

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Canadians express more positive views about race relations, but one in six have been the target of hate in the past year

**TORONTO, March 14, 2024:** The **Environics Institute for Survey Research** latest national survey of Canadians on race relations, released today, finds that racialized Canadians now express more positive opinions than before about race relations and the extent of racism in society. This 2024 survey is the third installment in an ongoing research program, updating similar surveys in 2019 and 2021 that provide the most comprehensive assessment by Canadians across the country's diverse population. Conducted in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, this research provides benchmark indicators of public attitudes, perceptions and experiences from the perspectives of Canadians across racial and ethnic backgrounds.

**Prevalence of experienced racism.** This latest survey documents the reality of racism, prejudice and hate in Canadian society, and the extent to which it is pervasive across the population and persistent over time. Discrimination and mistreatment due to one's ethnicity or race is experienced by people in all parts of society, and is something that happens in the street, the workplace, at school and online. While no group remains untouched, racism is most widely experienced by Canadians who are Indigenous or Black, although it is by no means an uncommon experience among other racialized groups.

- One in four Canadians say they have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment due to their race regularly (5%) or from time to time (21%), with this proportion most widespread among those who are First Nations (57%), Black (48%) or South Asian (40%).
- Canadians experiencing racism are most likely to report this happening on the street (40%), in the workplace (36%), in stores or restaurants (27%) and in schools or university (26%).

The research also confirms that endemic racism is widely recognized and acknowledged by most Canadians, even among those who do not experience this directly. Very few today express the opinion that racism does not exist in this country, even if many may not fully appreciate the scope and harm it inflicts on those affected.

- Clear majorities of Canadians believe that racialized people in this country experience discrimination on an ongoing or occasional basis, most notably by those who are Indigenous (80%), South Asian (72%), Black (72%), Arab (72%) or Chinese (60%). No more than five percent of Canadians say that any of these groups *never* experience racism or discrimination.
- Almost half (48%) of Canadians have witnessed discrimination or unfair treatment of people with a different racial background than their own. This experience is most likely to be reported by those who are Black (60%), Indigenous (57%) or East/Southeast Asian (57%), but also by significant proportions who are Chinese (48%), South Asian (47%) or white (47%).

**Trends (2019 – 2024).** This third national survey conducted since 2019 shows a general continuity of experiences and perspectives, in terms of how race relations are viewed and experienced generally and within specific groups. It also reveals how perspectives are influenced by broader events. The 2021 survey recorded increasing public recognition of racism in Canada in the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder, the Black Lives Matter movement and anti-Asian sentiment arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three years later, these events are no longer current and the public perspective about race and racism has reverted more closely to what was recorded in 2019. Significantly, this latest shift has taken place across the population, and in some cases it is racialized Canadians who now express more positive opinions than before about race relations and the extent of racism in society.

**Experiences with hate.** The 2024 survey is among the first to provide a comprehensive national picture of Canadians’ experience with hate, a rapidly spreading form of anti-social aggressive racism directed at people, most commonly because of their race, ethnicity or religion. The results show that a small, but significant, minority of Canadians report having been targeted by a hate incident or crime in the past year, and others have had indirect exposure through the experiences of other people they know. In total, three in ten (29%) Canadians have been exposed to hate directly or indirectly in the past year, due to how one is who they are or how they are perceived by others.

Not surprisingly, such experiences with hate are most common among Canadians who are also most likely to experience racism in other forms, but especially people who are First Nations, Black or Jewish, as well as those who are Muslim or 2SLGBQ+.

- One in six Canadians report having been definitely (7%) or possibly (8%) targeted by a hate incident or crime in the past year, with this experience most widely noted by those who are First Nations (43%), Black (34%), South Asian (34%), Muslim (31%), Jewish (23%) or 2SLGBQ+ (31%).
- While much attention has been given to online harassment, Canadians’ experience with hate is more common in person settings (62%), such as public spaces, at work or school, or at home(62%). Half as many (31%) report being the target of hate online.
- Only one-quarter (26%) of Canadians experiencing hate in the past year say they reported this to the police or another authority. Those who did not do so give a variety of reasons, but mostly because they do not think it would make a difference or lack trust in the process or outcome.

**Treatment of Muslims and Jews in Canada.** The 2024 survey broadened the scope to address the treatment of people who are Muslim or Jewish, which is now especially relevant given the rise of antisemitic, anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim incidents across this country. The research shows that Canadians as a whole recognize that Muslims and Jews are as likely as other racialized Canadians to experience discrimination (including hate-motivated harassment), and this is consistent with what Muslims and Jews themselves report in this survey.

- A majority (57%) of Canadians believe that both Muslims and Jews in Canada experience discrimination sometimes or often. Fewer than one in ten say this never happens to either group.
- Significant proportions of Canadian Muslims (45%) and Jews (41%) report having personally experienced discrimination or mistreatment on a regular or occasional basis because of their race, ethnicity or religion.

**Race as a social issue.** The prevalence and persistence of racism notwithstanding, the research shows that Canadians do not view their society as defined by inter-group conflict and polarization along racial or ethnic lines. Most Canadian believe that race relations are generally good in terms of how people from different groups get along and in the equality of opportunity for all, and a majority are optimistic about racial equality happening in their lifetime. This positive perspective has strengthened over the past three years, most notably among Black and most other racialized people, who are now express greater optimism about the future than white Canadians.

- Two-thirds (68%) of Canadians believe race relations in the country are generally good in terms of how different groups get along, versus less than one-third (21%) as many who disagree. The public is even more positive about race relations in their own community (78% generally good, versus 13% generally bad).
- Opinions on this question are similarly positive across racial and ethnic groups. Since 2021, opinions have improved noticeably across all groups, but most noticeably among Canadians who are Black or Indigenous.
- Almost six in ten (58%) of Canadians are optimistic that all racialized people in Canada will be treated with the same respect. This view has strengthened since 2021, and most noticeably among those who are Black (64%, up 15 percentage points) or Indigenous (60%, up 18 points).

*“This type of research can serve as point of common ground that brings different stakeholders together, and provide a means for measuring progress (or the lack of) over time to support organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors who are working to reduce racism both internally and in broader society”* comments Dr. Keith Neuman, the study’s project director at the Environics Institute.

The full report of the study is available [HERE](#).

The research consisted of a main survey conducted online between February 12 and March 13, 2024 with 4,470 Canadians (ages 18+), and a supplementary survey conducted online between November 18 and 25, 2024 with 616 Canadians who identify as Jewish (by religion, ethnicity and/or culture). The sample for the main survey was stratified to ensure representation by province, age, education and gender, and also included over-samples of individuals who self-identify as Chinese, Black, South Asian or Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (the four largest racialized populations in Canada).

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**The Environics Institute for Survey Research** was established by Michael Adams in 2006 with a mandate to conduct in-depth public opinion and social research on the issues shaping Canada’s future. It is through such research that Canadians can better understand themselves and their changing society.

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

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