUP] in Canada.

It is easy to understand the anger of [group] in Canada
2021 By racial group assessed



Q.23b
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: It is easy to understand the anger of [GROUP] in Canada.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IS THE MAIN REASON [GROUP] CANNOT GET AHEAD THESE DAYS.

While most Canadians now acknowledge the persistent experiences of racism among some groups in the country, they are less apt to believe this represents the primary obstacle to a successful life. Just four in ten Canadians agree strongly (10%) or somewhat (29%) with this statement, up six percentage points since 2019. A slightly larger proportion (43%) now somewhat or strongly disagree (down 7), while close to one in five (18%) cannot say either way.

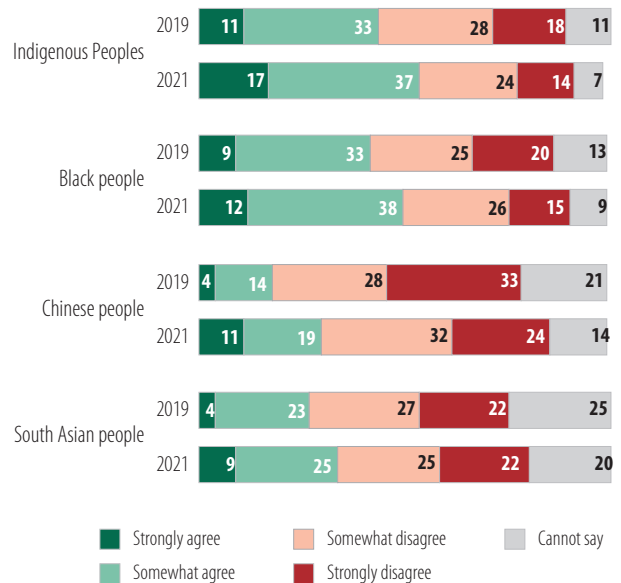
Agreement has increased most noticeably among residents of B.C. and Ontario, while holding steady in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec. Across the population, agreement about discrimination serving as an obstacle to getting ahead is most widespread among those who are Asian (50%, especially those who are East or Southeast Asian (56%)) or Black (50%), and least evident in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (27%), and among those who are Métis (26%).

Consistent with the two previous statements, this one is most widely accepted in terms of Indigenous Peoples, with more than half now strongly (17%) or somewhat (37%) in agreement, up 10 points since 2019. Similarly, half now strongly (12%) or somewhat (38%) agree that racial discrimination poses a primary obstacle to Black people (up 8 points). Smaller proportions strongly or somewhat agree this applies to Chinese people (30%, up 12) and South Asian people (34%, up 7).

Just over one-third (36%) of Canadians agree that racial discrimination is a major obstacle to the success of East or Southeast Asian people in this country, with similar proportions agreeing with the statement as it applies to Middle Eastern (37%) and Latin American (33%) people.

Racial discrimination is the main reason why [group] cannot get ahead these days

2019 - 2021 By racial group assessed

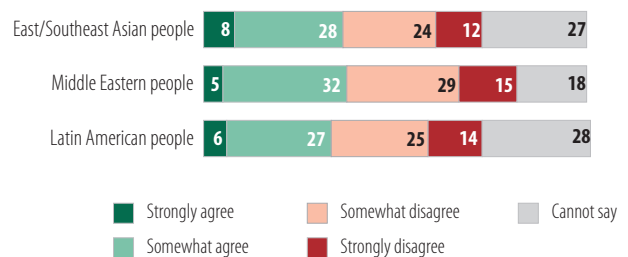


Q.23e

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: Racial discrimination is the main reason why many [GROUP] cannot get ahead these days.

Racial discrimination is the main reason why [group] cannot get ahead these days

2021 By racial group assessed



Q.23e

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people]: Racial discrimination is the main reason why many [GROUP] cannot get ahead these days.

Systemic versus attitudinal racism

Canadians are now somewhat more likely than before to see discrimination against racialized groups as systemic than as a matter of individual prejudice. This is seen to be most likely to occur when dealing with the police, and most widely experienced by those who are Indigenous or Black.

Is discrimination about individual prejudice or systemic racism? Discrimination and racism have various roots, typically most visible in the actions of individuals who act or otherwise express themselves disrespectfully toward others, but also manifested systemically in how society is structured and operates through its laws, policies and norms. The existence and extent of systemic racism have received increased attention over the past year or so as the result of greater scrutiny now being directed toward policing practices and other forms of institutional policy. The survey probed this issue by repeating a question from the 2019 survey that asked Canadians whether they believe the bigger problem with discrimination against each of

seven specific racialized groups stems from the prejudice of individuals or from what is built into the country's laws and institutions.

When framed this way, the balance of public opinion is weighted toward the problem being with individual attitudes, but since 2019 there has been a small shift in the direction of seeing racism as encompassing a systemic problem involving laws and institutions. When results are combined across the seven racialized groups assessed, a plurality continues to say that the bigger problem is individual prejudice (38%, down 3 points from 2019), while a slightly larger proportion sees the problem as built into our laws and institutions (6%, up 1), or is equally a problem of individual prejudice and systemic factors (34%, up 5). Also notable is the fact that slightly fewer Canadians now reject both premises, by insisting that these groups do not experience discrimination (9%, down 1) or not offering any opinion (12%, down 3).

Basis of discrimination of racialized groups in Canada

2019 - 2021 By racial group assessed

	TOTAL		Chinese people		South Asian people		Indigenous Peoples		Black people	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
Based on prejudice of individuals	41	38	39	44	44	44	33	23	47	38
Based on laws and institutions	5	6	3	7	4	3	8	13	4	7
Both equally a problem	29	34	19	30	25	31	44	49	29	40
Neither/no discrimination against group	10	9	19	8	10	10	5	8	8	8
Cannot say	15	12	20	11	18	12	11	7	11	7

Q.30

When it comes to discrimination against [Chinese people / Black people / South Asian people / Indigenous Peoples / East-Southeast Asian people] which do you think is the bigger problem...?

Perspectives on this question are largely similar across the population. The shift since 2019 toward focusing on a systemic basis of discrimination can be found across most of the population, but most noticeably among residents of B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Atlantic Canada, and among rural residents, Canadians 18 to 29 years of age, those without a high school diploma, and those who are Indigenous or Black. The view that racial discrimination is due primarily to the prejudice of individuals is most common among Canadians ages 65 and older (47%). Those most apt to say it is a function of both individual prejudice and systemic factors include Canadians ages 18 to 29 (42%), and those who are Black (47%), East or Southeast Asian (42%), or Chinese (41%).

Not surprisingly, Canadians' answers to this question vary depending on which racial group is being assessed. As in 2019, the focus on institutions and laws (on its own or equally with individual prejudice) is most prevalent when it comes to discrimination against Indigenous Peoples

(62%), followed by Black people (47%); for both groups, this view has strengthened measurably over the past two years (increasing by 10 and 14 points, respectively). But opinions have also changed significantly in the case of racism toward Chinese people, with a much larger proportion now ascribing this to systemic factors (37%, up 15 points), and much fewer now dismissing anti-Chinese discrimination or not offering any opinion (19%, down 20). By comparison, views about causes of discrimination against South Asians in Canada have changed little, and are now very similar to how Canadians see the treatment of Chinese people.

The survey also posed this question with reference to three new groups (people who are East or Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American), and opinions about the basis of racism directed at each of these groups roughly conform to the combined average across all groups. Canadians express the greatest uncertainty about the treatment of Latin American people in this country, with one in four (23%) unable to offer any opinion.

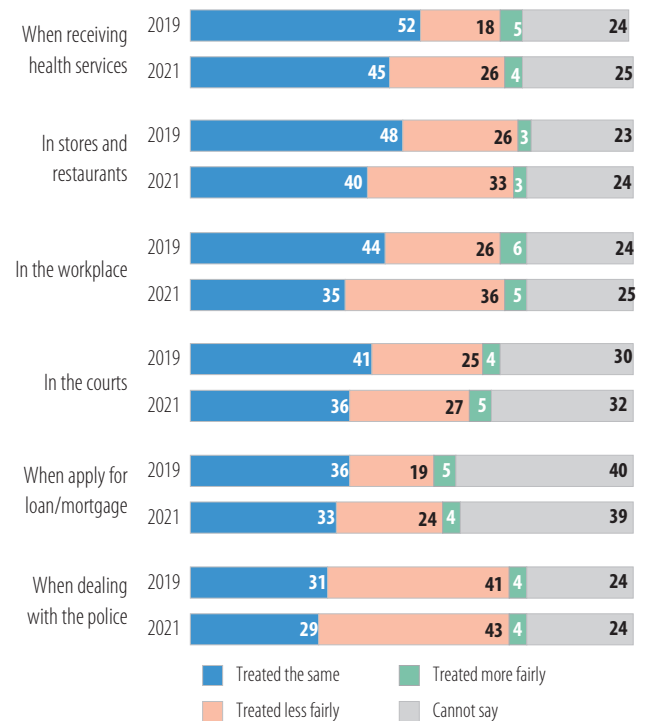
DISCRIMINATION IN SPECIFIC SETTINGS. A more specific way to measure Canadians’ awareness of systemic forms of racism is to ask about how they believe each of seven racialized groups are treated in six types of settings, specifically in terms of whether they are treated the same, less fairly or more fairly than white people.¹¹

Results for the seven groups combined show that perceptions of how racialized people are treated vary significantly depending on the type of setting, and that Canadians are now more likely than in 2019 to believe that racialized people are treated less fairly than white people in all of the settings examined. Across the six settings presented, the public is most likely to say that racialized individuals are treated the same as white people when it comes to **requiring health care services** (45%), but this is less so than two years ago, with one in four (26%, up 8 points) now indicating they are treated less fairly.

Equal treatment of racialized people is also now less apt than before to be assumed when they are **in stores and restaurants** (40%, down 8), **in the courts** (36%, down 5), **in the workplace** (35%, down 9), and **when applying for a loan or mortgage** (33%, down 3). As in 2019, Canadians are least apt to believe there is equal treatment **when dealing with the police** (29%, down 2), compared with 43 percent (up 2) who say racialized people are treated less fairly.

When results are broken down by how each of the seven racialized groups are treated, the pattern largely mirrors other survey findings showing opinions about the relative discrimination experienced by group. Across the six settings, Indigenous and Black people are the most likely to be seen as being treated less fairly than white people, and most significantly so when dealing with the police (a view now expressed by a clear majority of other Canadians). Moreover, perceptions of unequal treatment of both groups have strengthened noticeably since 2019, especially for Black people (with increases of more than 10 percentage points in each of the six settings). The most dramatic change has been in the area of receiving health care services, where perceptions of unequal treatment relative to white people have jumped for both Indigenous Peoples (to 50%, up 16 points) and Black people (to 33%, up 17).

Treatment of group compared with white people
2019 - 2021 Combined racialized groups By situation



Q.31
Thinking about Canada, overall would you say that [SAME GROUP FROM Q. 30] are treated the same as white people, treated less fairly, or more fairly than white people, in each of the following situations . . . ?

¹¹ Each respondent answered these questions with reference to one of seven racialized groups (randomly assigned). No one was asked about their own racial group.

Opinions about the treatment of South Asian people have also moved in the same direction since 2019, with the largest change in how they are seen as treated less fairly than white people in the workplace (to 33%, up 9 points). This is the same proportion that says South Asians are treated less fairly in dealing with the police (33%, up 2). As was the case two years ago, Chinese people in Canada are least commonly seen as being treated less fairly than white people across these settings, but this has also changed, most notably in terms of treatment in stores and restaurants (to 30%, up 12), in the workplace (to 28%, up 11) and when dealing with the police (to 24%, up 9).

Public perceptions about the treatment of the three racial groups first included in 2021 – East or Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American people – generally place them as treated better than Indigenous and Black people, but less so than Chinese and South Asians. In all three cases, these groups are the most apt to be seen as

treated less fairly than white people in the workplace and when dealing with the police.

How do perceptions of treatment in these settings vary by Canadians’ own background and identity?

The overall pattern of changes since 2019 noted earlier are evident across all or most subgroups (e.g., by region, demographics and racial background), in some cases more so and in other cases less so. Across settings, the belief that racialized people are treated the same as white people is most apt to be articulated by men and people ages 65 plus. As in 2019, white Canadians continue to be more likely than racialized Canadians to agree with this view, but notably their perceptions have changed as much as those of racialized people in acknowledging the unequal treatment experienced by others. Equal treatment for racialized people across the six settings is least apt to be seen by women, those ages 18 to 29, and those who are Black.

Group treated less fairly than white people, by situation

2019 - 2021 By racial group assessed

	Chinese people		South Asian people		Indigenous Peoples		Black people	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
When receiving health care services	11	16	13	18	34	50	16	33
In stores and restaurants	18	30	22	28	37	41	28	39
In the courts	10	13	16	18	38	42	35	46
In the workplace	17	28	24	33	34	43	27	41
When apply for loan/mortgage	10	11	13	20	31	40	23	34
When dealing with the police	15	24	31	33	58	59	57	68

Q.31

Thinking about Canada, overall would you say that [SAME GROUP FROM Q. 30] are treated the same as white people, treated less fairly, or more fairly than white people, in each of the following situations ...?

Group treated less fairly than white people, by situation

2021 By racial group assessed

	East/Southeast Asian people	Middle eastern peoples	Latin American people
When receiving health care services	25	20	19
In stores and restaurants	33	34	22
In the courts	20	27	28
In the workplace	35	39	31
When apply for loan/mortgage	19	24	23
When dealing with the police	36	44	38

Q.31

Thinking about Canada, overall would you say that [SAME GROUP FROM Q. 30] are treated the same as white people, treated less fairly, or more fairly than white people, in each of the following situations ...?



Indirect experience with racial discrimination

The survey asked Canadians about their perceptions of discrimination and racism experienced by people of their own racial or cultural group, including what they have personally witnessed.

General treatment of own group

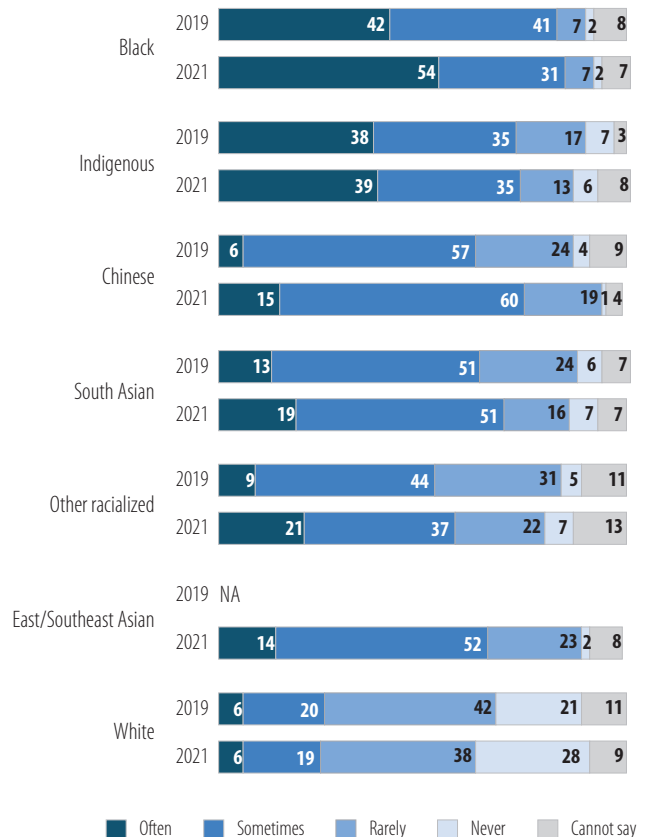
Large majorities of Black people and Indigenous Peoples see their own group experiencing unfair treatment because of their race and culture. Such perceptions increased noticeably since 2019 among Black and Chinese people, as well as among first-generation Canadians.

FREQUENCY OF DISCRIMINATION. Earlier in the survey, Canadians were asked about the extent to which they believe other groups in this country experience unfair treatment because of their race or cultural background. Later, they were asked about the experience of their own group, and the results are generally consistent. Large majorities of Canadians who are Black (85%) or Indigenous (74%) say that people in their group are treated unfairly at least sometimes, if not often, because of their race and culture. For the population as a whole, perceptions have remained stable since 2019, but this varies significantly by group.

Since 2019, ongoing unfair treatment of one's own group is now much more likely to be reported by Black people (up 12 points), with smaller increases among those who are Chinese (15%, up 9), South Asian (19%, up 6) or from another racialized group (21%, up 12). Two-thirds of East or Southeast Asian Canadians report that their group experiences discrimination often (14%) or sometimes (52%).

Three-quarters of Indigenous Peoples say their own group is mistreated often (39%) or sometimes (35%), with little change since 2019. As before, there are differences in views among those who identify as First Nations (85%) or Métis (62%). As in 2019, only one in four (25%, down 1) people who identify as white say the same occurs among people with their racial or culture group.¹²

Frequency of unfair treatment of own race
2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.27
How often are people in your own ethnic or racial group treated unfairly because of their race or culture...?

As was the case two years ago, Canadians ages 18 to 29 (50%, up 5) are more likely than older cohorts to say their racial or cultural group has experienced unfair treatment, a view shared by three in ten (30%) of those ages 65 and older. A similar gap can be seen across generations living in Canada, with perceptions of discrimination highest among those born in another country (58%, up 12) and lowest among third-plus-generation Canadians (28%, down 7). Views on this question are largely similar by gender, educational attainment and household income.

¹² Identifying as white encompasses a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds, which in some cases might expose them to discrimination. As an example, a 2018 Environics Institute survey found that close to one in five Jews in Canada reported to have experienced discrimination in the previous five years due to race, ethnicity or culture.

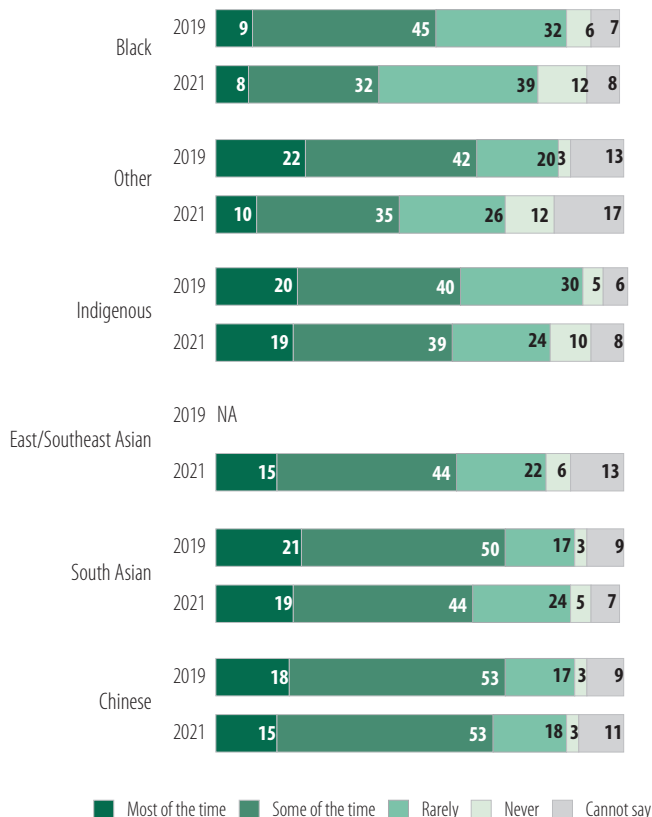
PORTRAYAL IN THE MEDIA. Non-white participants were asked how often they believe their own racial group is portrayed accurately in the Canadian media today. Positive responses are now lower than two years ago, with only one in six (15%, down 5) saying such portrayals are accurate most of the time, with most of the remainder indicating that this happens some of the time (42%, down 2), rarely (25%, up 2) or never (8%, up 4).

Views on this question do not vary significantly across racial groups, except that the proportion that says most or some of the time is now significantly lower among those who are Black (40%, down 12 points since 2019) or in another racialized group (45%, down 19).¹³

Positive media portrayal is most apt to be seen by those who are Chinese (68%, down 3), which has changed very little despite the rise of anti-Asian sentiment throughout the pandemic. As in 2019, age continues to play a role in such perceptions, with a positive view most prevalent among racialized Canadians ages 65 plus (71%, up 2), in contrast to with those ages 18 to 29 (51%, down 4). Opinions among racialized Canadians are also more positive among those with greater household incomes and financial security, but the decline since 2019 spans all income strata.

How often is your racial group accurately portrayed in the media?

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.32

Thinking about how your own ethnic or racial group is portrayed in the Canadian media today, would you say that your group is portrayed accurately...?

¹³ As previously noted, the “other” group includes everyone who doesn’t identify with one of the other named ethnic and racial categories covered in this report.

Witnessing discrimination of others due to race

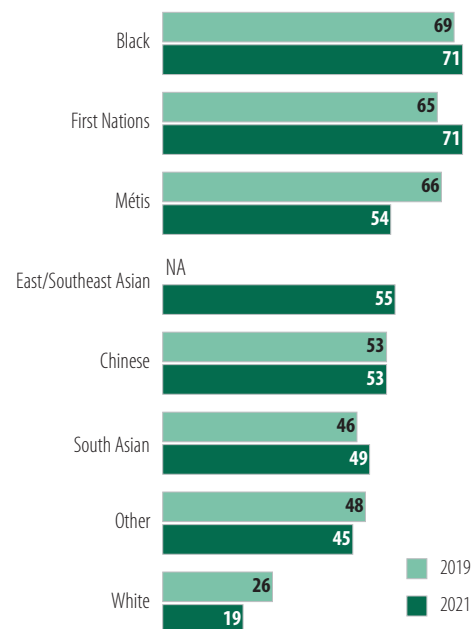
Most racialized Canadians – especially those who are Black or First Nations – have witnessed racial discrimination of others from their own racial group and those with other backgrounds. Since 2019, such reported experiences have declined across the population as a whole, but increased among specific groups.

TREATMENT OF OTHERS WHO ARE THE SAME RACE.

Canadians’ perspectives about the extent of discrimination and racism are informed by what they themselves have witnessed happening to others around them. Three in ten (30%) report having personally witnessed discrimination or unfair treatment of other people who are the same race as themselves, because of their race. As would be expected, such experience varies by survey participants’ own racial background, and this difference has widened since 2019. Among white Canadians, just one in five (19%) say they have witnessed such treatment of other white people, down from 26 percent who indicated this two years ago. By comparison, this experience is reported by seven in ten who are Black (71%, up 2) or First Nations (71%, up 6).

This response is also given by majorities who are Métis (54%, down 8), East or Southeast Asian (55%), South Asian (53%, up 3) or Chinese (53%, unchanged).¹⁴ As in 2019, Canadians ages 18 to 29 are the most likely to say they have witnessed racial discrimination of others from their own racial group (41%, versus 24% among those 65 plus). Such experiences do not vary by gender, educational attainment or household income.

Witnessed discrimination of others of same race
2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.33
Have you personally witnessed discrimination or unfair treatment of other people who are the same race as you, because of their race?

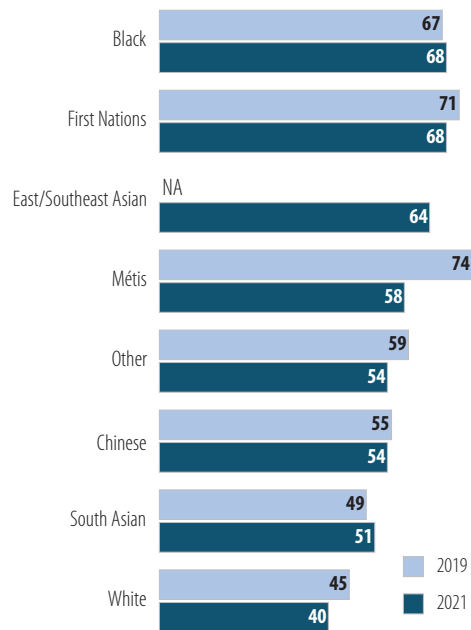
¹⁴ The absence of an increase in such reported experiences among Chinese Canadians is counter-intuitive given evidence of rising anti-Asian sentiment through the COVID-19 pandemic, including other findings in this survey.

TREATMENT OF OTHERS WHO ARE A DIFFERENT RACE. The survey also asked about witnessing unfair treatment of others who have a racial background different from their own. Overall, more than four in ten (45%) report this experience, which is lower than in 2019 (down 6 percentage points).

On this question, the gap between racialized and non-racialized Canadians is considerably smaller. Witnessing discrimination against those of another race is once again most prevalent among those who are Black (68%, up 1) or First Nations (68%, down 3), followed by those who are East or Southeast Asian (64%). Such reports are now less common than before among Canadians who are Métis (58%, down 16), from another racialized group (54%, down 5) or white (40%, down 5).

The likelihood of witnessing discrimination against people of a different race has declined across most population groups, but remains more prevalent among Canadians ages 18 to 29 (55%), residents of the Prairie provinces (55%), and those who have a lot of contact with people whose race or ethnicity is different from their own (59%).

Witnessed discrimination of others of different race
2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



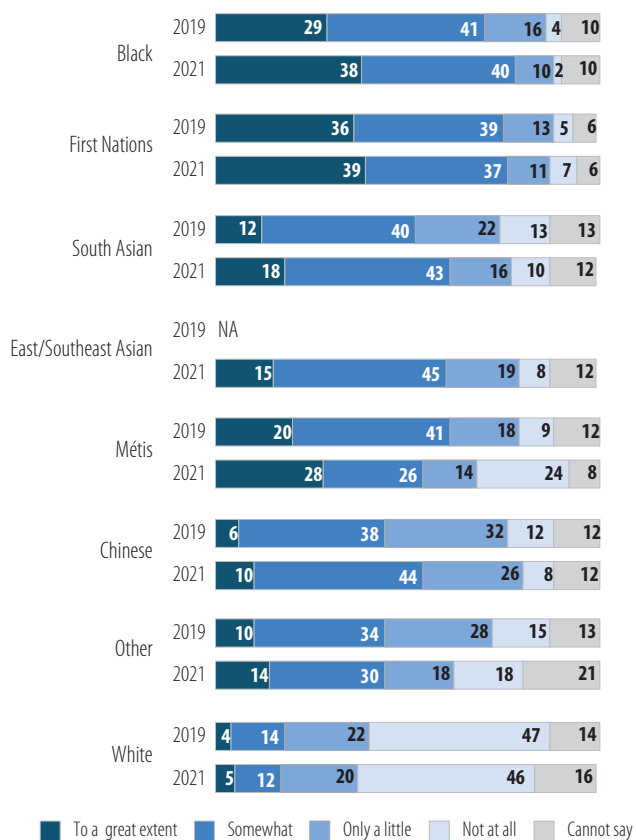
Q.34
And have you personally witnessed discrimination or unfair treatment of people with a different racial background as you, because of their race?

IMPACT OF RACISM ON PEOPLE YOU KNOW. Beyond witnessing discrimination against people in one’s own racial group, the survey also probed how Canadians believe such treatment is affecting people they are close to who share their racial background.

Overall, three in ten Canadians say racism is affecting those they know to a great extent (10%) or somewhat (20%), essentially unchanged from 2019. Once again, however, the impacts are most likely to be reported by those who are Black (78%, up 8 points from 2019) or First Nations (76%, up 1). This response is also now higher among those who are South Asian (61%, up 9) or Chinese (54%, up 10). By comparison, fewer than one in five (17%, down 1) white Canadians say that racial discrimination has had this level of impact on people close to them who share their racial background.

As with other questions, this type of impact is most commonly reported by Canadians 18 to 29 years of age (47% to a great extent or somewhat, up 7 points). By comparison, there are few differences by educational attainment and household income.

Impact of racism on people of your race you are close to 2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.35
Thinking about people close to you who share your racial background, to what extent do you think their lives have been affected because of discrimination due to their race...?



Personal experience with discrimination and racism

The survey asked Canadians about their own personal experience with discrimination and unfair treatment due to their race or cultural background, in terms of its frequency, where it takes place and its impact on their well-being.

Personal experience with discrimination

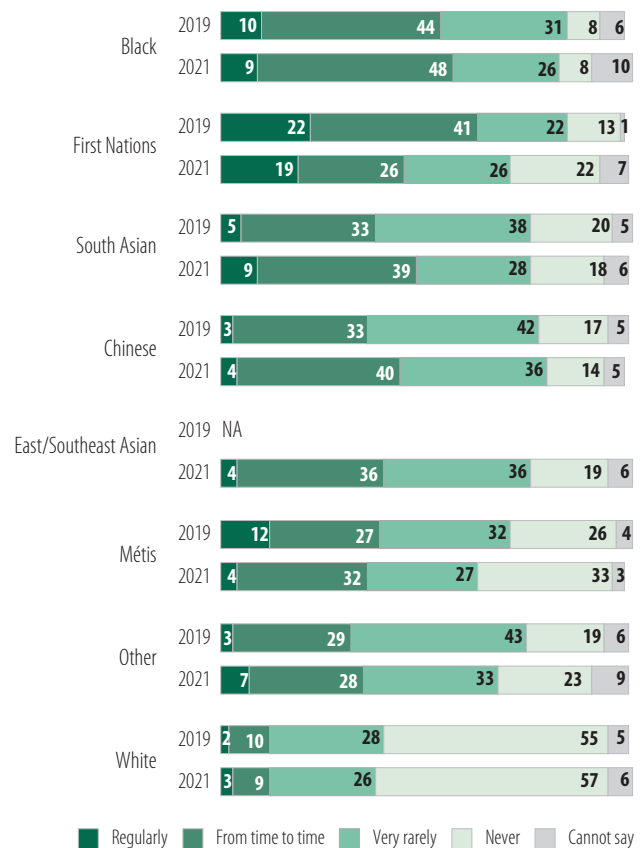
Discrimination due to one's race is commonly experienced in Canada – most widely among people who are Black or First Nations – and increasingly among those who are Chinese or South Asian. Such treatment is reported across a range of settings, most noticeably in the workplace and on the street.

FREQUENCY OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. Canadians were asked about their own personal experience with discrimination or unfair treatment because of their race or ethnicity. For the population as a whole, about half say this has happened to them at some point in their lives. One in five reports experiencing this regularly (4%) or from time to time (17%), unchanged from 2019. Another quarter (27%, down 3) indicates it has taken place very rarely, while a plurality (45%) says it has never happened to them (up 2).

Personal experience with such treatment is most widely reported by Canadians who are Black (57% regularly or from time to time, up 3 points) or First Nations (45%, but down 18 since 2019). By comparison, such reports have increased noticeably among those who are South Asian (48%, up 10) or Chinese (44%, up 8). This experience is also indicated by smaller, but still significant, minorities of East or Southeast Asians (40%), Métis (36%) and other racialized groups (35%). One in ten (12%) white Canadians report experiencing discrimination regularly or from time to time due to their race (unchanged from 2019).

Across the population, regular experience with racial discrimination at least from time to time is most widely reported among Canadians ages 18 to 29 (30%, up 4), first-generation Canadians (36%, up 8), those with precarious incomes (32%, up 4) and those with a university degree (27%, up 4). Such experience does not vary by gender.

Personal experience with discrimination due to one's race 2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.36
 Now thinking about your own experience. Have you ever personally experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly because of your race or ethnicity? If so, has this been ...?

IN WHAT SETTINGS DOES DISCRIMINATION

TAKE PLACE? Those who report any experience with discrimination due to race or ethnicity were asked to specify in which of eight settings this has taken place. As in 2019, those settings most commonly identified include experiences in the workplace (38%), on the street (37%), in stores and restaurants (29%), at school or university (27%), and on public transit (21%). For the population as a whole, the results are largely unchanged from two years ago.

As before, mention of settings varies across racial groups, and it is Black and First Nations individuals who are most likely to report such experiences across the settings presented, with notable increases since 2019 in the case of stores and restaurants (58%, up 15), and on the street (55%, up 9) among Black people; and when using public services (32%, up 8), and in dealing with the police and the courts (38%, up 7) for First Nations people.

Chinese people are among those most likely to say they have experienced unfair treatment on the street (54%, unchanged since 2019); and are now more likely than two years ago to indicate this has taken place in the workplace (35%, up 5), in stores and restaurants (39%, up 7), and when using public services (22%, up 6).

Increased harassment is also now more widely reported by South Asian people across a range of settings, most notably when using public services (23%, up 10), and in dealing with the police and the courts (21%, up 11). As in 2019, South Asian people are among those most apt to say they have experienced discrimination in the workplace (50%, up 2).

In what settings have you experienced racial discrimination?

2019 - 2021 Those experiencing discrimination



Q.37

In what settings have you experienced discrimination or been unfairly treated because of your race or ethnicity...?

Personal impacts of discrimination

Canadians who experience racial discrimination are affected to varying degrees; some are bothered quite a lot and others not at all. Negative impacts are most widely felt by those who are Black or First Nations, and by those who experience racism on a regular basis.

HOW MUCH RACIAL DISCRIMINATION BOTHERS

YOU. What impact does discrimination and unfair treatment due to race have on one's well-being? Those who report such experiences were asked the extent to which this has bothered them, and the results show that – as in 2019 – it is not the same for everyone. Four in ten Canadians say their experiences with racial discrimination have bothered them a lot (15%) or somewhat (24%), while the remainder indicate it has bothered them a little (33%) or not at all (24%).

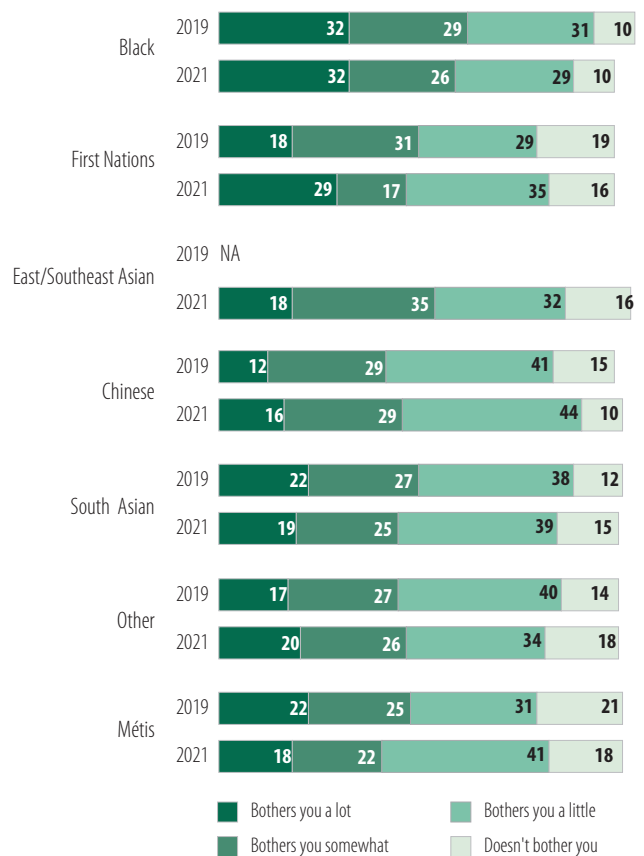
The extent of impact varies across racial groups, although not to the same degree as the reported experience with racial discrimination. Being bothered a lot by unfair treatment due to race is most widely felt by those who are Black (32%) or First Nations (29%); the former is unchanged from 2019, while the latter is up 11 percentage points. The extent of being bothered is similar across other racialized groups, with no significant changes over the past two years.

As before, it is white Canadians who are the least apt to report being bothered by whatever discrimination they may have experienced due to their race or culture. As might be expected, the personal toll of racism is more keenly felt by those who experience it on a regular basis: Being bothered a lot is most commonly reported by those who say they experience racial discrimination on a regular basis (35%), in comparison with those for whom this takes place from time to time (23%) or very rarely (10%).

As in 2019, reports of being bothered a lot by racial discrimination is more evident among women (18%, versus 12% of men), second-generation Canadians (21%) and those with precarious incomes (23%). This level of personal impact is least apt to be experienced by those ages 65 plus (11%) and those without a high school diploma (11%).

How much your experience with racial discrimination has bothered you

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



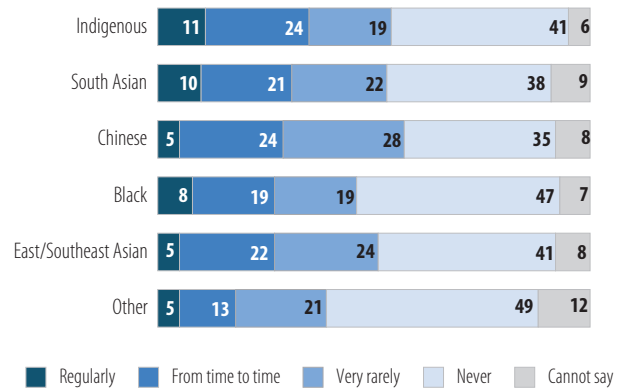
Q.39

Thinking about the experiences of discrimination and unfair treatment you mentioned, overall how much have they bothered you . . . ?

DOWNPLAYING ONE’S RACE OR CULTURE. Non-white Canadians were asked how often, if at all, they consciously downplay being someone of their race or cultural group. Across all racialized groups, three in ten say they do so regularly (8%) or from time to time (21%), with the remainder indicating they do this very rarely (22%), not at all (41%) or not offering any response (8%).

Across racial groups, downplaying one’s race or culture is most commonly reported by Indigenous Peoples (35% regularly or from time to time) and South Asians (31%), and least so by those in the “other” category (18%). It is also more prevalent among Canadians ages 18 to 29 (35%), and those who have experienced racial discrimination regularly or from time to time (43%). Responses to this question are largely similar to those reported in 2019.

**How often do you consciously downplay your race/culture?
2021 By racial group responding**



Q.40
How often, if at all, do you consciously downplay being someone who is [YOUR SELF-IDENTIFIED GROUP]...?



COVID-19 pandemic and racism

The survey explored the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on racialized Canadians, and how this may have differed from the experiences of non-racialized people. This covered the effects of the pandemic on general health and well-being, access to health care for treatment and vaccination, and pandemic-induced racial discrimination.

Impact on health and wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic has had little impact on Canadians' general health, but a more noticeable effect on mental health, especially among those who are younger or who have precarious incomes. Black and First Nations people show the strongest declines since before the pandemic outbreak.

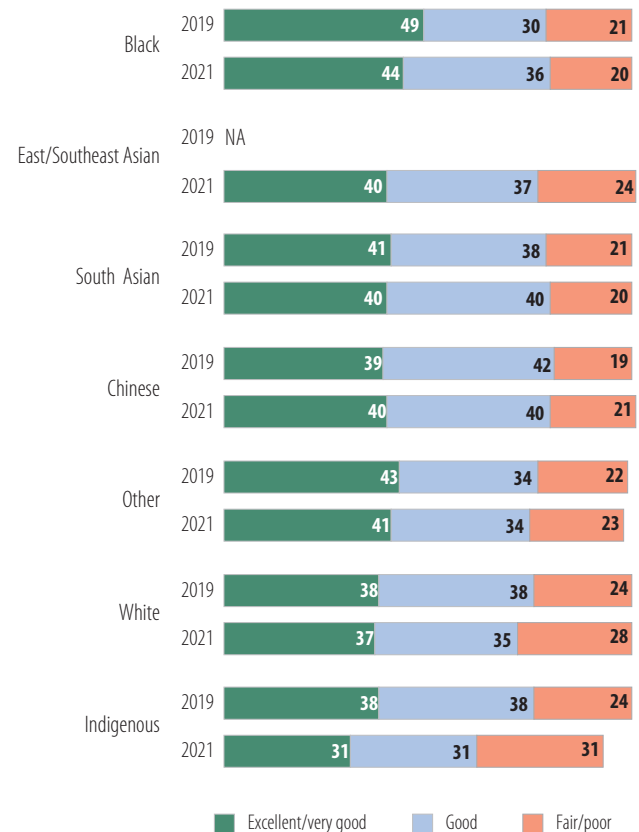
The COVID-19 pandemic forced unprecedented changes in every part of society, and resulted in significant disruption of lives and livelihoods for many (but not all) Canadians. What impact has this experience had across the population, and specifically by racial and ethnic background? The survey explored this issue through a set of standardized indicators for health and wellness as of the time when the survey was conducted (May-June 2021).

GENERAL HEALTH. Four in ten Canadians report their general health to be excellent (9%) or very good (29%), with another third (36%) describing it as good, and one in four indicating it is fair (21%) or poor (6%). For the population as a whole and for most groups, the level of self-reported health is essentially unchanged from Spring 2019, well before the pandemic outbreak (the proportion of excellent/very good responses is down 1 point, while fair/poor ratings are up 3).

Among racial groups, Black Canadians continue to be the most likely to say their health is excellent or very good (44%), but this proportion has declined (5 points) since 2019. As significant is the drop in positive ratings seen among Indigenous Peoples (31%, down 7), especially among those who are First Nations (33%, down 9). Across the population, positive health ratings have also declined among Canadians without a high school diploma and those with precarious incomes, opening a significant gap across income strata

General health status

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.2a

In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?

(positive health is reported by half (49%) of those with fully adequate incomes, compared with just 19% among those who are struggling). By comparison, self-reported general health does not vary by gender, age or the extent to which one has experienced racial discrimination.

MENTAL HEALTH AND DAILY STRESS. As with general health, four in ten Canadians report their mental health to be excellent (15%) or very good (28%), compared with one in four who say it is fair (19%) or poor (8%). However, in this case, self-reported status is noticeably lower than in 2019, almost certainly a function of spending more than a year under pandemic restrictions and navigating health risks.

This decline in reported mental health is evident across most of the population, but most noticeably among those who are Black (47% excellent or good, down 13 points) or First Nations (37%, down 18), although Black Canadians continue to be the most positive among all racial groups.

As with general health, the decline in mental health is most significant among Canadians with the least education and income security. Positive mental health is marginally lower among those who experience racial discrimination regularly or from time to time (39%), in comparison with those who do not (43%).

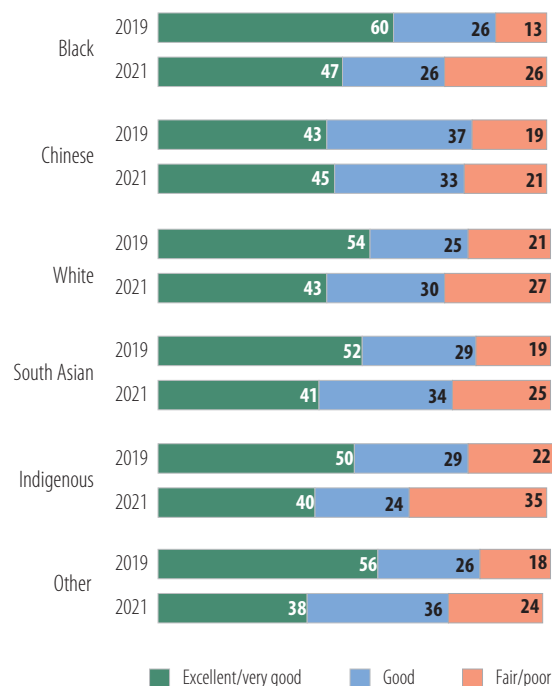
Across the country, reported mental health status has declined most significantly in Quebec (42%, down 18 from 2019), while holding steady in B.C. (47%, down 1) and Atlantic Canada (50%, up 1). Positive mental health has deteriorated across all age cohorts, but continues to be more than twice as evident among Canadians ages 65 plus (63%) than among those ages 18 to 29.

Another way to measure mental health is by asking about the presence of specific symptoms of psychological distress experienced over the previous week. The survey adopted indicators developed at Johns Hopkins University and University of Maryland, and used by the Pew Research Center on recent surveys with Americans. The indicators consist of a battery covering the most important dimensions of psychological stress or comfort that may have been experienced over the previous seven days:

- Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge
- Feeling depressed
- Feeling lonely
- Feeling hopeful for the future
- Having trouble sleeping.

Mental health status

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.2b

In general, would you say your mental health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?

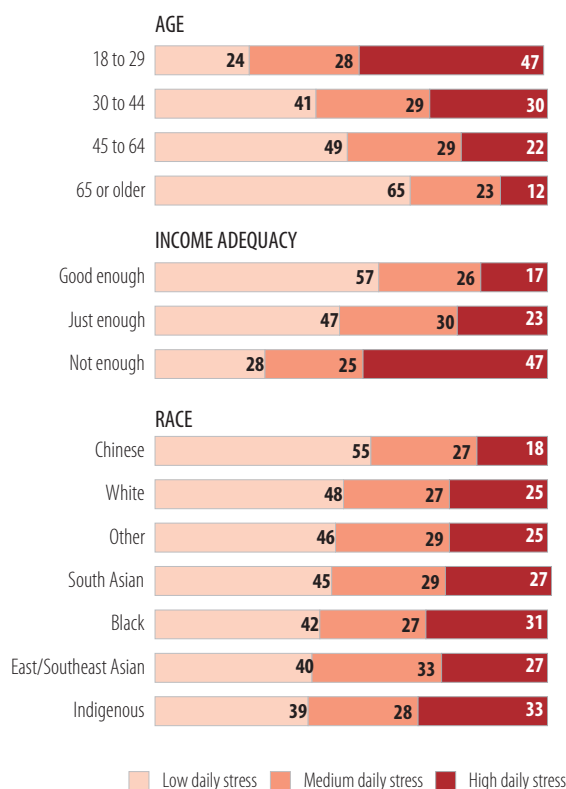
Responses to the five questions were combined to create a single index, and the sample was grouped into three categories: low daily stress (bottom two quartiles, or 47% of the population), medium (third quartile – 28%) and high (top quartile – 26%). As with general mental health, the most significant differences in daily psychological stress are by age and household income. Close to half (47%) of Canadians ages 18 to 29 report high daily stress, with this dropping by subsequent cohorts to only 12 percent among those ages 65 and older. Similarly, high daily stress is reported by 47 percent of those with precarious incomes, compared with 17 percent of those who have enough income and can save from it (57% of this latter group are in the low daily stress category).

An analysis of the data reveals that it is age more so than income adequacy that exerts the most powerful impact on daily stress levels. At the top three levels of income adequacy, daily stress is highest among the youngest cohorts of Canadians, and declines for older ones. At the lowest level, which encompasses the most precarious incomes (encompassing 5% of the population that reports their income is not enough and they are having a hard time), daily stress is high across all age levels.

Psychological stress varies less significantly across racial and ethnic groups. High daily stress is most likely to be reported by Canadians who are Indigenous (33%, and especially Métis at 38%) or Black (31%), and least so among those who are Chinese (18%). Notably, the impact of precarious income on daily stress levels is the same across racial and ethnic groups. High daily stress is also more prevalent among Canadians who have experienced racial discrimination regularly or sometimes (35%), compared with those who have not (23%). Finally, Canadian women (31%) are more likely than men (20%) to be in the high daily stress group.

Daily psychological stress

2021 By age, income adequacy, racial group responding



Q.3a-e

In the past 7 days, how often have you experienced each of the following: felt nervous, anxious, or on edge; felt depressed; felt lonely; felt hopeful for the future; had trouble sleeping? Response scale: Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day), Some or little of the time (1 – 2 days), Occasionally or moderate amount of time (3 – 4 days), or Most or all of the time (5 – 7 days).

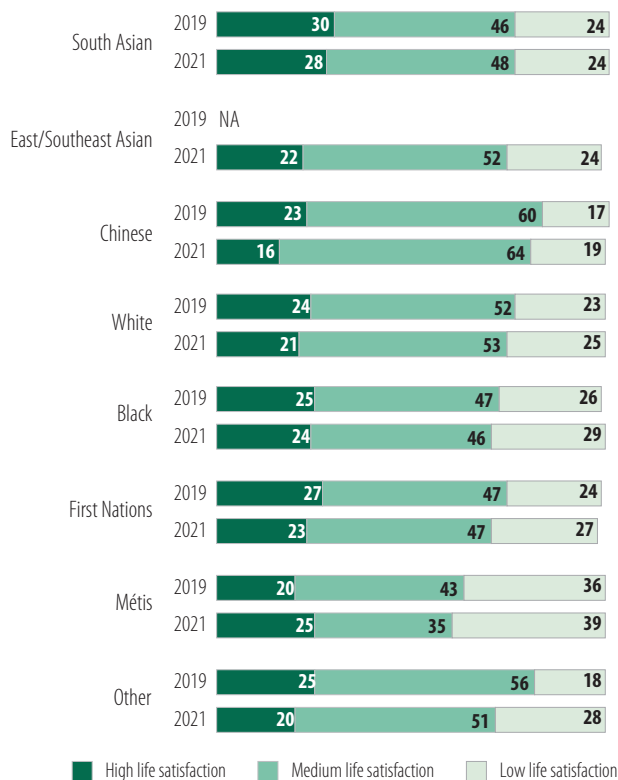
LIFE SATISFACTION. The survey also measured overall life satisfaction, using a standard benchmark indicator used by Statistics Canada and other research organizations. The question asks respondents to indicate their overall life satisfaction on a scale from “1” (very dissatisfied) to “10” (very satisfied). The responses are then grouped into categories of high (9 – 10), medium (6 – 8) and low (1- 5) life satisfaction.

For the population as a whole, life satisfaction has diminished only marginally since 2019, suggesting the pandemic has had limited lasting impact. One in five (22%, down 3) fall into the high life satisfaction group, with 53 percent (down 1) in the middle, and one in four (25%, up 2) in the low life satisfaction group. As with mental health, life satisfaction is strongly linked to age and income security, although these gaps have not widened since before the pandemic in 2019.

Life satisfaction has not changed significantly among racial and ethnic groups, but is now lower among Chinese Canadians (high life satisfaction at 16%, down 7 points since 2019) and other racialized groups (low life satisfaction is at 28%, up 10). High satisfaction is most prevalent among South Asians (28%), while low satisfaction is most apt to be reported by Métis people (39%, up 3). Low life satisfaction is more widespread among Canadians who have experienced racial discrimination (34%) than among those who have not (23%).

Overall life satisfaction

2019 - 2021 By racial group responding



Q.1

Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means “Very dissatisfied” and 10 means “Very satisfied”, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole right now?

Access to health care

Access to needed health services over the past year – and confidence in future access – is most widely enjoyed by older Canadians and those with secure incomes. Access varies less across racial groups, and it is Indigenous and Black Canadians who express the most confidence in future access.

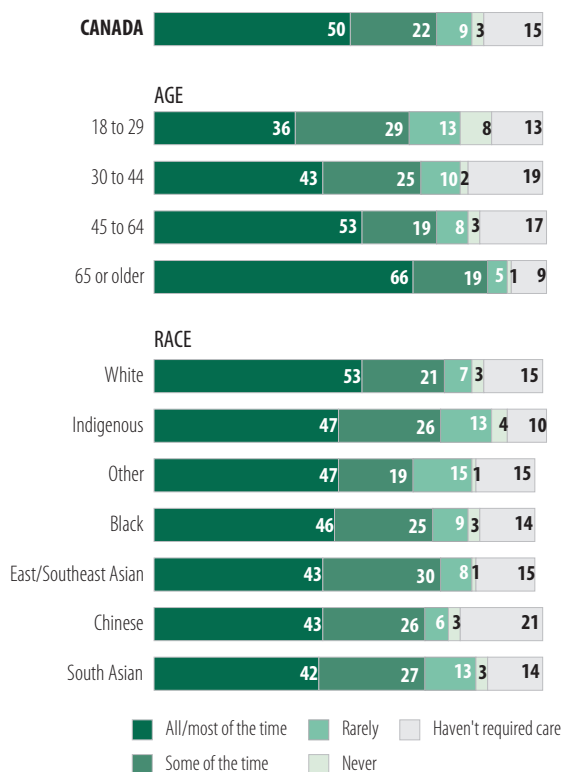
ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES OVER PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS. The COVID-19 pandemic has both increased the need for health care and placed an unprecedented strain on the capacity of the country’s hospitals and professionals to provide the necessary care to Canadians. To what extent has the pandemic affected access to needed care, and has this varied across racialized groups? The survey asked Canadians how frequently they were able to get the health care services and treatments needed by themselves and their families over the previous 12 months (essentially once the pandemic began).

Half (50%) of those surveyed say they received the care and treatment they needed all or most of the time, with one in five (22%) reporting this was some of the time, and another one in ten indicating this happened rarely (9%) or never (3%) (15% reported they did not require any health care services over this time period).

Access to needed care varies most significantly by age: Receiving needed care and services all or most of the time is reported by two-thirds (66%) of those ages 65 plus, compared with only 36 percent among those ages 18 to 29 (with 21% of this group saying they received needed care only rarely or never). Education and income are also important factors: Among Canadians whose income is more than sufficient, 56 percent report getting the care and services they needed all or most of the time, compared with only 39 percent among those whose incomes are precarious.

Responses to this question differ less significantly across racial and ethnic groups. Access to needed health care is most commonly reported by Canadians who are white (53%) or Métis (51%); and somewhat less so among those who are South Asian (42%), Chinese (43%), East or Southeast Asian (43%), or First Nations (44%).

Able to access needed health care services over past year 2021 By age and racial group responding



Q.4

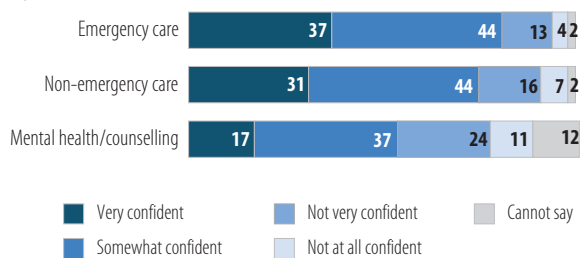
Thinking about you and your family’s need for health care services and treatment over the past 12 months, how often were you able to get the care or services you needed, when you needed it . . . ?

CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE ACCESS TO NEEDED HEALTH CARE. Looking ahead, how confident are Canadians that they and their family can get the health care services and treatments they might need? The survey posed this question with reference to three types of services. People place the most faith in future access to **emergency care at a hospital** (e.g., for injuries, heart disease, cancer treatment), with eight in ten saying they are very (37%) or somewhat (44%) confident. Three-quarters say they are very (31%) or somewhat confident (44%) about getting **non-emergency care at a family doctor or health clinic**, compared with one in four who are not very (16%) or not at all (7%) confident about this. Finally, Canadians are least apt to be very (17%) or somewhat (37%) confident about obtaining **mental health counselling** they might need, versus one-third (35%) expressing little or no confidence.

As with experience over the previous year, confidence in future access to needed health care is most closely associated with age and income. Canadians with precarious incomes are much less likely than others to be very confident about receiving non-emergency care (22%), and much more likely to have little or no confidence in obtaining mental health counselling (47%).

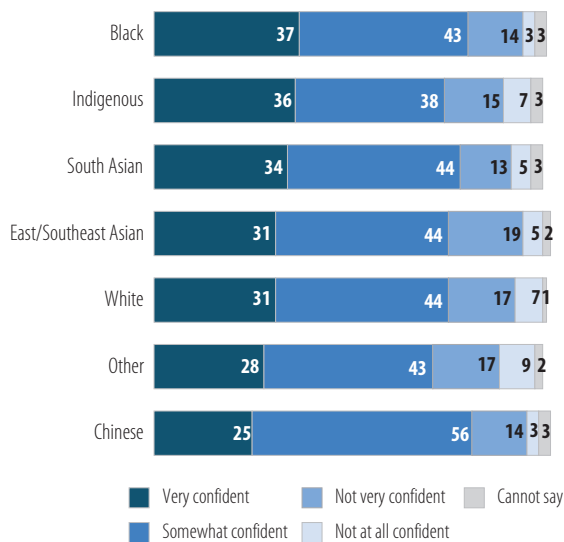
By comparison, confidence in future access to health care services varies less significantly across racial groups and in counter-intuitive ways. Notably, Indigenous and Black Canadians are among the most positive in their expectations for future access.

Confidence in future access to needed health care services 2021



Q.5a-c
Thinking now about today, how confident are you that you and your family could get the health care services and treatment you might need, in terms of: emergency care at a hospital (e.g., for injuries, heart disease, cancer treatment); non-emergency care at a family doctor or health clinic; mental health counselling ...?

Confidence in future access to non-emergency health care 2021 By racial group responding



Q.5b
Thinking now about today, how confident are you that you and your family could get the health care services and treatment you might need, in terms of non-emergency care at a family doctor or health clinic ...?

COVID-19 treatment

Canadians testing positive for the COVID-19 virus are generally positive about the quality of medical care and guidance received for treating the infection.

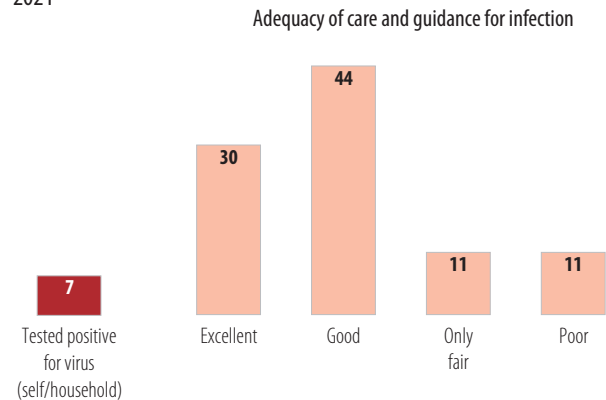
The survey also explored Canadians' experiences being treated for the COVID-19 virus, and how this may have differed by race and other factors. Small percentages of those surveyed report they (3%) or someone else in their family (5%) tested positive for the virus (which equates to a net of 7% for households). Household infections are most likely to be mentioned by residents of Quebec (11% of households), Canadians ages 18 to 29 (15%), those who are Métis (17%) or Black (13%), and those without a high school diploma (14%).

For this small sample of those testing positive for COVID-19 (n=269), participants were asked about the adequacy of medical care and guidance received to treat the infection. Three-quarters of this group say the care received was excellent (30%) or good (44%), compared with one in five indicating it was only fair (11%) or poor (11%). This subsample of negative responses is too small to support definitive analysis by subgroups, but the data suggest that the quality of care varies by income adequacy, but not by racial group.

Moreover, of the handful of participants who rated the care received to be only fair or poor (n=63), only 10 say they believe that they or their family member was treated differently because of their ethnicity or race.

Treatment for COVID-19 infection

2021



Q.7

Have you or someone else in your household tested positive for the COVID-19 virus?

Q.8

[IF YES TO Q.7] How would you rate the adequacy of medical care and guidance you or your family member received to treat COVID-19...?

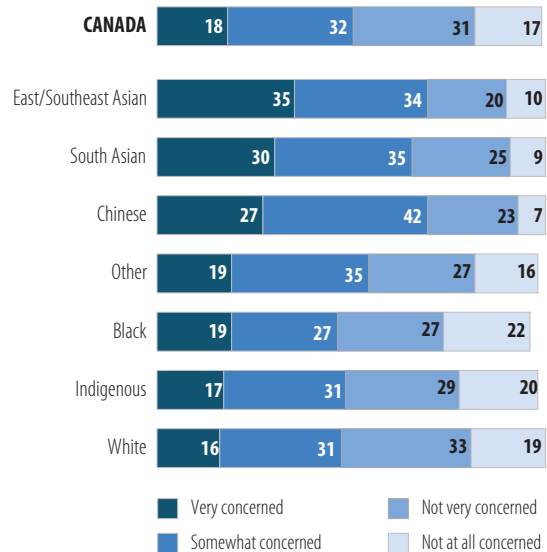
COVID-19 protection

Canadians express a range of concern about contracting COVID-19, with those who are most concerned also most likely to have gotten vaccinated or planning to do so. Low confidence in vaccines, and hesitancy about getting one, is somewhat greater among people who are Black or who have precarious incomes.

CONCERNS ABOUT GETTING THE VIRUS. Among Canadians who have not contracted COVID-19, the population is divided between those who are very (18%) or somewhat (32%) concerned about themselves or someone in their household getting the virus and requiring hospitalization, and those who are not very (31%) or not at all (17%) concerned. Strong concern is most prevalent among Asian Canadians, especially those identifying as East or Southeast Asian (35%), as well as first-generation Canadians (27%) and those with precarious incomes (26%). This view is least apt to be shared by those who are Métis (15%, with 57% of this group not very or not at all concerned about contracting the virus).

Given concerns about contracting the virus, it is likely that some people confronted with potential symptoms might resist confirmation. Close to one in ten Canadians report that, over the past 12 months, they have either avoided getting tested for infection (3%) and/or downplayed possible symptoms (6%) (the net result being 8% accounting for overlap between these two responses). Such actions are most clearly a function of age, being mentioned by 19 percent of Canadians ages 18 to 29, compared with only one percent of those ages 65 plus. It is also more commonly reported by those who are Indigenous (17%) or Black (16%), as well as those without a high school diploma (14%).

Concerns about getting COVID-19 virus
2021 By racial group responding



Q.11

How concerned, if at all, are you that you or someone in your household will get the COVID-19 coronavirus and require hospitalization ...?

GETTING VACCINATED. The most effective protection against the COVID-19 virus is to receive one of several approved vaccinations. Seven in ten (69%) Canadians surveyed report having been vaccinated (at the time of the survey), with either one or two doses. As per government priorities placed on vaccinating older people first, vaccinations are reported by 90 percent of Canadians ages 65 plus, falling to just under half (48%) of those ages 18 to 29. Across racial and ethnic groups, the vaccination rate is highest among Canadians who are Chinese (80%), East or Southeast Asian (78%), or South Asian (76%), and notably lower among those who are Black (50%). Vaccinations are also more prevalent among those with higher educational attainment and incomes, with the rate at 76 percent among those with household incomes of \$100K or more, compared with 52 percent among those earning less than \$30K.

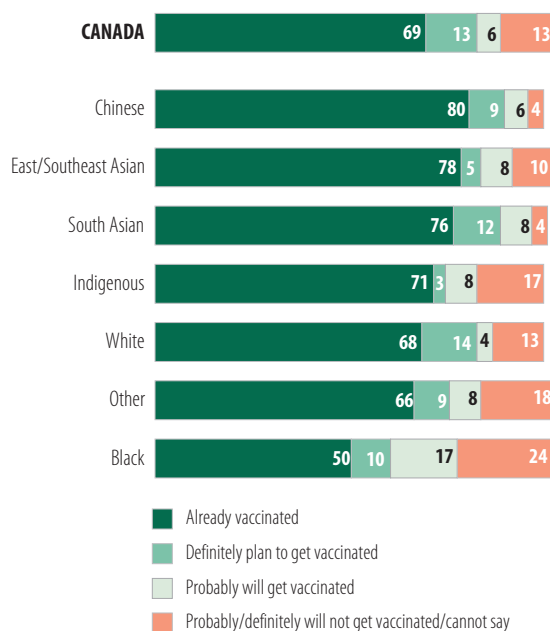
What about the intentions of those not yet vaccinated? Among Canadians in this category, close to six in ten say they will definitely (41%) or likely (18%) get a COVID-19 vaccine, compared with one-third who maintain they will probably not (13%) or definitely not (20%) do so, and another one in ten (9%) who cannot say either way. When these responses are factored into the full population, it yields the following:¹⁵

- 69% already vaccinated
- 13% definitely plan to get vaccinated
- 6% are likely to get vaccinated
- 13% are not planning to get vaccinated, or remain unsure.

Across racial and ethnic groups, vaccine hesitancy (those not yet vaccinated and not inclined to get one) is most evident among Canadians who are Black (24%), Indigenous (17%) or from another racialized group (18%). Such reluctance is also somewhat more prevalent among Quebecers (16%), rural residents (18%), Canadians without a post-secondary degree (17%) and those with precarious incomes (21%). Among those not yet vaccinated, the incidence of hesitancy to get this done is comparable across age cohorts, except for being lower among the small proportion of Canadians ages 65 plus. Not surprisingly, vaccination hesitancy increases as concern about getting the virus declines.

Vaccination rate and intentions

2021 By racial group responding



Q.13
Have you received a vaccine to prevent COVID-19? (either one or two doses)

Q.14
[IF NO TO Q.13] Thinking about vaccines to prevent COVID-19, do you think you will...?

¹⁵ As of the time the survey was fielded in May-June 2021.

CONFIDENCE IN VACCINES. A key factor in public willingness to get vaccinated for COVID-19 is confidence in the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines, which have been developed in record time. Eight in ten Canadians say they have a great deal (33%) or a fair amount (48%) of confidence that the research and development process that produced COVID-19 vaccines is safe and effective.

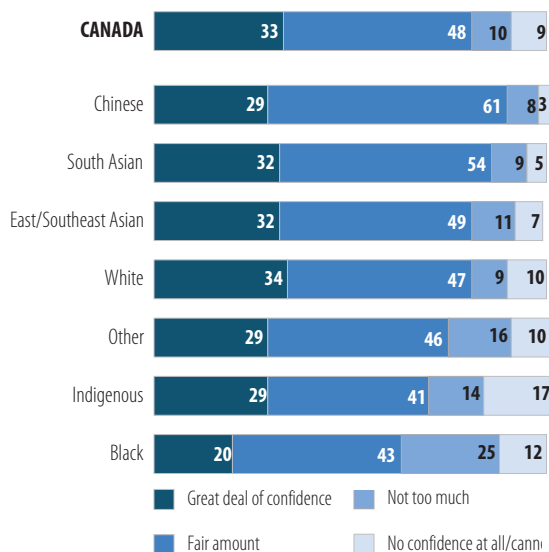
This level of confidence is comparable across much of the population, but is notably lower among Canadians who are Black (63%) or Métis (63%), as well as among Canadians who have precarious incomes (67%). Confidence in vaccines increases along with level of concern about contracting COVID-19.

Canadians' willingness to get vaccinated for COVID-19 is closely linked to their confidence in the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines. Reported vaccinations are reported by 84 percent of those who have a great deal of confidence in COVID-19 vaccines, compared with 32 percent who have not too much confidence, and only 10 percent among those with no confidence at all.

Among those not yet vaccinated, definite plans to do so are indicated by 19 percent who have a great deal of confidence in vaccines, compared with 10 percent among those with not too much confidence and zero percent with none at all. Among Canadians who say they will *definitely* not get vaccinated, 73 percent have no confidence at all in COVID-19 vaccines.

Confidence in the safety and effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines

2021 By racial group responding



Q.15

How much confidence, if any, do you have that the research and development process has produced COVID-19 vaccines that are safe and effective...?

Pandemic-related racial discrimination

Significant proportions of Chinese and East/Southeast Asian Canadians report having encountered racially-motivated mistreatment since the pandemic outbreak, but this is also a common experience for other racialized Canadians, notably Indigenous Peoples and those who are Black.

EXPERIENCES WITH PANDEMIC-RELATED

DISCRIMINATION. Because the evidence points to the COVID-19 virus originating in China, Canadians of Chinese or Asian descent are seen by some to be responsible for the pandemic and, as a result, are experiencing harassment. The survey examined this issue by asking Canadians if they have experienced each of four types of treatment from others since the COVID-19 outbreak because of their race or ethnicity. Three are negative forms of treatment (people feeling uncomfortable around you, being subjected to jokes or slurs, and fearing someone might threaten or physically harm you) and one is positive (someone expressing support).

Results show that Canadians who are Chinese, or East or Southeast Asian do in fact report much higher rates of each of the three negative types of pandemic-related

discrimination, but this is also equally the case among First Nations Peoples and those who are Black. By comparison, South Asians, Métis and other racialized groups are less apt to experience these forms of pandemic-related mistreatment, but do so well above that which is reported by white Canadians. Black people are the most likely to report incidences in which other people acted uncomfortable around them since the pandemic outbreak (35%).

On the positive side, it is Black (37%) and First Nations (33%) people who are the most likely to say that others have openly expressed support for them as a member of their race or ethnicity, since the pandemic began. This experience has also happened to Asian Canadians, but not noticeably more so than other groups.

These types of experiences (both negative and positive) are most commonly reported by younger Canadians and those who are first generation to the country (and especially newcomers). Responses to this question are generally consistent across region, gender, educational attainment and household income.

Treatment experienced since pandemic outbreak due to race/ethnicity

2021 By racial group responding

	White	Chinese	South Asian	East/SE Asian	First Nations	Métis	Black	Other
People acted as if they were uncomfortable around you	10	31	20	33	32	16	35	17
Been subject to slurs or jokes	8	26	18	26	29	16	17	16
Fearred some might threaten or physically attack you	5	24	12	24	22	8	13	13
Someone expressed support for you	19	18	20	26	33	22	37	21

Q.38a-d Please indicate whether or not each has happened to you since the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak because of your race or ethnicity?

Pandemic-related discrimination in the USA

These questions were drawn from a survey of Americans by the Pew Research Center in June 2020, with the results showing a similar pattern to that recorded in Canada one year later. Asian and Black Americans are most likely to experience negative pandemic-related discrimination, followed by Hispanics. Half of Black Americans report receiving support from others, likely resulting from the George Floyd murder in May 2020 and the resulting events.

	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic
People acted as if they were uncomfortable around you	13	39	38	27
Been subject to slurs or jokes	8	31	21	15
Feared some might threaten or physically attack you	9	26	20	10
Someone expressed support for you	18	28	51	29

PERCEPTIONS OF PANDEMIC-RELATED

DISCRIMINATION. Apart from the actual experiences of racialized Canadians stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, what is the broader public perception of this form of racism? The survey asked participants how common they think it is for people to express racist or racially-insensitive views about specific groups in Canada, compared to before the pandemic outbreak in March 2020.¹⁶

Of the eight racial and ethnic groups assessed, Canadians are most likely to believe that Chinese people are more likely than before to experience racial insensitivity since the pandemic outbreak began (59%), with fewer saying this is now more frequently happening to East or Southeast Asian (38%), and South Asian (26%) people. Majorities express the view that the pandemic has not affected the treatment of

Canadians who are Black, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, Latin American or white.

Chinese people are most likely to be seen as encountering greater racial insensitivity since the pandemic outbreak by residents of B.C. and Alberta, as well as those who are East or Southeast Asian. And likewise, it is Chinese participants who are most apt to say that East or Southeast Asian Canadians are now experiencing greater harassment than before. Southeast Asians are most likely to be seen as encountering more racism by both Chinese, and East or Southeast Asian survey participants. And across the population as a whole, women and Canadians ages 18 to 29 are among the most likely to believe that such mistreatment is occurring among all three Asian populations in this country.

Perceived change in racial mistreatment against [group] due to pandemic
2021 By racial group assessed

	Chinese people	East/SE Asian people	South Asian people	Black people	Indigenous Peoples	Middle Eastern people	White People	Latin American people
More common than before	59	38	26	15	14	14	11	6
About as common	21	38	48	60	60	58	57	61
Less common than before	7	9	9	12	10	11	10	12
Cannot say	13	16	17	14	15	17	21	20

Q.29

Compared to before the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak, how common do you think it is for people to express racist or racially insensitive views about each of the following groups in our society...?

¹⁶ Survey participants were not asked these questions with reference to their own racial or ethnic group.



Local policing

The killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer in May 2020 brought new scrutiny to how police operate in Canada as well as the USA, and in particular their treatment of racialized communities. There is extensive evidence of police mistreatment of Canadians, especially those who are Indigenous or Black, with several high-profile cases occurring over the past year. This issue warrants significant attention on its own, but there was space on this survey to examine it through a small number of questions.

Local police performance

Canadians are generally positive about the job being done by their local police, but Black and First Nations people are much less likely to share this view, especially in terms of how their own community is treated. Opinions are divided on whether one's local police requires incremental or fundamental change.

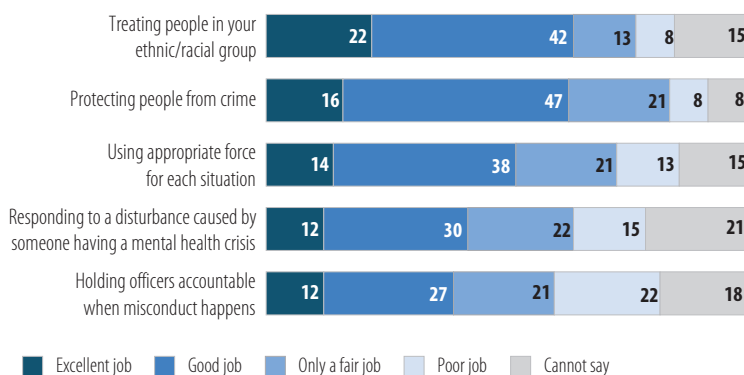
CURRENT POLICE PERFORMANCE. The survey asked Canadians how they would rate the performance of their local police force on each of five dimensions. The public overall is most positive about **how local police are treating people in their own ethnic or racial group**, with more than

six in ten saying they are doing an excellent (22%) or good (42%) job of this, compared with those who say only fair (13%) or poor (8%). Another one in five (15%) cannot offer an opinion.

Similar ratings are given to how local police are **protecting people from crime** (63% excellent or good, versus 29% only fair or poor). Canadians are somewhat less positive about how their local police are **using appropriate force for each situation** (52%, versus 34%); and least apt to express satisfaction with the job they are doing when it comes to **responding to a disturbance caused by someone having a mental health crisis** (42%, versus 37%) and **holding officers accountable when misconduct happens** (39%, versus 43%).

Opinions about local police performance vary noticeably across racial and ethnic groups, and most significantly in terms of how people feel their own group is being treated. White Canadians (73%) are the most apt to give police excellent or good ratings on this dimension, while this is much less likely to be the case for those who are Black (26%) or First Nations (33%), and is also lower among "other" racialized groups covered.

Performance of local police force 2021



Q.42
How would you rate the job police in your own community are doing when it comes to each of the following...?

A similar discrepancy is evident for other dimensions of police performance, with white Canadians the most positive, and Black and First Nations people the least so, most notably in the case of how the police use appropriate force for each situation. The one exception to this pattern is in how police respond to disturbances caused by someone having a mental health crisis; in this case, it is white and First Nations people who are the least apt to give excellent or good ratings.

Across the population, positive ratings on all dimensions of police performance are more common among Canadians 65 years and older, while least so among those ages 18 to 29 and those with precarious incomes. Ratings are generally similar between urban and rural residents, and across regions of the country (although Atlantic Canadians are the most positive about how police protect people from crime, and treat people in their ethnic or racial group).

Performance of local police force

2021 Excellent/good job By racial group responding

	White	Chinese	South Asian	East/SE Asian	Black	First Nations	Métis	Other
Treating people in your ethnic/racial group	73	49	48	57	26	33	44	42
Protecting people from crime	66	51	63	57	47	48	58	50
Using appropriate force for each situation	55	46	49	47	27	37	53	40
Responding to a disturbance caused by someone having a mental health crisis	44	28	47	38	28	35	44	34
Holding officers accountable when misconduct occurs	41	30	42	35	24	36	43	32

Q.42

How would you rate the job police in your own community are doing when it comes to each of the following ...?

HOW MUCH DO LOCAL POLICE NEED TO CHANGE?

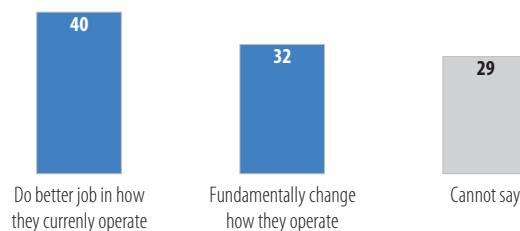
The recent focus on police conduct and mistreatment of racialized people has led some advocates to push for significant change in how policing is performed, including “defunding” some or all police budgets, and shifting resources to other types of community supports (e.g., to respond to mental health crises). This movement has not yet coalesced around concrete proposals at the national, provincial or local level in Canada, and so it is premature to expect the public to have formed clearly defined views.

The survey addressed the issue through a general question aimed at gauging Canadians’ opinion about whether they believe significant changes of some sort are called for. Specifically, survey participants were asked if, in order to properly serve the people in their community, the police in their local area either need to do a better job of how they currently operate, or need to fundamentally change the way they operate.¹⁷ Opinions on this question are divided, with a plurality (40%) saying local police need to improve how they current operate, compared with one-third (32%) who believe they need to fundamentally change. Three in ten (29%) cannot say either way.

A lack of consensus on this question about how police operate extends across the population, including among ethnic and racial groups. The balance of opinion tips toward incremental improvement over fundamental change among Canadians who are white (41%, versus 29%) or Chinese (45%,

How local police need to change

2021 Those not fully satisfied with police performance



Q.43

In order to properly serve the people in your community, do you think that your local area police need to do a better job of how they currently operate, or need to fundamentally change the way they operate, or you cannot say?

versus 30%), while the opposite is evident among those who are Black (37%, versus 43%), First Nations (37%, versus 46%) or South Asian (34%, versus 43%). Support for fundamental change is noticeably stronger among Canadians with precarious incomes (41%), compared with those who have more than enough (28%).¹⁸

Views on this issue are similar across the country, except in Quebec where there is greater support for incremental improvement (52%) over fundamental change (23%). Canadians ages 18 to 29 are more likely to advocate for fundamental reform (37%), while those ages 45 and older are among those most apt to offer no opinion.

How local police need to change

2021 By racial group responding

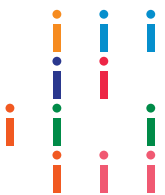
	White	Chinese	South Asian	East/SE Asian	Black	First Nations	Métis	Other
Do better job in how they currently operate	41	45	34	36	37	37	33	37
Fundamentally change how they operate	29	30	43	36	43	46	36	36
Cannot say	31	26	23	28	20	17	31	27

Q.43

In order to properly serve the people in your community, do you think that your local area police need to do a better job of how they currently operate, or need to fundamentally change the way they operate, or you cannot say?

¹⁷ This question was not posed to those participants who gave only excellent or good ratings for local police performance on all five dimensions presented in the previous question (which encompassed 21% of the full sample). It was assumed that these participants would be unlikely to see the need for any changes to current local police performance.

¹⁸ Note that this difference in opinion does not appear across levels of household income. This provides an example of how overall income (in dollar terms) and the adequacy of one’s income are not the same thing.



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