



# Race relations in Canada **2019**

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 is Canada's leading organization dedicated to the elimination of racism and the promotion of harmonious race relations. Its underlying principle in addressing racism and racial discrimination emphasizes positive race relations and the promotion of shared Canadian values of human rights and democratic institutions. It strives to coordinate and cooperate with all sectors of society, and develop partnerships with relevant agencies and organizations at the local, provincial and national levels.

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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.

**For more information about this study, contact:**

**Keith Neuman, Ph.D.**

The Environics Institute for Survey Research

[keith.neuman@environics.ca](mailto:keith.neuman@environics.ca)

The study partners would like to acknowledge the generous support provided to the study launch by **RBC WEALTH MANAGEMENT**



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# Introduction

## Background

Canada is one of the most ethnically and racially diverse societies on the planet, and steadily becoming more so over time. More than four in ten Canadians are now first or second generation; and, in some parts of the country, those once labelled as “visible minority” are now the majority. Indigenous Peoples, at one point in time greatly reduced in numbers due to colonization and disease, are now among the fastest growing segments of the population.

Canada’s past included significant tensions between ethnic and racial groups, along with systemic discrimination and, in the case of Indigenous Peoples, cultural genocide. Today the country is seen by many as a model of multicultural harmony in relation to other parts of the world where ethnic and racial strife is on the rise. In comparison to most other western nations, immigrants and refugees have not become a flashpoint of ethnic and political conflict, and many Canadians see their country’s multicultural diversity as a defining symbol of national identity.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, racism and discrimination remain an underlying reality in Canada. People with racialized identities and backgrounds face ongoing challenges, both at a personal and an institutional level.<sup>2</sup> The state of race relations in Canada today is not a single story. Some see an uplifting story of dramatic changes 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 an urgent need to address 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. What is also needed to better understand and address these realities is empirically-based evidence about the current situation and how relations between racial groups are evolving over time. This includes quantifiable measures of the perspectives and experiences of Canadians, both racialized and not.

## Race Relations in Canada 2019 Survey

The Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, conducted a social research study to address this evidence gap; the first ever in Canada to do so in a comprehensive way. The Race Relations in Canada 2019 Survey establishes new benchmark indicators of race relations across Canada from the perspective of its citizens, and provides the foundation for monitoring progress over time. The primary focus of this research is on public attitudes, perceptions and experiences as they pertain to relevant dimensions of race relations.

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

The research is national in scope, and includes significant oversamples of the country’s largest racial groups (i.e., Chinese, Black, South Asian and Indigenous Peoples) in order to measure perspectives and experiences of both racialized and non-racialized Canadians.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Environics Institute Focus Canada Spring 2019. <https://www.environicsinstitute.org/projects/project-details/canadian-public-opinion-on-immigration-and-refugees---focus-canada-spring-2019>

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of the lived experience and challenges faced by Muslims, Indigenous Peoples and Black people in Canada has been documented in previous Environics Institute studies (see [www.environicsinstitute.org](http://www.environicsinstitute.org)).

<sup>3</sup> There is no consensus in Canada about whether Indigenous Peoples constitute a racial group as the term is generally applied. They are included in this research because Indigenous Peoples experience systemic discrimination commensurate with that of other racialized groups in Canadian society, with this treatment often labelled as “racism.”

This study is the first of its kind in Canada to focus on the respective perspectives and experiences of the country's major racial groups at a national level. The research is inspired by "reconciliation barometer" studies that have been conducted on a regular basis in South Africa and Australia (this research focuses on the relations between Indigenous and settler populations).<sup>4</sup> In the USA, much of the survey research on race relations has focused on comparing the attitudes of white and black Americans, with more recently inclusion of other ethnic groups such as Hispanics and Asians.<sup>5</sup>

This research consisted of a survey conducted online between April 17 and May 6, 2019, with a sample of 3,111 Canadians ages 18 and over. The sample was stratified to ensure representation by province, age and gender, according to the most current population statistics (2016 Census). In addition, over-samples were collected with individuals who self-identify as Chinese, Black, South Asian or Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (the four largest racialized populations in Canada), in order to provide for sufficient representation of each group for analysis.<sup>6</sup> 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 between racialized and non-racialized Canadians, as well as by selected population characteristics (e.g., region, gender, age cohort). The report also draws comparisons with the opinions and experiences of Americans, based on research conducted by the Pew Research Center.

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](http://www.environicsinstitute.org)). All results are presented as percentages unless otherwise noted.

**Note about terminology.** The term "race" is problematic from a number of perspectives, in part because there is no consensus on exactly what it refers to. The term is widely used in the context of relations between people from different backgrounds and physical characteristics (e.g., culture, ethnicity, religion, history and skin colour), and as a way to define segments of society facing systematic challenges (racialized people).<sup>7</sup> In this report, the terms "race" and "race relations" are used for purposes of editorial clarity, with full acknowledgement of the limitations they entail.

## Acknowledgements

This research was made possible with the support from a number of individuals and organizations. The Environics Institute would like to acknowledge the financial and substantive contributions of its lead partner, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (Lilian Ma, Praan Misir, Suvaka Priyatharsan); Professor Jeffrey Reitz (University of Toronto), who served as a project advisor; the research team at Maru/Blue (Chris Andaya, Michael Theophile-Uruena), who managed the sample design and fieldwork; and, finally, the 3,111 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.

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<sup>4</sup> See South African Reconciliation Barometer: <https://www.ijr.org.za/portfolio-items/south-african-reconciliation-barometer-survey-2017-report/>; Australian Reconciliation Barometer: [https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/final\\_full\\_arb-full-report-2018.pdf](https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/final_full_arb-full-report-2018.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> An important survey on Discrimination in America was conducted in 2017 by National Public Radio, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard T.H.Chan School of Public Health, which expands the focus to Native Americans: <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2017/10/discrimination-in-america--experiences-and-views.html>

<sup>6</sup> The survey also includes individuals from a range of other racial groups, but none of these groups are sufficiently represented in the sample to support group-specific analysis. These respondents as a group are identified as "other" racialized Canadians.

<sup>7</sup> A relevant definitional statement about race has been published by the American Anthropological Association <https://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>



## Executive summary

How do Canadians view and experience relations between racial groups in their country today? At the broadest level, public opinion about the state of race relations is more positive than negative, both in terms of how groups are seen to get along and in the equality of opportunities for people with different racial backgrounds. Many (but not all) see evidence of improvement, and Canadians are generally optimistic about further progress over time. Perspectives on the broad picture vary somewhat by racial background, with racialized people (most notably Indigenous Peoples and Black people) less positive about the state of relations in comparison with those who are white; however, these differences are in many cases a matter of degree rather than a substantively different point of view.

At the same time, there is widespread recognition that racism is a reality in Canada, and something that is directly experienced by a significant proportion of the population. Among the groups studied, Indigenous Peoples and Black people are the most likely to report experiences of racial discrimination (in comparison with Chinese, South Asians and other racialized people), and they are also the groups most widely understood by others to experience such treatment (especially in the case of Indigenous Peoples as targets of racism).

The following are key conclusions from the research.

### State of race relations in Canada

As a whole, Canadians believe that race relations in their country are generally good, both in terms of how well people from different races get along with one another and the extent to which people from all races have equal opportunities to succeed in life. In terms of how race relations have changed over the past decade, the public is more likely to see progress than setbacks; although a plurality believes conditions have changed little over this period. Views are noticeably more positive when the focus is placed on race relations in one's own local community compared with the country as a whole.

Two-thirds of Canadians believe that race relations in their country are generally better than that in the USA, and indeed Americans themselves are mostly negative in their assessment; just four in ten Americans describe current race relations in their country as generally good, and a majority says they have gotten worse over the past 10 years.

At the same time, perspectives on race relations are not equally positive across racial groups. Indigenous Peoples (especially First Nations) are noticeably less likely than others to see race relations as good or having improved over time, and to believe Canada compares favourably to the USA, while Black Canadians are also less positive about people from all races having an equal chance to succeed in life. By comparison, Chinese and South Asian Canadians tend to be the most positive about current race relations. Apart from racial background, opinions about race relations are also linked to one's socio-economic status, with positive views rising along with education level and household income.

Looking to the future, Canadians as a whole are generally optimistic that progress toward racial equality will happen in their lifetime. On this question, South Asians are the most optimistic and Black people the least so, but these differences across racial groups are relatively small. More notably, strong optimism about future progress toward racial equality is most evident among Canadians 18 to 29 years of age, Indigenous Peoples, and those born in another country. Racialized Canadians expect the future will mean less rather than more racism for the next generation of people with their own background, although many do not believe there will be much change from the status quo.

### Attitudes toward people of other racial groups

Canada is a multicultural and multi-racial country, with more than one in five people categorized by Statistics Canada as "visible minority" (or racialized). A large proportion of the population has frequent contact with people from different racial backgrounds, and this is especially so for individuals

from who are racialized (i.e., having contact with those who are non-racialized). Beyond contact, however, Canadians generally describe such interactions as somewhat if not very friendly. As well, most Canadians have friendships that cross racial and cultural lines, with eight in ten reporting to have at least one friend from a different racial or cultural background.

The survey examined Canadians' attitudes toward each of the country's four largest racialized populations, and results reveal a mix of favourable and unfavourable opinions along a continuum of "modern racism"; this term refers to people's general attitude or sentiment about the treatment of specific racial groups in Canadian society, focusing on the perceived validity of their experiences of discrimination due to race and whether they are receiving more than they deserve (e.g., special consideration, government benefits).<sup>8</sup> Among the four groups, Indigenous Peoples are most likely to be seen as experiencing discrimination and obstacles (that is, least apt to attract modern racist sentiment), followed by Black people, with South Asian and Chinese Canadians less apt to be considered to experience racism.

Across racial groups, Black Canadians stand out as being the most attuned to the experience of other racialized groups in the country (i.e., thereby expressing low levels of modern racism), especially when considering Indigenous Peoples. This perspective may be the result of ongoing experience with anti-Black racism. In comparison, the attitudes of other racial groups toward one another are more variable. None of the other groups (including racialized and white Canadians) stand out as being higher than average when it comes to expressing views that manifest as modern racism.

## Racial discrimination in Canada

The reality of racial discrimination in Canada is widely acknowledged, although not by everyone. Just six in ten can identify at least one group whom they believe are targeted for discrimination due to race, with no group mentioned by as many as one in four, while the remaining four in ten respondents cannot name any. The racial groups most commonly identified as affected include Indigenous or Aboriginal Peoples, Black or African people, and Muslims or people from the Middle East. Perceptions on this question do

not vary noticeably by respondents' own racial background, although Indigenous and Black people are much more likely than others to name their own group.

Among Canadians as a whole, Indigenous Peoples are most widely seen as experiencing frequent discrimination in society today, followed by Black people and South Asians, with few placing Chinese Canadians in this category. Black people and Canadians ages 18 to 29 are the most sensitized to racism against other groups in society, while ongoing discrimination directed at Black people is most apt to be recognized by other racialized groups, and especially First Nations people.

Canadians are more likely to see racial discrimination to be a function of the prejudiced attitudes and actions of individuals rather than the systemic foundation of the country's laws and institutions; and this is regardless of whether the target is Indigenous, Black, South Asian or Chinese. Moreover, this perspective is largely the same across the population and racial groups, although younger Canadians are more apt to see both causes as equally problematic, and First Nations respondents are more likely than others to believe that Black people in Canada experience systemic racism. At the same time, many Canadians also recognize that racialized persons are systematically treated less fairly than whites in a number of settings, such as accessing medical services, in stores and restaurants, and in the criminal justice system.

In terms of racism directed at one's own group, large majorities of Indigenous Peoples (especially First Nations) and Black people say their own group experiences ongoing discrimination and unfair treatment in Canada today, and also are most likely to believe that this treatment has a significant negative impact on people they are close to. Identification of one's own group as the target of racism is somewhat less widespread among those who are South Asian, Chinese or from other racialized backgrounds. In comparison, very few white Canadians believe their racial group often encounters racism, although a significant proportion maintains it happens sometimes or rarely (reflecting, for example, the experiences of people who are Jewish).

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<sup>8</sup> Modern racism is defined as a more contemporary and subtle form of prejudice that focuses on racialized people as a group rather than as individuals, and looks more at their place in society than at individual characteristics.

Perceptions and knowledge about racism are based in part on seeing it happen to other people. A significant proportion of racialized Canadians (and especially Indigenous and Black people) report having witnessed the discrimination of others due to their race, including people of their own racial background as well as those with other backgrounds. Such observations have taken place in a range of settings, most commonly on the street, on public transit, in stores and restaurants, and in the workplace.

## **Personal experience with discrimination and racism**

Discrimination due to one's race is a common experience in Canada, with one in five Canadians having experienced this regularly or from time to time, and another three in ten indicating it has taken place, but only very rarely. Not surprisingly, such treatment is most widely reported by Indigenous and Black people, to a lesser extent among other racialized groups, and even by four in ten white Canadians who say this has happened to them if only on rare occasions. These differences in the likelihood of reporting discrimination across racial groups is evident in a number of settings, but is most apparent in situations involving the police and in the workplace.

Racial discrimination also takes the form of day-to-day experiences involving subtle slights or insults (e.g., micro-aggressions), such as being treated as not smart, as suspicious, mistaken for someone who serves others, or ignored when requesting services. Such experiences are reported by individuals from all racial groups, but most commonly by Indigenous Peoples (especially in the case of being unfairly stopped by police) and Black people (not being treated as smart, others acting as if you are suspicious), and to a lesser extent by South Asians and people of "other" racial backgrounds. Younger Canadians, regardless of race, are more likely than older ones to report experiencing all forms of negative day-to-day experiences.

Canadians who experience racial discrimination are affected in different ways; some report they are bothered quite a bit and others insist not at all. Negative impacts are most likely to be reported by Black people, as well as by women, younger people, and those who are experiencing financial insecurity. Racialized Canadians are more likely than not to say their race or ethnicity has made it more difficult for them to succeed in life, and this is most commonly reported by Black people. 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 Indigenous Peoples.





# State of race relations in Canada

The survey explored Canadians' views about the state of race relations in the country today and in the future, including two dimensions: how well people from different races get along, and the extent to which people from all backgrounds have an equal opportunity to succeed. This section also addresses how Canadians believe race relations in Canada compares with that in the USA.

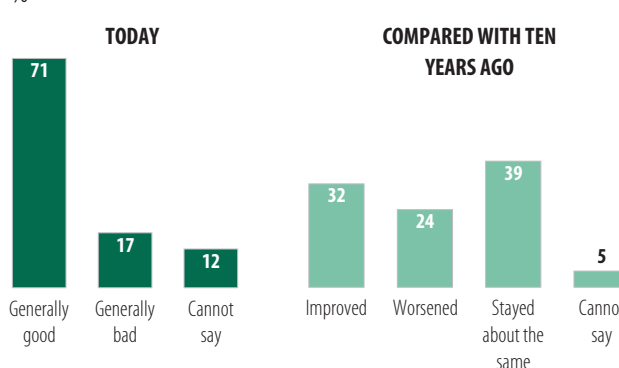
## How well people from different backgrounds get along

Most Canadians believe that people from different racial groups generally get along, although this view is less apt to be shared by Indigenous Peoples and those with lower socio-economic status. Opinion is divided on whether relations between races have been improving or worsening.

**CURRENT STATE OF RACE RELATIONS.** Seven in ten (71%) Canadians say that race relations in Canada today are generally good in terms of *how well people from different races get along with each other*, compared with just 17 percent who describe such relations as generally bad, and another 12 percent who cannot say either way. Across the country, a majority expresses a positive perspective on how well different groups get along, but not to the same degree across all groups. This view is most evident among residents of B.C. and Atlantic Canada (76% each), as well as among Canadians who are Chinese (77%) or South Asian (81%); and least apt to be shared by residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (60%), and by Indigenous Peoples (56%, and notably First Nations (52% versus 38% who say relations are generally bad)). The perspective of Black Canadians on this question is at the national average (72% positive versus 16% negative).

Perceptions of how well people from different groups get along are strongly linked to socio-economic circumstances. Canadians who describe race relations as generally good are much more likely to have higher levels of education and income (81% among those with household incomes of \$100K or more, compared with only 61% among those earning less than \$30K).

## How well people from different races get along in Canada



Q.6  
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?  
Q.7  
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?

**HOW RACE RELATIONS HAVE CHANGED.** When asked how this aspect of race relations has changed over the past 10 years, opinions are mixed. One-third (32%) of Canadians say that relations have improved in terms of how different racial groups get along, compared with one-quarter (24%) who believe they have worsened, while a plurality (39%) maintains it has stayed about the same.

Those most likely to see improvement include Atlantic Canadians (39%), those ages 18 to 29 (44%), South Asians (44%) and those in the top income bracket (39%). By comparison, a worsening trend is most apt to be seen by residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (31%), and Indigenous Peoples (30%, notably Métis (36%)). As might be expected, improvement is most widely seen among those who believe different racial groups currently get along well (42% versus 10% of this group who sees relations as having deteriorated), in contrast with those who feel relations are generally bad (16% versus 57%). Across age groups, Canadians ages 18 to 29 are more likely than older cohorts to say that relations between races have improved over time (44% versus 28% among those ages 45 and older).

Those who say that race relations *have improved* were asked to specify (unprompted) in what ways things are getting better in terms of how people from different racial groups get along. This group is most likely to see improvement in terms of there being more openness and acceptance in Canadian society (e.g., less racism and discrimination, more open-mindedness, greater respect for differences) (38%).

Others point to increasing racial diversity and interaction (16%), and education and communications initiatives (12%). More than one-third (36%) of this group, however, are unable to offer any specific response.

Those who believe that race relations *have worsened* over the past decade are most likely to attribute this to increased discrimination and racism (e.g., increased tensions, Islamophobia, lower tolerance) (28%), while others point to the growing number of immigrants and their lack of integration into Canadian society (19%), and populism and right-wing ideologies (18%). Less apt to be mentioned are conflict over religion and secularism (6%), mass media (4%) and social media (4%). One-fifth (22%) of this group do not provide any response to the question.

**In what ways have race relations changed in Canada?**

% Unprompted responses

HOW IMPROVED?		HOW WORSENE?	
More openness/ acceptance	38	More discrimination/ racism/less tolerance	31
Greater diversity/ more interaction	16	Too many immigrants/ lack of integration	19
Education/awareness initiatives	12	Populism/right-wing ideologies	18
Other	9	Media/social media	8
Cannot say	36	Conflict over religion	6
		Other	12
		Cannot say	22

Q.8  
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?

Two-thirds say that people from all races have equal opportunities to succeed in life, with this view largely shared by those who also believe racial groups in Canada get along. Indigenous Peoples are least likely to share this perspective, along with Black people and those without a high school diploma.

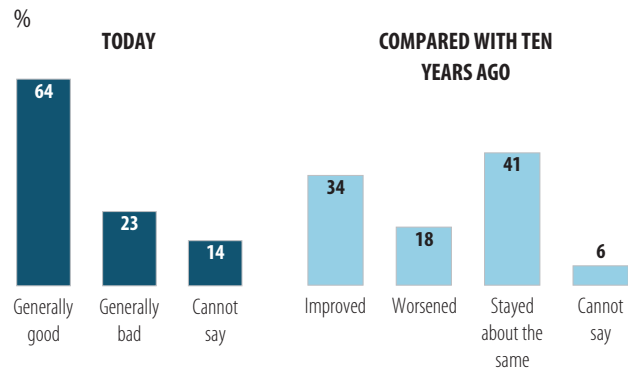
**CURRENT STATE OF RACE RELATIONS.** How do Canadians view the current state of race relations in the country in terms of *people from all racial backgrounds having an equal chance to succeed in life*? Opinions are similar but slightly less positive than in the case of different races getting along: two-thirds (64%) describe equal opportunities among races to be generally good, compared with 23 percent saying chances are generally bad, and another 14 percent who do not offer a response to the question. Opinions about equal opportunities are largely in line with those about races getting along, with 72 percent of Canadians giving the same response on both questions.

As with views about how well races get along in Canada, a positive assessment about equal opportunities afforded to all races is most apt to be expressed by those who are Chinese (69%) or South Asian (70%), as well as among those in the top income bracket (71%), and those who are 65 and older (68%). This view is least apt to be shared by residents in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (55%), and among Indigenous Peoples (48% versus 40% who say such opportunities are generally bad) and Black people (55% positive, versus 29% negative), as well as by those who do not have a high school diploma (52%) and/or earn less than \$30K (54%).

**HOW RACE RELATIONS HAVE CHANGED.** As with perspectives about different racial groups getting along, there is no consensus among Canadians about how opportunities for success by race have changed over time, although the balance of opinion is in the positive direction. One-third (34%) believe that opportunities have improved over the past decade, compared with fewer than one in five (18%) who say they have worsened, while a plurality (41%) maintains they have stayed about the same. On this question, the differences in opinion across groups are somewhat less noticeable, although a positive view is most evident among South Asians (48%).

Those who say that opportunities for all racial groups to succeed in life *have improved* over the past decade give

### Race relations in Canada: Equal chance for all races to succeed in life



Q.9

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?

Q.10

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?

a number of reasons for this assessment, including the country's growing multiculturalism and diversity (e.g., in professions, generally in society) (18%), better opportunities in the workplace (18%), more acceptance and inclusiveness generally (12%), greater awareness (12%), and new programs and policies (e.g., training initiatives, laws against racism) (7%). One-third (35%) of this group do not provide any specific response to the question.

The smaller proportion who believe such opportunities *are now worse* than before are most apt to say this is because they see more discrimination and racism in Canadian society (25%), "reverse" discrimination (e.g., against white people) (14%), populism and right-wing ideology (13%), too many immigrants in the country (12%), and economic/workplace obstacles (e.g., credentials not being accepted, and language barriers) (8%). Three in ten (29%) in this group do not offer a response to the question.

## Race relations in comparison with the USA

A clear majority of Canadians believe race relations in their country today are generally better than in the USA; but not everyone agrees, notably Indigenous Peoples and those with less education and income.

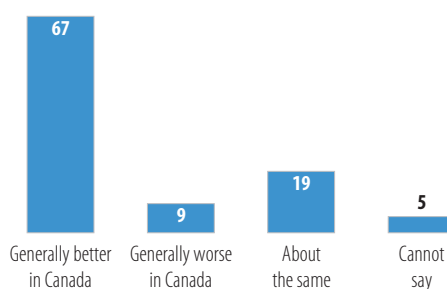
The survey asked how race relations in Canada compare with the situation in the USA, where racial tensions have been a deep-seated part of that country's history and culture. Most, but not all, Canadians (67%) express the view that race relations in Canada are generally better than in the USA; one in ten (9%) maintains race relations in Canada are worse, while one in five (19%) believes relations in the two countries are about the same.<sup>9</sup>

Views on this question are broadly similar across much of the country, although a positive comparison is most evident in B.C. (74% say relations are better in Canada) and least so in Alberta (67%). Opinions are also similar across racial groups, but are noticeably less positive among Indigenous Peoples (with just over half saying race relations are better in Canada).

The biggest divergence occurs along socio-economic lines, and especially by education level: three-quarters (75%) of university-educated Canadians say that Canada has better race relations than the USA, compared with only 42 percent among those who do not have a high school diploma (among this latter group, 19% say race relations in Canada are worse, while the balance maintains they are about the same (29%) of have no opinion (10%).

Opinions do not vary much by gender, age, or between urban and rural residents. Views are broadly similar across racial groups, but with a positive comparison least evident among Indigenous Peoples (56%, versus those who say relations are the same (20%) or worse (20%) in Canada).

Race relations in Canada compared with the USA  
%



Q.12

Would you say that race relations in Canada is generally better, generally worse, or about the same as in the USA today?

<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that the history and context of race relations is different in the two countries. In the US, it has always been primarily about relations between black and white Americans, while in Canada the issue is more widely focused on relations between white people and those from a broader range of racialized groups (often referred to as “visible minorities”).

## How Americans view race relations in their country

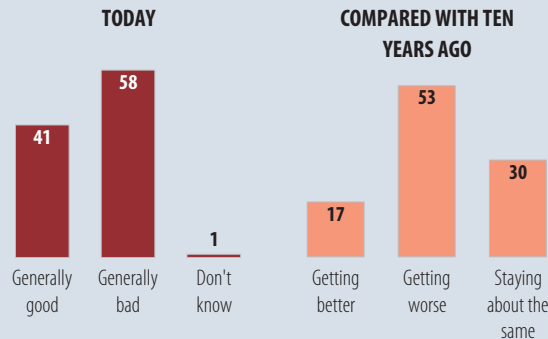
A recent survey by the Pew Research Center provides valuable insights into how Americans view race relations in their country. This survey reveals that opinions are much more likely to be negative than positive, and have become more so in the past several years. The survey (conducted in January and February 2019) shows that four in ten (41%) Americans describe race relations in their country as generally good, compared with almost six in ten (58%) who say they are generally bad. Not surprisingly, race relations are more likely to be described as generally good by white Americans (44%) than by those who are Black (27%) or Hispanic (37%).

This question has been covered on a number of U.S. surveys stretching back to 1990s, with the trend showing considerable fluctuation over time. In 2015, only 37 percent of Americans considered race relations to be generally good, while in 2012 the percentage was 62 percent (versus 30% who described relations as generally bad).

How do Americans think race relations are changing over time? Just one in six (17%) now believes race relations are getting better (and only 12% among Blacks), with just over half (53%) saying they are getting worse, and another 30 percent saying staying about the same. This reflects a downward trend when compared with results from 2016, when only 38 percent of Americans said that race relations in their country were getting worse.

### Race relations in the United States\*

% Americans



\* Source: Pew Research Center, January- February 2019

## Race relations in one's own community

In comparison with their view of the country as a whole, Canadians are much more positive about the current state of race relations in the community where they live, both in terms of how well different races get along and the opportunities for everyone to succeed in life.

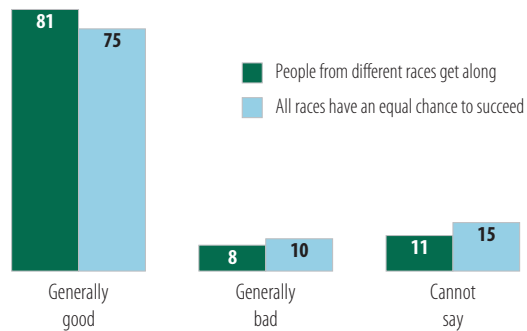
When Canadians are asked to describe the state of race relations in the community where they live, they are noticeably more positive than when thinking about the country as a whole. Eight in ten (81%) say that relations are generally good when it comes to **how well people from different races get along**, compared with only eight percent who believe relations are generally bad, and another 11 percent who cannot say either way.

Similarly, three-quarters (75%) believe race relations in their community are generally good as it pertains to **how well people from all racial backgrounds have an equal chance to succeed in life**, versus 10 percent who hold a negative view and another 15 percent who do not provide a response.

On both measures, opinions on this question are generally similar across the population. Positive views are somewhat less prevalent in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, among Indigenous Peoples and Black individuals, and among those with the least education and income; but in each case still reflects a strong majority perspective, with no more than one in four articulating the negative perspective.

### Race relations in your own community

%



Q.13a,b

How would you describe the state of race relations in the community where you live in terms of: a) How well people from different races get along? b) How well people from all racial backgrounds have an equal chance to succeed in life?

## Future of race relations in Canada

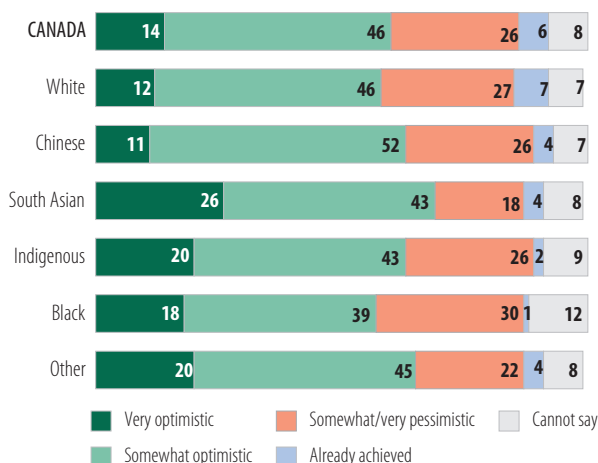
Canadians are generally optimistic that progress toward racial equality will happen in their lifetime, and this perspective is largely shared across racial and cultural groups. At the same time, some racialized groups expect their next generation will face more discrimination in the future.

**OPTIMISM ABOUT ACHIEVING RACIAL EQUALITY IN THE FUTURE.** How do Canadians view the future of race relations in terms of progress toward racial equality? Six in ten say they are very (14%) or somewhat (46%) optimistic that all racialized people in Canada will be treated with the same respect as other people, in their lifetime. One in four is somewhat (20%) or very (6%) pessimistic about this outcome, while the remainder say either that such equality already exists (6%) or do not offer a response to the question (8%).

Opinions on this question are largely consistent across the population, and most notably across racial groups. South Asians are the most positive (69% are optimistic about such progress in their lifetime), but other differences are relatively small: Indigenous Peoples are more likely than average to say they are very optimistic (20%), while Black individuals are only marginally more pessimistic than other groups (30%). Across demographic strata, optimism is somewhat stronger among younger Canadians, those with higher incomes, and those who are first generation in the country. The strongest predictor of optimism about the future is opinions about the current state of race relations (both how people get along and equal opportunities for success).

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

% By group responding



Q.36

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?

**HOW THE NEXT GENERATION WILL BE TREATED IN SOCIETY.**

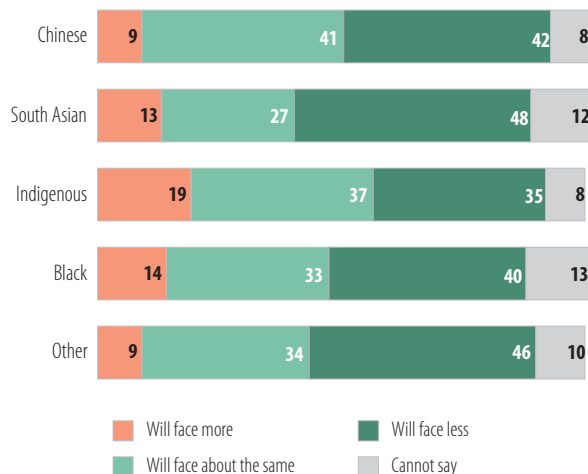
The survey also asked Canadians who are not white about how they think the next generation of people with their own racial or cultural background is likely to be treated in society in terms of discrimination and stereotyping. Overall, the expectation is that the next generation will experience less racism (40%) than more so (14%), but a significant proportion believe it will remain about the same as it is today (35%) or cannot say (10%).

Responses to this question vary somewhat, but not significantly by group. Indigenous Peoples are most likely to say their next generation will face more discrimination and stereotyping (19%), followed by Black individuals (14%) and South Asians (13%), but significant minorities in each case also believe that such treatment will decline (especially South Asians).

Across all racialized groups, there is a notable difference in perspective across age cohorts. Canadians ages 18 to 29 are more likely than older generations to anticipate either more discrimination in the future (18%) or less of it (45%). By comparison, few (7%) racialized Canadians ages 65 and older believe the next generation of their race or culture will face more discrimination and stereotyping compared to today, with most anticipating it will remain the same (40%) or diminish (41%). Finally, the expectation of better treatment for the next generation increases with education and income.

**How next generation in your group will experience racism**

% By group responding



Q.37

*[IF NOT WHITE] Do you believe the next generation of people with your own racial or cultural background will face more, face less, or face about the same level of discrimination and stereotyping as they do today?*

## How Americans view the future of race relations in their country

The 2019 Pew Research Center survey provides valuable insight into how Americans view the future of race relations, with specific reference to equal rights for Black and whites in that country. When asked about the progress made to date in giving Black people equal rights with whites, the survey found that 45 percent of Americans say the country has not gone far enough, compared with 15 percent who believe it has gone too far, and another 39 percent who feel it has been about right. The survey also reveals a significant gap in perspectives across racial lines: Blacks (78%) are twice as likely as whites (38%) to say that more progress is needed, with Hispanics (48%) somewhere in between.

Among the 45 percent who say that more progress is needed to give Black people equal rights with whites, there is modest optimism that this goal will eventually be achieved. Two thirds say it is very (19%) or somewhat (46%) likely to happen, compared with one in three who believes this is somewhat (28%) or very (7%) unlikely. Again, there is a wide gulf by race, with Blacks (35%) much less likely than those who are white (79%) or Hispanic (54%) to believe such racial equality is very or somewhat likely to be achieved.





# Attitudes toward other racial groups

The survey examined Canadians’ contact with, and attitudes about, people with racial and cultural backgrounds other than their own, with a focus on the four largest racialized groups in the country (Chinese, South Asian, Indigenous and Black).

## Personal experience with other groups

Regular contact with people of different racial and cultural groups is a common experience for most Canadians, especially those from racial minorities. Most report such interactions are friendly, and eight in ten say they have friends with racial/cultural backgrounds different from their own.

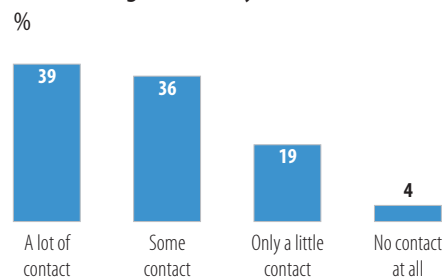
**FREQUENCY OF CONTACT WITH PEOPLE FROM OTHER RACIAL/CULTURAL GROUPS.** Canada is a multicultural society. More than four in ten Canadians are first or second generation in the country and more than one-fifth are classified by Statistics Canada as belonging to a “visible minority” group. So it is not surprising that a large proportion of the population comes into contact with people from different backgrounds.

The survey reveals that three in four Canadians say they have a lot of contact (39%) or some contact (36%) with people who have a different racial or cultural background than their own. Fewer than one in four says he or she has only a little (19%) or no (4%) such contact.

Because racialized groups are in the minority, they are most frequently in contact with people who are different, and this is confirmed in the survey findings. Having “a lot of contact” is most widely reported by individuals who are Black (69%), South Asian (59%) or part of another racialized group (60%), followed by Chinese (47%), Indigenous Peoples (46%), and finally those who identify as white (32%; 28% of whom say they have little or no contact with people who are different).

Frequent contact with people from different racial/cultural groups is also more widely reported by residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (46%), by urban dwellers

## Frequency of contact with people of different racial backgrounds to your own



Q.15  
*In your daily life, how much contact do you, personally, have with people who have a different racial background than your own?*

(46% versus 26% of rural residents), Canadians ages 18 to 29 (46% versus 24% of those ages 65 plus), and those with higher levels of education and income. Notably, such contact appears to have only a minimal impact on Canadians’ opinions about the current state of race relations or prospects for racial equality in the future.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Other research by the Environics Institute and others suggests that opinions about people who are different improve with more frequent contact. This survey suggests that such contact does not improve Canadians’ views about the general state of race relations in society.

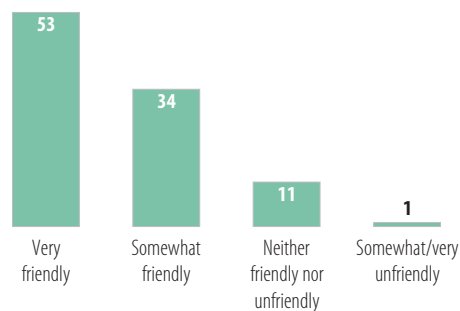
## NATURE OF INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS.

Apart from having contact with people who are different, what is the quality of these interactions? For most Canadians, the experience is positive, at least superficially. Among those who report any level of contact with people of different racial or cultural backgrounds, almost nine in ten say these interaction are very (53%) or somewhat (34%) friendly, with almost all of the remainder (11%) describing such encounters as neither friendly nor unfriendly.

This experience is largely the same across the population, with at least 80 percent in every identifiable group describing such interactions as somewhat if not very friendly. What varies is the proportion that describes the contact as “very friendly”, with this dynamic most commonly reported by Atlantic Canadians (68%), South Asians (58%), Métis (60%), and those with a university education (59%) and incomes in the top bracket (62%).

Very friendly (versus “somewhat” friendly) contact with people of a different racial/cultural background is least apt to be mentioned by Quebecers (45%), Chinese (42%) and First Nations people (37%), those without a high school diploma (43%) and those in the lowest income bracket (45%); in none of these groups, however, do more than five percent describe their encounters as unfriendly. Canadians who have frequent contact with people of backgrounds different from their own are more likely to describe the interactions as very friendly (66%), compared with those who have some (44%) or only a little (39%) contact.

Nature of interactions with people of different race %



Q.16

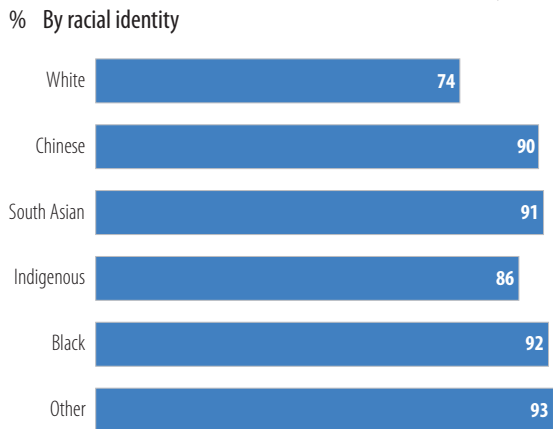
[IF HAVE ANY CONTACT] And, in general, would you say the interactions you have with people with a different racial background than yours is friendly or unfriendly?

**FRIENDSHIPS WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER RACES AND CULTURES.**

Beyond contact and friendly interactions, most Canadians also have friendships that cross racial and cultural lines. Eight in ten (79%) say they have one or more friends from racial groups different from their own.

Such friendships are the norm across most of the country, although somewhat less so among white Canadians (74%), Quebecers (65%), Canadians ages 65 plus (73%) and those with no post-secondary education (71%).

**Have friends from racial groups different from your own**



Q.17  
Do you have friends from racial groups different from your own?

**Americans’ contact with people of other races**

The Pew Research Center conducted a survey of Americans in 2016, which included comparable questions about contact with people from another race and the nature of these interactions. Similar to the Canadian results presented here, a large majority of Americans reported to have a lot of contact (42%) or some contact (31%) with people of a different race (in this case defined as white, Black or Hispanic). Frequent contact is much more commonly reported by Blacks (66%) than by those who are white (38%) or Hispanic (35%, of whom another 40% say they have only a little or no contact with people who are white or Black).

Like Canadians, most Americans who report any level of contact with people of another race describe these interactions in positive terms. More than nine in ten describe such contact as very (66%) or somewhat (28%) friendly, with only four percent describing them as unfriendly. Whites (70%) are noticeably more likely than Blacks (50%) to describe such interactions as *very friendly*, with the perceptions of Hispanics falling in between (60%).

## Attitudes about other racial and cultural groups

Canadians as a whole are most likely to perceive as valid the racial discrimination experienced by Indigenous Peoples, followed by that of Black people; while this sentiment is least evident when it comes to Chinese and South Asians. Black respondents are the most sympathetic toward other groups.

The survey probed Canadians' attitudes about racialized people, focusing on the four largest groups by population (Chinese, South Asians, Indigenous Peoples and Black people). Some of the questions were drawn from the research literature on "symbolic" or "modern" racism. This form of prejudice is generally defined as a more contemporary and subtle form of racism that focuses on racialized people as a group rather than as individuals, and looks more at their place in society than at individual characteristics. The term "symbolic racism" was coined by David Sears and John McConahay in 1973 to explain why most white Americans supported principles of equality for black Americans, but less than half were willing to support programs designed to implement these principles.<sup>11</sup>

The survey included six questions with specific reference to one of the four racialized groups, measuring different aspects of how the group is seen to be treated in Canadian society today, plus a seventh question that was not group-specific.<sup>12</sup> The results reveal that Canadians as whole express a range of attitudes toward these groups, some more favourable and some less so. At the same time, many make a clear distinction across the four groups in a consistent pattern, in which Indigenous Peoples are most likely to be seen as experiencing ongoing discrimination in society, followed by Black people, with South Asians and Chinese Canadians less apt to be considered as targets of racism. Moreover, there are also notable differences in how members of racialized groups view the treatment of other groups.

The seven questions were presented as statements, to which respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree (on a four-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with "cannot say" offered as a fifth option).

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

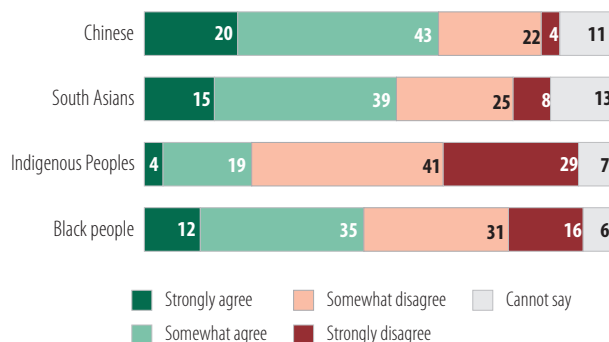
When the results are combined for the four racialized groups, Canadians as a whole are evenly divided on this question, with just under half strongly (13%) or somewhat (35%) agreeing with the statement, and almost as many who somewhat (30%) or strongly (14%) disagree (another 9% do not offer a response). Overall agreement is somewhat higher in Quebec, as well as among men, rural residents, those ages 65 plus, and those without a high school diploma.

Opinions about discrimination no longer being a problem in Canada diverge more noticeably across the specific racialized groups. Agreement with the statement is most evident in the case of Chinese (63% agree) and to a lesser extent South Asians (54%), while Canadians are evenly divided when it comes to Black people (47% agree versus 47% disagree). In contrast, fewer than one in four (23%) agrees that discrimination against Indigenous Peoples is no longer a problem, compared with 70 percent who disagree (including 29% who strongly disagree).

Perceptions of treatment of these groups vary somewhat by the racial background of respondents. Most noticeably, Black respondents are the most likely to disagree about the absence of discrimination against the other three groups, suggesting a heightened awareness or sensitivity to racism that affects many parts of Canadian society.

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

% By racial group assessed



Q.14a

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: Discrimination against [GROUP] is no longer a problem in Canada.

<sup>11</sup> Sears, David O.; McConahay, John B., eds. (1973). *The Politics of Violence: The New Urban Blacks and the Watts Riot*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

<sup>12</sup> The sample was randomly divided into four groups, each of which was presented with the six questions focusing on one of the four racialized groups.

**It is easy to understand the anger of [group] in Canada.** Canadians are also divided in their responses to the question about understanding the anger of racialized groups in Canada (when combined across the four groups), with more than four in ten who strongly (12%) or somewhat (32%) agree, compared with almost as many who somewhat (25%) or strongly (16%) disagree (15% do not offer a response). Agreement is most evident in Atlantic Canada (and least so in Quebec), among Canadians ages 18 to 29, and among those who are First Nations or Black (versus those who are white). Notably, opinions do not vary by level of education or income.

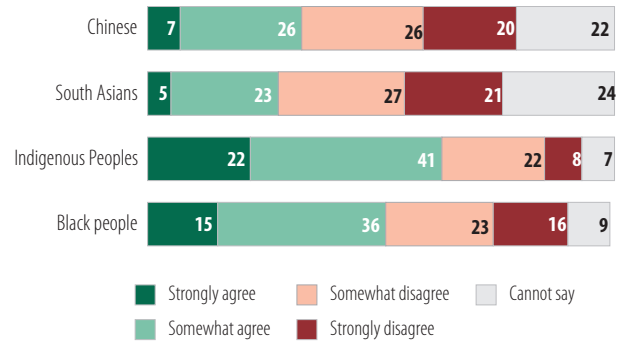
Across racial groups, the pattern of responses mirrors those of the previous statement. Agreement is most evident when it comes to understanding the anger of Indigenous Peoples (63%) and Black people (51%) and least so for Chinese (33%) and South Asians (28%). Strong agreement about understanding the anger of Indigenous Peoples is most common among Canadians who are Black or of “other” racialized backgrounds, as well as among those 18 to 29 years of age. Similarly, it is Indigenous respondents who are most apt to strongly sympathize with the anger of Black people in Canada.

**Over the past few years [group] have gotten more economically than they deserve.** Only one in five Canadians strongly (7%) or somewhat (16%) agrees with the statement about racialized groups getting more than they deserve economically, compared with just over half who somewhat (29%) or strongly (26%) disagrees, while almost one in four (23%) unable to say either way.

Agreement is somewhat more common among Canadians 18 to 29 years of age, those without a high school diploma, and those who are South Asian or First Nations. Agreement with getting more than deserved is most likely to be expressed when applied to Indigenous Peoples (30% agree, versus 52% disagree), while this is least apt to be the case for Black people (16% versus 63%). It is Chinese (34% versus 51%) and First Nations (34% versus 51%) respondents who are most likely to agree that Black people in Canada have received more than their fair share economically, while white people are least apt to share this view (12% agree versus 68% disagree).

**It is easy to understand the anger of [group] in Canada**

% By racial group assessed

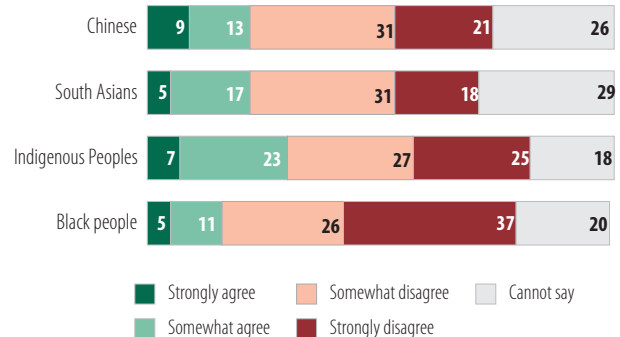


Q.14b

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: It is easy to understand the anger of [GROUP] in Canada.

**Over the past few years, [group] have gotten more economically than they deserve**

% By racial group assessed



Q.14c

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: Over the past few years [GROUP] have gotten more economically than they deserve.

**Over the past few years, the government and news media have shown more respect to [group] than they deserve.** One in four strongly (7%) or somewhat (18%) agrees with this statement as it applies to one of the four racialized groups, compared with a modest majority who somewhat (28%) or strongly (27%) disagree; another one-fifth (20%) do not provide a response.

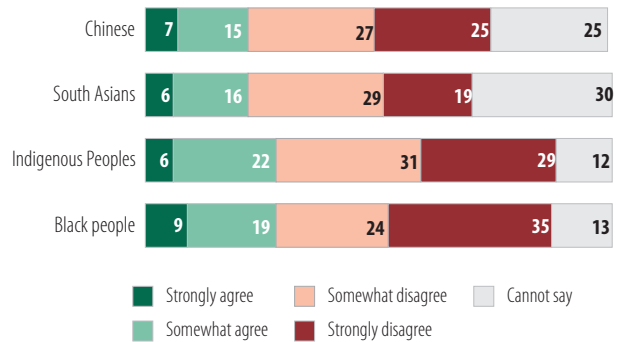
Agreement is most evident among Canadians without a high school diploma, as well as those who are Chinese, South Asian or First Nations, with this view least apt to be shared by white Canadians, Métis, and residents of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Atlantic Canada. Opinions do not vary much as the statement applies to the four racial groups, but “cannot say” responses are most prevalent in terms of the government/media treatment of Chinese and South Asian Canadians.

**Racial discrimination is the main reason [group] cannot get ahead these days.** While Canadians generally acknowledge the persistent racism experienced by some groups in the country today, relatively few believe this represents an obstacle to a successful life. One in three strongly (7%) or somewhat (26%) agrees with the statement about racial discrimination posing a major obstacle for these four groups, versus half who somewhat (27%) or strongly (23%) disagrees, and another 17 percent who cannot say either way.

Agreement with this statement is most pronounced in Quebec, and among Canadians ages 18 to 29, as well as among those who are Black, First Nations or have an “other” racialized background (i.e., racialized groups not oversampled). This view is least apt to be shared by Métis people.

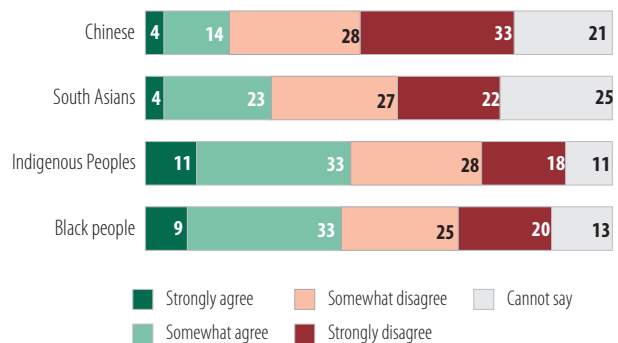
Consistent with other survey findings presented previously, agreement about discrimination posing an obstacle is most likely to be applied to Indigenous Peoples (43%) and Black people (42%), with this least apt to be the case for Chinese people (18%). Once again, it is Black respondents who are most likely to express support for Indigenous Peoples in seeing them as facing obstacles to getting ahead.

**Government and news media have shown more respect to [group] than they deserve**  
 % By racial group assessed



Q.14d  
 Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: Over the past few years, the government and news media have shown more respect to [GROUP] than they deserve.

**Racial discrimination is the main reason why [group] cannot get ahead**  
 % By racial group assessed



Q.14e  
 Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: Racial discrimination is the main reason why many [GROUP] cannot get ahead these days.

***I would have no problem accepting someone who is [group] as a neighbour.*** At a more personal level, most Canadians say they would be fine with having people from other racial groups as neighbours. For the combined results (across the four racial groups presented) nine in ten strongly (70%) or somewhat (20%) agree with this statement, compared with fewer than one in ten (6%) who somewhat or strongly disagree. A positive response to this question is the clear majority view across the population, with strong agreement most prevalent among British Columbians and Atlantic Canadians, women, Canadians ages 18 to 29, and those with the most education and income; this response less evident among respondents who are Chinese or First Nations.

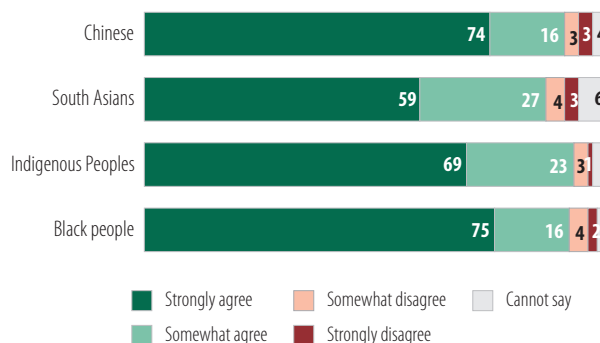
Across the four racial groups, Canadians are most likely to *strongly agree* about having no problem accepting a neighbour who is Black (75%) or Chinese (74%), and to a somewhat lesser extent someone who is Indigenous (69%) or South Asian (59%) (although very few disagree about welcoming such individuals as neighbours).

***Generally speaking, Canada would be a better place if ethnic and racial groups maintained their cultural identities.*** Close to half of Canadians strongly (17%) or somewhat (31%) agree with the statement about the benefits of ethnic and racial groups maintaining their cultural identities, compared with just over one-third who somewhat (22%) or strongly (14%) disagree, and another 16 percent offering no opinion.

Age appears to be an important factor in opinions about this issue, with agreement expressed by a clear majority of those 18 to 29 years of age (61%), compared with 38 percent among those ages 65 plus. Agreement is also the majority view among each of the racialized groups (with the exception of Métis at 50%), and least evident among Canadians who are white (42%).

### *Would have no problem accepting someone who is [group] as a neighbour*

% By racial group assessed

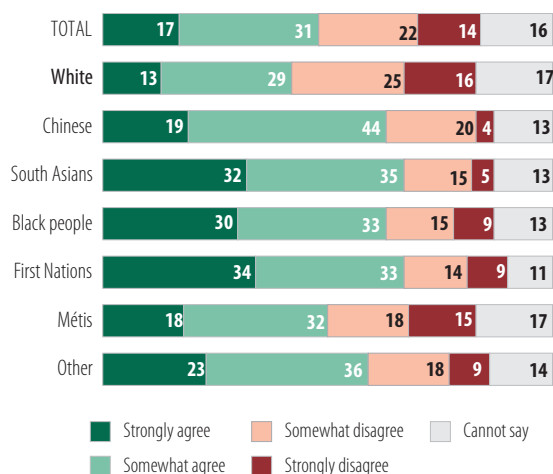


Q.14g

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: I would have no problem accepting someone who is [GROUP] as a neighbour.

### *Canada would be a better place if ethnic/racial groups maintained their cultural identities*

% By racial group responding



Q.14f

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the treatment of [SELECTED RACIAL GROUP] in Canada today: Generally speaking, Canada would be a better place if ethnic and racial groups maintained their cultural identities.

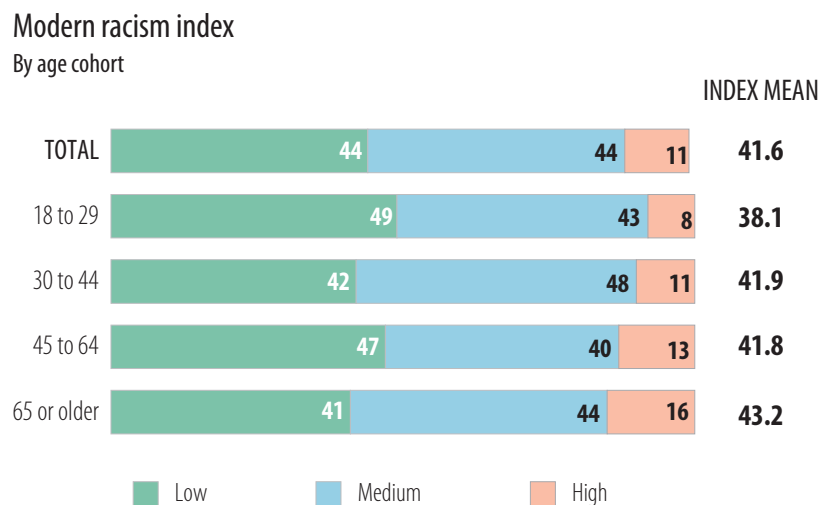
**MODERN RACISM INDEX.** The seven statements presented previously cover different facets of attitudes about specific racialized groups in Canada. The results from these questions were combined to form a single measure or index of modern racism, based on a similar approach used elsewhere.<sup>13</sup> This index measures people’s general attitude or sentiment about the treatment of specific racial groups in Canadian society, focusing on the perceived validity of their experiences of discrimination due to race and whether they are receiving more than they deserve.

Data from the seven agree-disagree questions were combined to create an index with a value ranging from “0” (low score) to “100” (high score). For the population as a whole, the mean value of this index is 41.6 (out of 100), and distributes across five quintiles as follows: 44 percent place in the lower two quintiles (low modern racism), 44 percent in the middle group, and 11 percent in the higher two quintiles (high modern racism).<sup>14</sup>

Across the population (for the four racial groups combined), the index does not vary significantly. Modern racism somewhat more evident (scores over 43) among Canadians ages 65 plus, along with men, Indigenous Peoples, and those without a high school diploma; the index is lower (scores under 39) among Atlantic Canadians, those ages 18 to 29, Black respondents and those with a university education.

Modern racism varies more noticeably across the four racialized groups considered, in a pattern consistent with the results presented earlier for the individual question statements. As a whole, Canadians are most likely to have a higher score on the index when asked about South Asians (index score of 45.7) and Chinese (45.3), in comparison with Black people (39.0) and Indigenous Peoples (36.6).

Perspectives are also different based on the racial background of the respondent answering the questions. The modern racism index directed at South Asians is higher among white and Indigenous respondents, while the index directed at Chinese is higher among white and South Asian respondents.



<sup>13</sup> Various forms of a “modern racism scale” have been developed, mostly in the USA with a focus on attitudes toward black Americans. For example, see Attitudinal and Behavioral Indicators of Discrimination.” National Research Council. 2004. Measuring Racial Discrimination. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

<sup>14</sup> Cross-national comparisons are not possible because some of the questions differ due to country-specific context (e.g., USA focus on black-white relations).

Modern racism in the case of Indigenous Peoples is most evident among Chinese respondents. For all groups, Black respondents express the lowest levels of modern racism toward other groups, and most notably when it comes to the treatment of Indigenous Peoples.

Finally, having contact with people with a different racial background appears to have a positive influence on attitudes about specific racial groups. Modern racism index scores are lower among those who have a lot of contact or are friends, with people from racial groups different from their own. This pattern is evident regardless of whether the attitudes are about Indigenous, Black, Chinese or South Asian people.

**Modern racism index**  
By racial groups asked about and responding

RACIAL GROUP RESPONDING	RACIAL GROUP ASKED ABOUT					TOTAL
	White	Chinese	South Asian	Indigenous	Black	
White	–	45.7	47.1	36.9	39.2	<b>42.1</b>
Chinese	–	–	41.3	42.4	40.7	<b>41.5</b>
South Asian	–	47.2	–	38.8	36.8	<b>41.3</b>
Indigenous	–	44.1	46.6	–	40.4	<b>43.4</b>
Black	–	42.2	39.8	30.2	–	<b>37.1</b>
Other	–	46.5	42.5	34.5	36.2	<b>39.5</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	–	<b>45.3</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>41.6</b>





# Racial discrimination in Canada

The survey examined Canadians' perceptions about the treatment of specific racial and cultural groups in Canada, in broad terms and in specific situations. The survey also probed attitudes about the extent to which racism is seen as systemic versus mostly due to the prejudice of individuals.

## Extent of discrimination against specific groups in Canada

Indigenous Peoples and Black people are most widely seen as the targets of discrimination and unfair treatment in Canada today, followed by Muslims and people from the Middle East. Black people and youth are the most attuned to racism against most groups in society.

**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 Canada today. A number of groups are mentioned but none by more than one-quarter of the population, and only six in ten people surveyed are able to identify at least one.

At the top of this list of groups identified as targets of discrimination are Aboriginal or First Nations people (23%), followed by Africans or Black people (16%), Muslims/women wearing hijabs (15%), and Arabs or people from the Middle East (9%). No other group is mentioned by as many as five percent, and include Caucasians/Europeans, East Indians/Pakistanis, Chinese/other Asians, people of colour generally, and Jews. Notably, four in ten Canadians indicate they are not aware of any group that experiences discrimination (3%) or did not provide a response to the question (36%).

### Racial groups most frequently targeted for discrimination

% Unprompted mentions, by racial group responding

	TOTAL	White	Chinese	South Asian	Indigenous	Black
Aboriginal/First Nations	23	22	16	13	39	21
Africans/Blacks	16	14	22	21	10	44
Muslims	15	17	12	13	8	12
Arabs/Middle Eastern	9	9	6	4	4	7
Caucasians/Europeans	4	5	–	–	3	1
East Indians	4	4	2	6	4	3
Chinese/Asians	3	3	7	6	3	2
People of colour/visible minority	3	2	3	8	2	3
Jews	2	2	1	1	1	3
Other	4	3	3	1	6	2
None/cannot say	39	37	49	49	41	32

Q.18

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

The results of this question do not vary dramatically across the population, with the top three groups named across the country. Views vary by respondents' own racial/cultural group, but not as significantly as might be expected. Indigenous Peoples and Black persons are the most likely to identify their own group as frequently targeted for discrimination, but in both cases by fewer than half. As well, Chinese and South Asians are only minimally more likely to identify their own group as being among those most frequently targeted in Canada.

Education level makes some difference in the identification of groups seen as frequently targeted for discrimination in Canada. Those with a university education are more likely to mention Aboriginal/First Nations and African/Black people, although even among this educated group three in ten (31%) do not identify any group. Across the country, Aboriginal/First Nations people are most widely mentioned in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (51%), and British Columbia (39%), while least so in Quebec (12%), where the focus is more on Muslims (19%) and Arabs/Middle Easterners (14%). Responses to this question do not vary by age cohort, gender, or between urban and rural residents.

**EXTENT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SPECIFIC GROUPS.** Canadians were also asked (in a prompted question) about the frequency with which each of four racialized groups is the target of discrimination in the country today. In all cases, at least a majority says each of the groups experience discrimination at least "sometimes", with wide variation in the likelihood of this being "often." [Note: respondents were not asked to rate the frequency of discrimination against their own racial or cultural group.]

Of the four groups, Canadians are most likely to believe that **Indigenous Peoples** often experience discrimination (39%), with an equal proportion (38%) saying this happens occasionally and only three percent maintaining it "never" happens. One in four says that **Black people** (26%) and **South Asians** (from countries like India and Pakistan) (25%) often experience discrimination, with another half in each case indicating this happens occasionally. By comparison, few (8%) believe that **Chinese people** in Canada are frequent targets of poor treatment, although close to half (46%) maintains this happens occasionally.

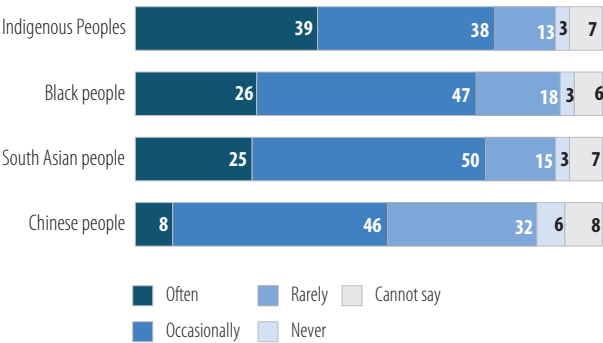
Perceptions of frequent discrimination against *Indigenous Peoples* are most commonly reported by residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (51%), Canadians ages 18 to 29 (47%), those with a university degree (47%) and Black people (50%). This view is least evident in Quebec (31%), among rural Canadians (32%), those without a high school diploma (27%) and South Asians (33%).

Frequent discrimination against *Black people* is most likely to be seen by other racialized Canadians (Chinese, South Asians, Indigenous, and other) (32%), and especially those who are First Nations (38%), in comparison with white people (22%). This view is also more apt to be shared by women, Canadians ages 18 to 29, and those with a university education. In the case of *South Asians*, frequent discrimination is most widely seen by residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (37%), as well as among Canadians ages 18 to 29 (40%) and Indigenous Peoples (37%); and least so in Quebec (20%), and among those ages 45 and older (20%).

Finally, few from any group believe that *Chinese people* in Canada often experience discrimination, but the proportion who see this happening at least occasionally is greater among British Columbians (67%) and Atlantic Canadians (61%), as well as among those ages 18 to 29 (60%), urban residents (58%), Indigenous Peoples (58%; 21% of First Nations people say this happens often) and those who have higher levels of education.

**Perceived frequency of discrimination against specific racial groups**

% By racial group assessed



Q.20a-d  
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?

## Systemic versus attitudinal racism

Canadians see discrimination against racialized groups to be more a function of the prejudiced attitudes of individuals than the systemic foundation of laws and institutions. Yet many also believe racialized persons are treated less fairly than whites in accessing medical care and in the workplace.

Discrimination and racism have various roots, typically most visible in the actions of individuals who act or otherwise express themselves in negative ways toward others, but also manifested systemically through societal institutions and norms. The survey probed this issue by asking Canadians whether they believe the bigger problem with discrimination against specific racialized groups is that which emanates from the prejudice of individuals or from what is built into the country's laws and institutions.

When framed this way, the balance of opinion is heavily weighted toward individual attitudes. Across the four racialized groups included in the question, four in ten Canadians say that discrimination due to individual prejudice is the bigger problem, compared with only five percent who place greater weight on laws and institutions. Another three in ten (29%) maintain that both are equally problematic, while others reject both premises and insist that these groups do not experience discrimination today (10%) or do not offer any response (15%).

Perspectives on this question are similar whether Canadians are considering the experience of Chinese, South Asians, Indigenous Peoples or Black people. Indigenous Peoples are most likely to be seen to be affected by systemic discrimination (more than of half of those surveyed identify this either solely or with equal weight to individual prejudice), while this is least apt to be case in the perceived experience of Chinese people in Canada (one in five says this group does not currently experience discrimination in Canada today).

As well, opinions about systemic racism versus individual prejudice are largely the same across the population, with a few notable exceptions. Younger Canadians are more likely than older generations to say that both forms of discrimination are equally problematic, and this view is shared by those with lower education levels when it comes to Black people, and by those with more education in the case of Chinese and South Asians. First Nations People are more likely than others to say that Black people experience discrimination due to laws and institutions (15%) rather than the prejudice of individuals.

### Basis of discrimination of racialized groups in Canada

% By racial group assessed

	TOTAL	Chinese people	South Asian people	Indigenous Peoples	Black people
Based on prejudice of individuals	41	39	44	33	47
Built into laws and institutions	5	3	4	8	4
Both equally a problem	29	19	25	44	29
Neither/no discrimination against group	10	19	10	5	8
Cannot say	15	20	18	11	11

Q.21

When it comes to discrimination against [SAME GROUP AS IN Q.14: Chinese people/Black people/South Asian people/Indigenous Peoples] people in Canada today, which do you think is the bigger problem?

## **How Americans view racial discrimination in their country**

This same question was included on the 2016 Pew Research survey reported previously. As with Canadians, Americans are also less likely to attribute discrimination against Blacks to systemic factors involving the country's laws and institutions (23%), in comparison with the prejudice of individual people (63%). Only five percent insisted that both are equally problematic (this low proportion is due to the fact that this response option was not offered to respondents, so these individuals had to volunteer it).

Blacks (40%) were twice as likely as whites (19%) and Hispanics (23%) to focus on laws and institutions as the basis for discrimination against Black people in the USA.

**DISCRIMINATION IN SPECIFIC SITUATIONS.** While Canadians tend to believe that the most problematic aspect of racism stems from the prejudices of individuals, many also hold the view that racialized people are treated less fairly than whites in society in a systematic way. The survey asked Canadians how they believed people from each of the four racialized groups are treated in six types of situations, specifically in terms of whether they are treated the same, less fairly or more fairly than white people in the same situation.<sup>15</sup>

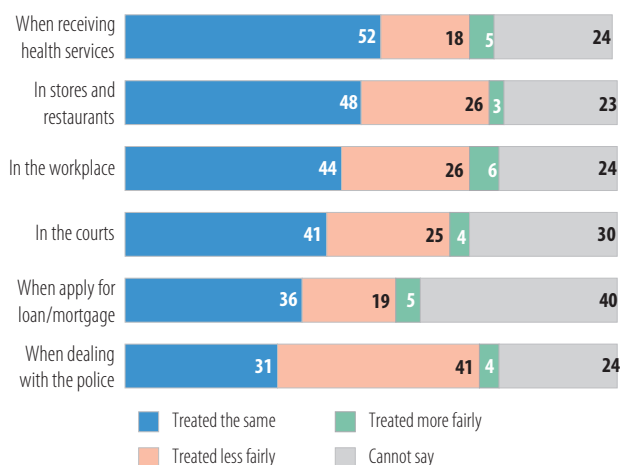
The results (for the four groups combined) show that perceptions of how racialized people are treated vary significantly across the six situations. Canadians are most likely to say that racialized individuals are treated the same as white people when it comes to **requiring health care services** (52%), compared with those who believe they are treated less fairly (18%), treated more fairly (5%) or cannot offer an opinion (24%).

Equal treatment of racialized individuals is less apt to be assumed when they are **in stores and restaurants** (48%), **in the workplace** (44%) and **in the courts** (44%), versus one in four (each) who believes such people are treated less fairly. Just over one-third (36%) would say racialized individuals are treated as fairly as white people when **applying for a loan or mortgage**, compared with 19 percent who believe they are treated less fairly, but in this case a plurality (40%) is unable to say. Finally, Canadians are most apt to believe that racialized individuals are not treated equally when it comes to **dealing with police**: only three in ten (31%) say they are treated the same as white people, compared with 41 percent who say they are treated less fairly.

When the results are broken out by each of the four racialized groups, they largely mirror the pattern revealed previously in terms of the overall extent of discrimination faced by each of the four groups in Canadian society.

### Treatment of group compared with white people

% By situation



Q.22a-f

Thinking about Canada, overall would you say that [GROUP FROM Q. 21] are treated the same as white people, treated less fairly or more fairly than white people, in each of the following situations?

<sup>15</sup> Each respondent answered the questions with reference to one of the four racialized groups (randomly assigned), and no one was asked about their own racial group.

Across all six situations, Chinese people are most commonly seen as being treated the same as white people, followed by South Asians and Black people. Indigenous Peoples are most widely believed to be treated less fairly than white people in all six situations – except when dealing with police, where Black people are as likely to be seen as unfairly treated.

It is worth noting that few Canadians consider that individuals from any of the four racialized groups are treated more fairly than white people in any of the six situations, with this proportion no more than 10 percent in all cases.

How do perceptions of treatment in these situations vary by Canadians’ own background and identity? In broad terms, the belief that racialized groups are treated less fairly than white people is more common among younger people (especially those ages 18 to 29), as well as among Black people (who may be especially attuned to racial discrimination given their own experience with systemic racism).

White Canadians are consistently less likely than others to say that each of the four racialized groups are treated less fairly in these situations, but the gap is most noticeable in cases where the common view is that treatment is fair (e.g., when requiring health care services). Moreover, the gap in perspectives between white and racialized Canadians is most evident in perceptions of the treatment of Black people in Canada (as white respondents are less apt to see Black people as treated less fairly than white people in all of the situations presented). But this pattern does not hold consistently when applied to the treatment of Indigenous Peoples (in this case, it is Black respondents who are, by far, are most apt to see this group as treated less fairly than white people).

The data suggest that Black people and Indigenous Peoples are each cognizant of the others’ challenges in Canadian society; and, to a lesser extent, this appears to be the case between Chinese and South Asians. Education level plays a minor role in shaping perceptions except in the case of treatment of racialized groups in dealing with police.

**Group treated less fairly than white people, by situation**

% By racial group assessed

	Chinese people	South Asian people	Indigenous Peoples	Black people
When receiving health services	11	13	34	16
In stores and restaurants	18	22	37	28
In the workplace	17	24	34	27
In the courts	10	16	38	35
When apply for loan/mortgage	10	13	31	23
When dealing with the police	15	31	58	57

Q.22a-f

Thinking about Canada, overall would you say that [GROUP FROM Q. 21] are treated the same as white people, treated less fairly or more fairly than white people, in each of the following situations?

## How Americans view the treatment of racial groups in society

The 2019 Pew Research Center survey asked a similar set of questions about the treatment of Black people in the USA compared with white people. In comparable situations, Americans are noticeably more likely to say that Black people are treated less fairly than white people, with the biggest gaps evident in how they are treated in the courts (65% of Americans say Black people are treated less fairly), in the work place (52%), and when applying for a loan or mortgage (45%). Americans are much less likely than Canadians to offer no opinion in response to these questions, but this may be in large part due to differences in how the two surveys were administered (the Pew survey was conducted by telephone, in which a “do not know” option was not offered, but accepted if volunteered).

Predictably, Blacks are much more likely than whites to say that Black people are treated less fairly in each of the situations presented. This gap is largest in the cases of being in stores and restaurants, when applying for a loan or mortgage, and when seeking medical treatment. The gap is smaller in situations when dealing with police, in which two-thirds (67%) of white people maintain that Blacks are treated less fairly, compared with 87 percent of Black people. In all situations, the perceptions of Asians and Hispanics fall somewhere between those of Black and white Americans.





# Treatment of own racial group

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

## General treatment of own group

Indigenous Peoples (especially First Nations) and Black people are most likely to see their group experiencing racism and unfair treatment in Canada today, and to believe this is having a significant impact on people close to them.

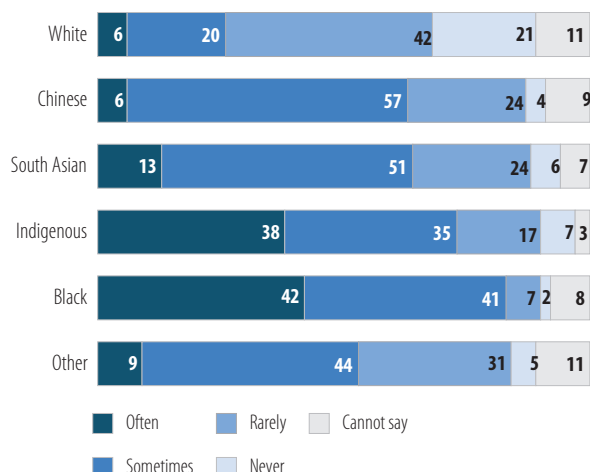
**FREQUENCY OF DISCRIMINATION.** Earlier in the survey, Canadians were asked about the extent to which they believe other groups in Canada experience unfair treatment because of their race or cultural background, and were then asked about the experience of their own group. As might be expected there are significant differences in a predictable pattern. Large majorities of Canadians who are Black (83%) or Indigenous (73%) say people in their group are treated unfairly at least sometimes because of their race or culture, with four in ten in each case indicating this happens often. Among Indigenous Peoples, those who are First Nations (46%) are much more likely than Métis (28%) to describe this experience happening often.

A similar response is given by those who are South Asian (64% often or sometimes), Chinese (63%) or of another racial group (53%), but in these cases few indicate this happens “often.” By comparison, about one in four white people say his or her racial group is treated unfairly often (6%) or sometimes (20%).

Across the population as a whole, perceptions of discrimination against one’s own racial group is linked to age, as Canadians ages 18 to 29 are more likely to say this happens often or sometimes (45%), compared with those who ages 65 plus (27%).<sup>16</sup> Men are marginally more likely than women to express this view, but there is no apparent difference by education or income level.

## Frequency of unfair treatment of own racial group

% By racial group responding



Q.19

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

<sup>16</sup> This pattern is consistent with results from other Environics Institute surveys of specific groups, including Muslims, Black people, Indigenous Peoples and Jews. It is likely that younger Canadians are more attuned to issues surrounding racism and less accepting of the status quo.

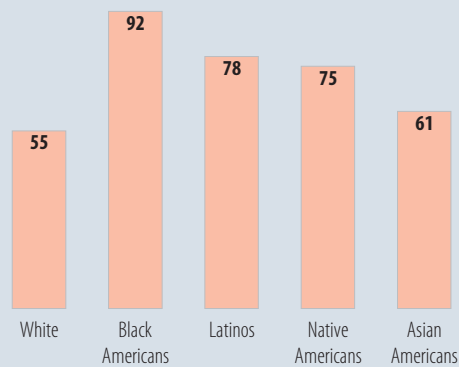
## Discrimination against one's own racial group in America

The 2017 survey conducted by National Public Radio, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health found that majorities of Americans in all of the main racialized groups believe that discrimination against their group exists in America today.

This response is given by almost all Black Americans (92%), followed by Latinos (78%), Native Americans (75%) and Asian Americans (61%). It is also the majority view among Americans who identify as white (55%).

### Discrimination against own racial group exists in America today\*

% By racial group responding



\* Source: NPR/RWJ Foundation/Harvard Public Health: 2017

**PORTRAYAL IN THE MEDIA.** Non-white Canadians were also asked how often they believe their own racial group is portrayed accurately in the Canadian media today. Overall, only one in five (20%) says this takes place most of the time, with most indicating it happens some of the time (44%) or rarely (23%).

Results in this case do not vary significantly across racial groups, but Black respondents are least apt to report that media portrayal is accurate most of the time, and along with Indigenous respondents are most apt to say it happens rarely.

Once again, age is a factor influencing such perceptions. Non-white Canadians ages 65 and older are most positive about media portrayal of their racial group (34% say this happens most of the time), compared with only 17 percent among those under 45.

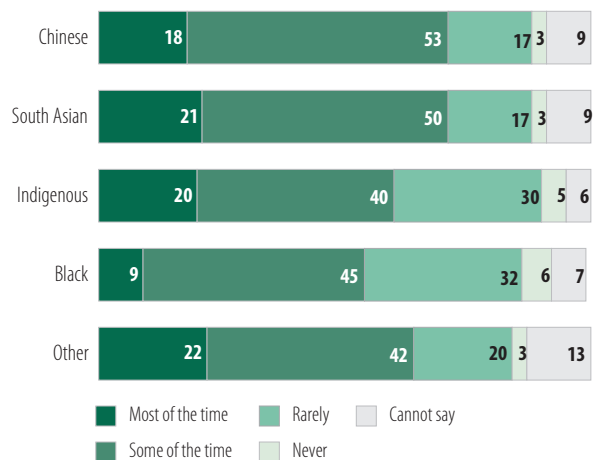
**IMPACT OF RACISM ON PEOPLE YOU KNOW.** Going beyond perceptions of treatment of people in one’s racial group generally, the survey also probed the perceived impact of discrimination and racism on people that one is close to. Once again, the most significant impacts are reported by Canadians who are Indigenous (especially those who are First Nations) or Black. In each case, three in ten (29%) say that racism affects people close to them to a great extent, with another four in ten (40% and 41%, respectively) indicating this happens “somewhat.”<sup>17</sup>

Such impacts are less commonly reported by those who are South Asian (52% to a great extent or somewhat), Chinese (44%) or other racialized groups (44%). By comparison, fewer than one in five white people say his or her racial group is impacted to a great extent (4%) or somewhat (14%) by racism.

Again, impacts of racism are most apt to be seen among racialized Canadians ages 18 to 29, and less so among older cohorts. This view is also somewhat more evident among those who have less education and are experiencing income insecurity.

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

% By racial group responding

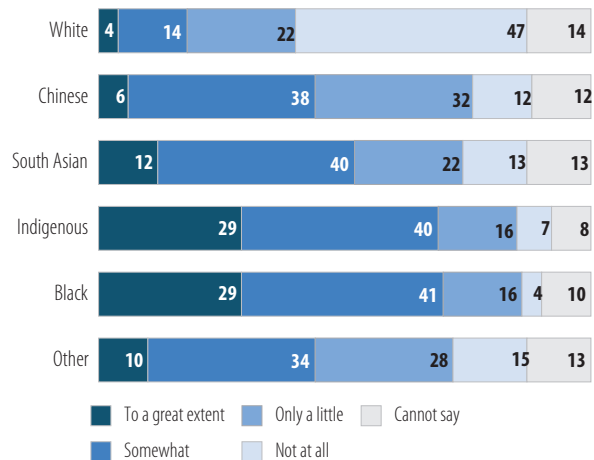


Q.23

[IF NOT WHITE] Thinking about how your own racial group is portrayed in the Canadian media today, how often would you say that your group is portrayed accurately?

### Impact of racism on people of your race who you are close to

% By racial group responding



Q.27

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?

<sup>17</sup> First Nations respondents (36%) are almost twice as likely as those who are Métis (20%) to say that racism affects people they are close to “to a great extent.”

## Witnessing discrimination of others due to race

A significant proportion of racialized Canadians have witnessed the discrimination of others due to their race, both of people from their own racial group and that with other backgrounds. This has taken place in a range of settings, including on the street, in the workplace and at airports.

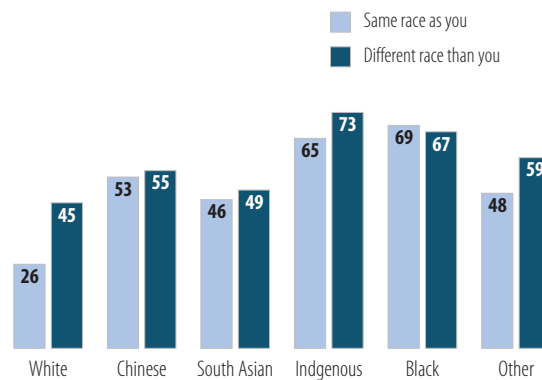
The basis of Canadians' perspective on racism includes witnessing such treatment of others. More than one in three (36%) reports having personally witnessed discrimination or unfair treatment of other people who are the same race as themselves, because of their race. Half (51%) say they have witnessed such treatment of others who have a racial background different from their own.

In both cases, such experience varies significantly by respondents' own racial background. Among those who are Indigenous or Black, two-thirds or more report witnessing discrimination of people of their own racial group (65% and 69%, respectively) and from other racial backgrounds (73% and 67%, respectively).

This response is also given by a small majority of Chinese respondents (53%), and just under half of those who are South Asian (46%). By comparison, one in four (26%) white Canadians say he or she has seen discrimination of other white people due to their race, with 45 percent reporting such treatment of people with other racial backgrounds.

As with other questions in this section, perspectives on racism are linked to age. Across the population as a whole, Canadians ages 18 to 29 are the most likely to say they have witnessed racial discrimination of others from their own racial group (42% versus 23% of those 65 plus) and of others with a different background (63% versus 41%). Notably, such witnessing of racial discrimination does not vary by level of education or income.

**Witnessed discrimination of others due to their race**  
% By racial group responding



Q.24

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

Q.25

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

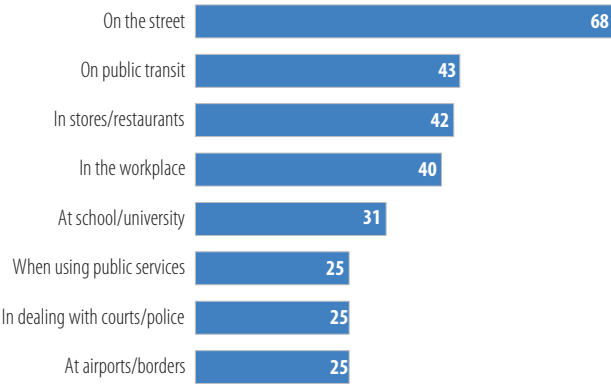
Those who report having witnessed racial discrimination of others (of their own and/or other racial groups) were asked to indicate in which of eight types of settings this has occurred. All eight are identified as settings of racism by at least one in four Canadians, with this most likely to be on the street (68%), followed by on public transit (43%), in stores and restaurants (42%), and in the workplace (40%).<sup>18</sup>

Smaller proportions mention they have witnessed such treatment at school or university (31%), when using public services (25%), in dealing with courts or the police (25%), and at borders and airports (25%).

Responses to this question are largely similar across racial groups, although Black people are more likely to identify most of the settings, especially in dealing with police and the courts (49%); while South Asians are the most apt to say they have witnessed racism at borders and airports (52%). Across age cohorts, Canadians ages 18 to 29 are the most likely to mention each of the settings listed.

### In what settings have you witnessed racial discrimination of others?

% Those witnessing discrimination



Q.26  
(IF PERSONALLY WITNESSED DISCRIMINATION OF OTHERS OF SAME/  
DIFFERENT RACE) In which of the following settings have you witnessed  
discrimination or unfair treatment of others because of their race?

<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that these differences in experiences with racial discrimination across settings reflects in part the likelihood of being in these situations (e.g., being on the street and on transit are common, while dealing with police and the courts are much less so).





# Personal experience with discrimination and racism

The final section of the survey asked Canadians about their own personal experience with discrimination and unfair treatment due to their race or cultural background.

## Personal experience with discrimination

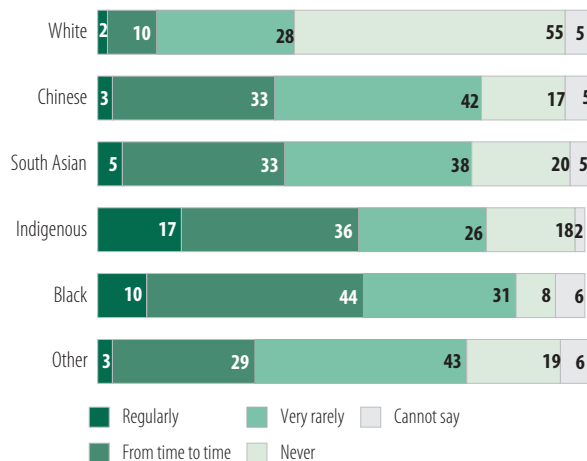
Discrimination due to one's race is a common experience in Canada, but is most widespread among people who are Indigenous or Black. This difference in treatment is evident across a range of settings and situations, but most noticeably when it comes to dealing with police and in the workplace.

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, close to half say this has happened to them at some point in their lives: One in five reports to have experienced this regularly (4%) or from time to time (17%), with another 30 percent indicating it has taken place very rarely. The other half say this has never happened to them (43%) or did not answer the question (5%).

Personal experience with such treatment is predictably a function of one's racial background. Ongoing experience (regularly or from time to time) is reported by majorities of Canadians who are Black (54%) or Indigenous (53%; especially First Nations Peoples, with 22% indicating this happens to them regularly).

Such ongoing experience is less widely reported by those who are Chinese (36%), South Asian (38%) and from other racialized backgrounds (32%). By comparison, about one in ten (12%) white people report this type of treatment due to his or her race or ethnicity, with 55 percent indicating it has never happened (versus only 8% of Black people).<sup>19</sup>

Personal experience with discrimination due to one's race  
% By racial group responding



Q.28  
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 ... ?

Across the population, ongoing experience with racial discrimination is consistent across age cohorts, except among those ages 65 plus, who report this happens less frequently (10%). Men are marginally more likely than women to report such experiences, and women are more apt to say this has never happened to them (47% versus 38% of men). Experience with racial discrimination does not vary by level of education or income.

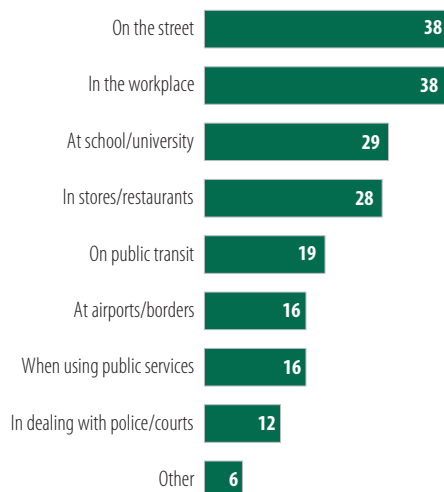
<sup>19</sup> Those who identify as white encompass a range of racial or ethnic backgrounds, which in some cases might expose them to discrimination. For instance, close to one in five (18%) Jews in Canada reported to have experienced discrimination in the past five years due to his or her ethnicity or culture (EnviroNics Institute, 2019).

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. Mostly commonly identified are experiences on the street (38%) and in the workplace (38%), followed by at school and university (29%), and in stores and restaurants (28%).

The mention of settings varies somewhat across racial groups: Indigenous (especially First Nations) and Black respondents are among the most likely to identify experiences on the street, in stores and restaurants, and in dealing with police and the courts. Negative experiences on the street are also emphasized by Chinese respondents, while workplace issues are most apt to be mentioned by those who South Asian.

### In what settings have you experienced racial discrimination?

% Those experiencing discrimination



Q.29

[IF EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION] In what settings have you experienced discrimination or been unfairly treated because of your race or ethnicity?

### Americans' personal experience with racial discrimination

The Pew Research Center asked the same question on its 2019 survey, and the results are roughly comparable to the Canadian experience. Four in ten (45%) Americans overall report having ever experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity, with six percent indicating this happens regularly and another 39 percent saying it happens from time to time. As in Canada, such experiences are largely determined by one's racial background, with regular or time to time discrimination reported by 76 percent of Blacks, 76 percent of Asians, 58 percent of Hispanics and 33 percent of whites. [Note: The Canadian and American data are not fully comparable because the American survey did not present a "very rarely experience" response option.]

## DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCES OF RACIAL

**DISCRIMINATION.** Racial discrimination takes many forms, and can often involve subtle slights or insensitive treatment in day-to-day life (sometimes are described as “micro-aggressions”). The survey reveals that many Canadians, and especially those who are Indigenous or Black, experience such treatment.

Among six types of micro-aggression presented, at least three in ten people surveyed say that, in the past 12 months, they have had other people act as if they were not smart (36%), had others act as if they were suspicious of them (31%), and/or were ignored/overlooked or not given service in a restaurant or store (31%). One in five reports he or she has been mistaken for someone who serves others (e.g., janitor, maid) (22%), or been treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay or promotion (19%), while one in ten (12%) reports being unfairly stopped by police.

Of course such experiences are closely linked to one’s racial or ethnic background. In all six cases, the likelihood of reporting such incidents in the past 12 months is greatest among Canadians who are Black or Indigenous (especially those who are First Nations). The gap across groups is most striking in the case of not being treated as smart (56% of Black people report having this experience over the past 12 months), others acting as if you are suspicious (55% of Black people), and being unfairly stopped by police (31% of Indigenous Peoples).

Across the population as a whole, younger Canadians are more likely than older ones to report experiencing each of the six forms of micro-aggression. Men are somewhat more apt to report being unfairly stopped by police, while women are more likely to say they have had people act as if they are not smart, been ignored/overlooked or not given service in a restaurant or store, and/or been mistaken for someone who serves others.

### Day-to-day experience in past 12 months due to race

% By racial group responding

	White	Chinese people	South Asian people	Indigenous Peoples	Black people	Other
Others treated you as not smart	30	21	40	47	56	37
Others acted as if suspicious of you	24	18	34	50	55	30
Ignored, overlooked or not given service in a restaurant/store	25	28	31	44	42	31
Mistaken for someone who serves others	16	20	23	32	37	25
Treated differently by employer (hiring, pay, promotion)	16	15	21	30	23	21
Unfairly stopped by police	5	5	10	31	18	12

Q.30a-f

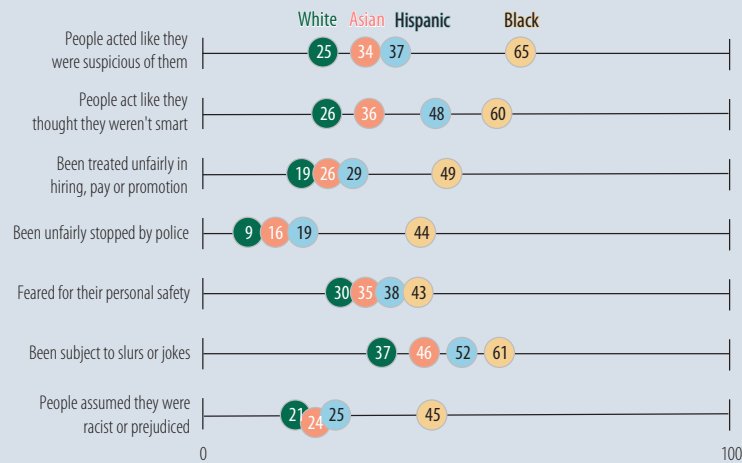
Please indicate whether or not each of the following has happened to you in the past 12 months because of your race or ethnicity?

## Americans' personal experience with day-to-day racial discrimination

Americans' experience with day-to-day racial discrimination is broadly comparable to that of Canadians, based on the 2019 Pew Research Center survey, but is more commonly reported by Blacks in that country for the four situations that are directly comparable on the two surveys, especially in terms of being treated unfairly by employers and being stopped by police. The experiences of Asian and Hispanic Americans fall between those of whites and Blacks.

### Most blacks say someone has acted suspicious of them or as if they weren't smart\*

% of each group saying each of the following has happened to them because of their race or ethnicity



\* Source: Pew Research Center: 2018

## Personal impacts of racial discrimination

Canadians who experience racial discrimination are affected in different ways; some are bothered quite a lot and others not at all. Those who are racialized are more likely than not to say their race or ethnicity has made it harder to succeed in life, and this is especially the case for Black people.

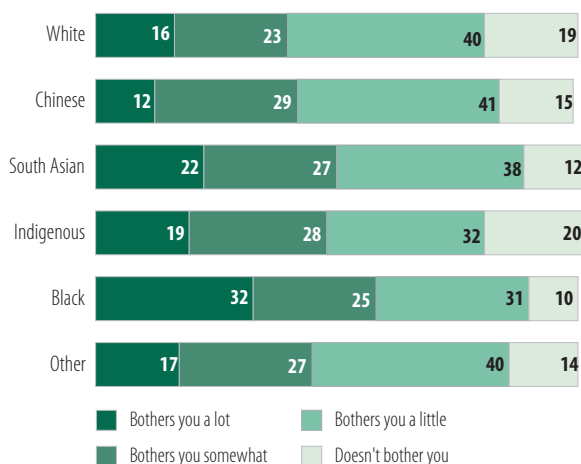
How much racial discrimination bothers you. The experience of discrimination and unfair treatment due to one's race is clearly evident, but what impact does this have on people's lives? Those who report such experiences were asked the extent to which this has bothered them, and the results demonstrate that it is not same for everyone. About four in ten Canadians say their experiences with racial discrimination have bothered them a lot (18%) or somewhat (25%), while just over half indicate it has bothered them just a little (38%) or not at all (17%).

While the extent of reported racial discrimination varies dramatically across racial and cultural groups, the reported impact of such experiences does not differ nearly as much. Black people are, by far, the most likely to say that such treatment bothers them a lot (32%), but otherwise the differences in degree of being bothered across groups is not significant.

Across the population, reports of being bothered a lot or somewhat by racial discrimination is somewhat more evident among women (48% versus 38% of men) and least so among those ages 65 and older (35%). Income also plays a role, with this impact identified by more than half (54%) of Canadians with inadequate incomes, compared with only 36 percent among those who say they have enough and can easily save.

## How much your experience with racial discrimination has bothered you

% By racial group responding



Q.32

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 (9%) or from time to time (21%), with the remainder indicating they do this very rarely (21%), not at all (40%), or did not provide a response to the question (9%).

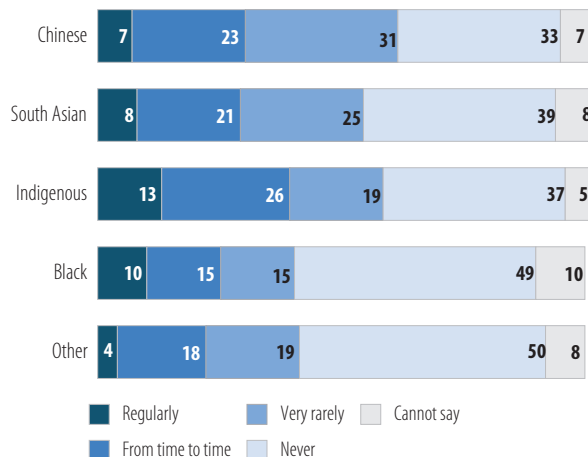
Across racial groups, downplaying one's race or culture is most commonly reported by Indigenous Peoples (39%), and least so among Black people (25%) and those of other non-racial backgrounds (22%). This action is also more widely practiced among younger Canadians (40%, compared with only 16% among those ages 65 plus), and those who have personally experienced discrimination due to their race or culture (35% versus 11% among those who have not).

**IMPACT OF RACE AND ETHNICITY ON SUCCESS IN LIFE.** What impact do Canadians believe their race or ethnicity has on their opportunities for success in life? Overall, 14 percent say that their race/ethnicity has made it easier for them to succeed, compared with 23 percent who believe it has made this harder to achieve, and the balance indicating it has made no difference (55%) or offered no opinion (8%).

Across racial groups, Black people (50%) stand out as reporting their race being an obstacle to success, compared with only six percent of white people. For other groups, people are more likely to say it has been harder than easier to succeed, but in each case a plurality or majority indicates it has made no difference either way.

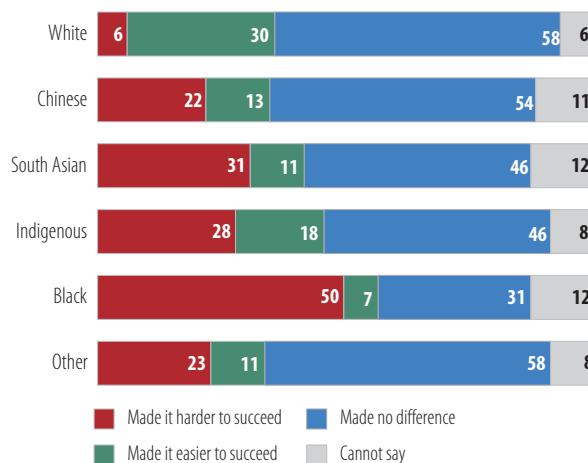
Among Indigenous Peoples, First Nations individuals are more likely to say their Indigenous background has made it more difficult for them to succeed in life (34% versus 18% of Métis), while Métis are more likely to say it has made no difference (61% versus 36% among First Nations).

### How often do you consciously downplay your race/culture? % By racial group responding



Q.33  
[IF NOT WHITE] How often, if at all, do you consciously downplay being someone who is [OWN RACIAL GROUP]?

### Impact of your race/ethnicity on success in life % By racial group responding

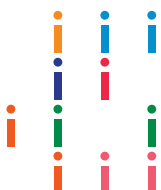


Q.34  
Overall, do you think your race or ethnicity has made it harder or made it easier for you to succeed in life, or has it not made much difference?

## Impact of race and ethnicity on success in America

The Pew Research Center survey in 2016 asked the same question, and found that the perceived impact of one's race or ethnicity on success in life is comparable to that of Canadians as a whole. Among Americans, 24 percent report their race or ethnicity has made it easier to succeed in life, compared with 14 percent who say it has made it harder to succeed, and another 61 percent who indicate it has made no difference (with 1% not responding). As in Canada, American Blacks are the most likely to say their race/ethnicity made life harder (40%), compared with whites (5%) and Hispanics (20%).





**Environics  
Institute**

**The Environics Institute  
for Survery Research**

900-33 Bloor Street East  
Toronto, ON M4W 3H1

416 969 2457  
[www.environicsinstitute.org](http://www.environicsinstitute.org)