

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Groundbreaking study documents extent of racism in Canada**

*First study of its kind to measure attitudes, perceptions and experiences  
among racial and non-racialized Canadians*

TORONTO, December 10, 2019 – Today – International Human Rights Day - the **Environics Institute for Survey Research** and the **Canadian Race Relations Foundation** released the **Race Relations in Canada 2019 Survey**, a new national survey of Canadians that is the first of its kind to cover race relations across the country.

This study confirms the reality of racism in Canada. Also important, it shows that this reality is widely if not universally acknowledged. Many Canadians across different racial backgrounds report experiences of racism and discrimination due to race, and also recognize that it also affects others of their own race and from other racial groups.

- Majorities of Canadians who are Black (54%) or Indigenous (53%) have personally experienced discrimination due to race or ethnicity from time to time if not regularly. Such experience is also evident but less widely reported by those who are South Asian (38%), Chinese (36%), from other racialized groups (32%), or White (12%).
- Most Canadians acknowledge that racialized Canadians experience discrimination either often or at least occasionally. Specifically, Canadians are most likely to believe that Indigenous Peoples (77%), Black people (73%), and South Asians (75%) experience discrimination often or occasionally; by comparison, fewer – although still a majority - (54%) believe this is the case for Chinese people in Canada. Very few (5%) say that racialized Canadians never experience discrimination.

The reality of racism in Canada notwithstanding, most Canadians believe that different racial groups generally get along with one another, and are more likely to be optimistic than pessimistic about achieving racial equality in their lifetime.

- Eight in ten (81%) Canadians say that race relations in their own community are generally good in terms of how well people from different races get along with one another, versus just eight percent who describe such relations as generally bad. A positive view is held by large majorities of those who are White (84%), South Asian (83%), Chinese (81%) and Black (77%), and by a smaller majority who are Indigenous (69%).
- Six in ten are very (14%) or somewhat (46%) optimistic that all racialized people in Canada will be treated with the same respect as others in their lifetime, versus 26 percent who are pessimistic. Such optimism is evident across all racial groups, and strongest among younger Canadians.

*“As social discourse has become coarser with the global emboldening of hate speech, so has the importance of civil dialogue grown,”* said Dr. Lillian Ma, Executive Director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. *“With the loosening of the bonds of civility, it becomes all the more essential to provide pragmatic, evidence-based and non-partisan data such as this. This study provides factual information based on lived experience and is meant to serve as a reference point for cross-cultural interchange.”*

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. Themes covered in the research include: the state of race relations in Canada, attitudes toward specific racial groups, perceptions of racial discrimination in Canada generally and of one’s own racial group, and personal experiences. The study also draws comparisons with the attitudes and experiences of Americans based on research conducted in the USA.

*“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 at <https://www.environicsinstitute.org/projects/project-details/race-relations-in-canada-2019>

The 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, 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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**Environics Institute for Survey Research** was established by Michael Adams in 2006 to promote relevant and original public opinion and social research on important issues of public policy and social change. The focus of the Institute’s mandate is to survey individuals and groups not usually heard from, asking questions not normally asked. For further information see [www.environicsinstitute.org](http://www.environicsinstitute.org), or contact Andrew Parkin at [andrew.parkin@environics.ca](mailto:andrew.parkin@environics.ca)

**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. For further information see [www.crrf-fcrr.ca](http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca), or contact Lillian Ma at [lillian.ma@crrf-fcrr.ca](mailto:lillian.ma@crrf-fcrr.ca)

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