

Anti-racism Measures

Canada has a history of colonization, systemic racism, and discrimination. We are still experiencing the effects of centuries old racism, and indeed many racist systems and attitudes still exist in the present.

During the COVID-19 pandemic hate crimes against Asians skyrocketed. Statistics from the Vancouver Police Department show a 717% rise in hate crimes against East Asians from 2019 to 2020 ([Global News](#)).

After George Floyd's murder, thousands of Canadians took to the streets to protest anti-Black racism abroad and in Canada. But the protests did not have universal support. In July 2020, 2 protesters were attacked during a Black and Indigenous Lives Matter protest in Winnipeg. The 2 white women involved in the attack were charged with two counts of assault.

Between April and June 2020, at least 4 people of colour died during police wellness checks in Canada. CBC News reported that, of the 461 people who died during encounters with police between 2000 and 2017, Black and Indigenous people were over-represented. This is just a sampling of overt and systematic racism that occurs in Canada. There are hundreds of less obvious examples of racism and microaggressions that occur daily, such as a lack of race based COVID-19 data, or that no one follows up with police departments who fail to submit an annual report on carding.

Liberal

The Liberals have several commitments to diversity and anti-racism throughout their platform. Examples of their commitments are

- implementing swiftly the Black-led Philanthropic Endowment Fund,
- increasing research grants pertaining to Black Canadians,
- investing \$100 million in BIPOC arts and journalism programs,
- implementing an action plan to increase representation and leadership development within the Public Service,
- strengthening and boosting funding to the Anti-Racism Strategy and the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat,
- strengthening the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Criminal Code* to combat online hate, and
- rooting out all forms of racism in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Conservative

The Conservative platform has a section called "A Detailed Plan to Secure the Future of Canada's Indigenous Peoples," but it does not have a section for anti-racism or diversity and inclusion. Their platform does not include the words racism or anti-racism. In their section on immigration, they claim to be the party that "ended racial discrimination in Canadian immigration."

Many movements fighting for equality have employed protest as a tactic to voice opposition and enact change. The Conservatives are promising to make interfering with infrastructure or public transportation, including through some protests, a *Criminal Code* offence. This section of their platform cites the rail blockades in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en land defenders as an example of a protest that would be subject to prosecution under their amendment of the Code. Proposing such changes would impact many marginalized groups across Canada.

NDP

In the section titled, "Confronting racism," the NDP platform makes several commitments to work against racism and make life better for BIPOC living in Canada. They promise to establish national standards for identifying and recording all hate incidents, take on white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups, and convene a national working group to counter online hate and protect public safety.

The NDP is also promising to help close the racialized wage gap, prioritize the collection of race-based data on health, employment, policing, and more with the goal of improving outcomes for racialized communities. They will immediately ban the RCMP from carding, and create a national task force to develop a roadmap to end the chronic over-representation of Indigenous people and Black Canadians in the federal prison population. They also propose creating dedicated hate crimes units in major cities.

Green

The Green Party does not have a section dedicated to anti-racism or diversity in its platform. They do call for race-based and gender-based data on all policing action taken during the pandemic. They also support municipalities and provinces reorganizing their budgets to put money into community-developed and community-led support systems. They also include a call for COVID-19 race-based data to make decisions on recovery investment.

Conclusion

Much of the racism in Canada is systematic. It impacts BIPOC in all stages of life, from the quality of education they receive, to whether they can afford to go to post-secondary school, to the types of jobs they're hired to do, and to where they can afford to live. We must ensure, that going forward, the government looks at all programs and policies with an equity lens to ensure that anti-racism efforts are always kept as a priority issue.

If a lack of data is preventing us from taking action, government must work with communities and BIPOC-led organizations to collect the data. And there must be strict protocol on who can access the data and how it is to be used, especially given Canada's history with surveillance and over-policing of BIPOC. Above all else, government must work in partnership BIPOC and ensure funds are not just earmarked but spent on projects to end racism in Canada.

