

A Look at **Education, Income & Employment Inequality** for **Indigenous & People of Colour** in Edmonton

Racism even shows up as we research racism

— data has traditionally been used by people in power to obscure inequities and reinforce their privilege. Gaps in data are not accidental.



“**Racism** is a system of power and violence that structures opportunity and assigns value based on the social construct of race where privilege is afforded to whiteness, unfairly disadvantaging Indigenous Communities and People of Colour.”

CFRAC, 2017

“**Whiteness** is a social construct born out of colonialism. It characterizes the force holding social, political, and economic power. Naming whiteness enables us to map, challenge, and ultimately dismantle oppressive power structures.”

CFRAC, 2017

Stereotypes:

- The **Perpetual Foreigner** stereotype assumes minorities are foreign or “other” due to their connection with ethnic or racial groups, regardless of whether they were born in Canada or not. These folks are often not fully accepted into Canadian society.
- This racist stereotype is reinforced through research by grouping all immigrants under one term which falsely assumes that the experience amongst all generations of immigrants are the same.

Lam, Q. K. (2021). Forever Foreigners and the Myth of the Model Minority.

Unconscious bias refers to the unconscious assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes that humans have about different groups. Biases are ingrained in every part of western culture, and they are taught to us through various systems. These learned mental short-cuts affect how we perceive and respond to people. Unconscious biases prevent us from seeing fairly and accurately the information or the people in front of us.

Discrimination is unfair treatment — whether intentional or not — because of race, religious beliefs (including Indigenous spirituality), colour, gender (male, female or transgendered), physical disability, mental disability, marital status, age, ancestry, place of origin, family status, source of income or sexual orientation.

A note on language:

This document uses the language and terms as reported in the original sources, and as such, may not reflect the language and terms people identify with and use in their daily lives, and may be offensive to some.

Education



Systemic racism within the education system is intended to uphold systems of power that benefit whiteness. Barriers are put in place that prevent Black, Indigenous and students of colour from flourishing. This has lasting impacts for the remainder of these students' lives.

Racialized students in Alberta schools experience:

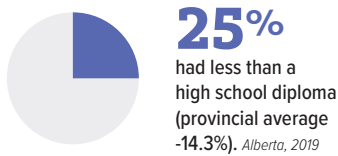
- Microaggressions
- Being incorrectly placed in ESL programs
- Lack of staff diversity and representation of BIPOC in teaching and administrative staff

- Low expectations from teachers stemming from prejudiced assumptions
- Teachers and administrative staff downplaying acts of racism in schools
- Inequitable punishment against Black students
- Race-based bullying

These experiences have psychological, emotional, social, and mental impacts on students and parents including: anger, insecurity, low self-esteem, questioned identity, frustration, inferiority complex, and poor academic performance.

Coalition for Equal Access to Education, March 2022

Indigenous People Living Off-Reserve



TRC and School legacy

- Legacies of the residential school system have had a significant impact on Indigenous people's educational outcomes today
- Residential schools were more focused on labour, education was substandard and living conditions were not conducive to learning
- A 2010 study of Indigenous parents and children living off reserves found that the high school completion rate of children of residential school survivors living on reserves is lower (28%) than for the children of those who did not attend (36%)
- Since 1973, the Government of Canada has claimed that it is committed to devolving control of education to First Nations people, but did not give the resources they needed to do so effectively — as such, Indigenous education on reserves is underfunded and lower quality than the rest of the province, and lacks cultural relevance

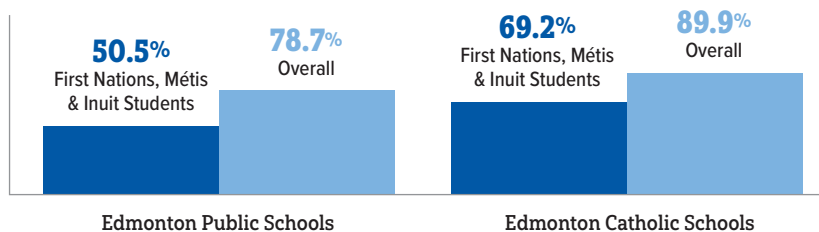
Myth Busting. Facts are:

- Indigenous Bands are allocated a limited amount of money to distribute to students to go to university — there is not enough money for each applicant
- Students need to maintain their grades, reapply each year and there is no guarantee of funding



"It was precisely because **education was the primary tool of oppression of Aboriginal people** and miseducation of all Canadians, that we have concluded that **education holds the key to reconciliation.**" — Justice Murray Sinclair

2019–20 School Year Graduation Rates



New Curriculum

Indigenous leaders have criticized the UCP draft curriculum, arguing it was Eurocentric and perpetuated systemic racism, and that they were not properly consulted.

Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) takes steps to make holiday calendar more inclusive

The Edmonton Public School Board has decided to create holidays (days off school) to mark Diwali and National Indigenous Peoples Day in 2022–23 after a group of advocates called for the board to make its holiday calendar more inclusive, but this group still wants more.

"EPSB's existing holidays ... reflect colonial structures and entrenched privilege. Children from non-Christian religious groups are at a disadvantage."

— Islamic Family and Social Services



School Experience

Note: It is acknowledged that the rates of racism recorded are subtler forms of racism that occur in curriculum, customs, or other historical biases ingrained in the school system were not recorded.

58% of students in Canadian schools said they've **witnessed someone being bullied, excluded or insulted based on their race or ethnicity** in their school —

14% said it happened to **them personally**

Indigenous and visible minority students are, respectively, **2 and 3 times more likely** to say they have **experienced race-based bullying**

21% of students in Canadian schools said they **haven't learned anything at all about racism** in Canada throughout history

Of all students surveyed in Canadian schools:



One-third said they never learned anything about **slavery in Canada**



Half said they didn't learn of the **internment of Japanese Canadians** during the Second World War



Three-in-five said schools didn't teach them about the **head tax on Chinese immigrants**

EPSB currently offers bilingual programming in the following languages:

American Sign Language, Arabic, Mandarin, French, German, Hebrew & Spanish.

Cree language instruction is also available.

Race data to be collected by EPSB

- Edmonton Public Schools has decided to start collecting race-based data on students, with the goals of dismantling systemic racism and racial discrimination
- The board will consult with Black, Indigenous and other racialized communities impacted by racism on how the data will be collected

School Resource Officers

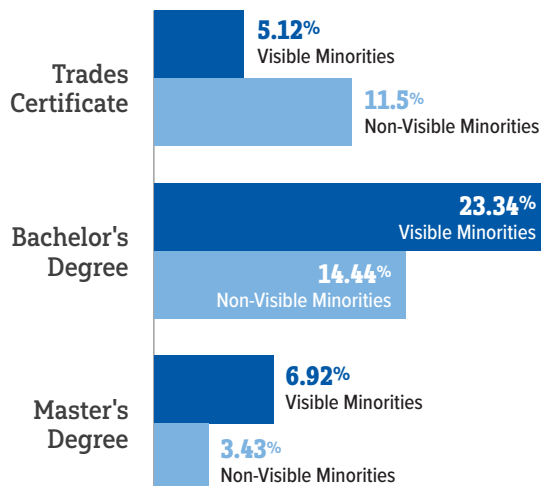
- As of May 2020, there were 26 School Resource Officers (SROs) in High Schools and Junior Highs
- Edmonton Public Schools suspended their program in September 2020 and are currently reviewing the program
- Edmonton Catholic Schools maintains a police presence
- Approximately **1,068** people were criminally charged between September 2011 to December 2021 and 20,963 students were labelled as offenders
- While Edmonton does not share race-based data, in the Toronto District School Board (2016/17):
 - Black students were expelled at a rate 3.3x their representation in the general school population
 - Indigenous — 5x
 - Whites — 0.77x

Edmonton SRO Research Project

- With SROs, school becomes a place where students are investigated, surveilled and charged by police officers
Edmonton SRO Research Project

School to Prison Pipeline: "Through disciplinary policies and practices, teachers and administrators criminalize children, and push students out of schools and into direct contact with ... the criminal justice system." *Black Action Legal Centre, 2022*

Highest Level of Education by Race/Ethnicity



Immigrant Children

- The children of immigrants were generally more likely (43%) than those whose parents had been born in Canada (29%) to complete post-secondary studies
- 67% of children of immigrants from East Asia had university degrees, 56% of children from South Asia and 52% of children from North Africa
- Those from Central America (19%) and the Caribbean and Bermuda (24%) had lower rates
Canada, 2016



Teaching and Racism

"Being a Black female teacher in Alberta has led to many racially abusive experiences that have made me want to stop teaching. Racism, especially at school, feels like an assault that leaves me humiliated and afraid" — *Gail-Ann Wilson, 2021*

- In Ontario's publicly funded school boards, racialized people are passed over for permanent contracts while the white teachers have a faster path to permanency. *Abawi, Z and Eizadirad, A., 2020*

Underrepresentation in Post-secondary Instructors

- Indigenous university professors made up just 1.4% of all university professors and 3% of college instructors. 5% of undergraduate university students are Indigenous
- 21% of racialized university professors are on par with growth in the proportion of the overall labour force
- 2% of University teachers are Black while the Black labour force is about 3.1% *Canada, 2016*

Education Attainment in Black Youth

- A study looking at Black youth in Canada aged 9 to 13 in 2006 were as likely as other Canadian youth to obtain a high school diploma (approximately 90%). But, less likely to attain a post-secondary qualification
- Only 51% of males had a post-secondary diploma 10 years later (62% for non-Black males)
- 34% of Black females had a university degree 10 years later (41% for non-Black females)

Educational barriers for Black Youth

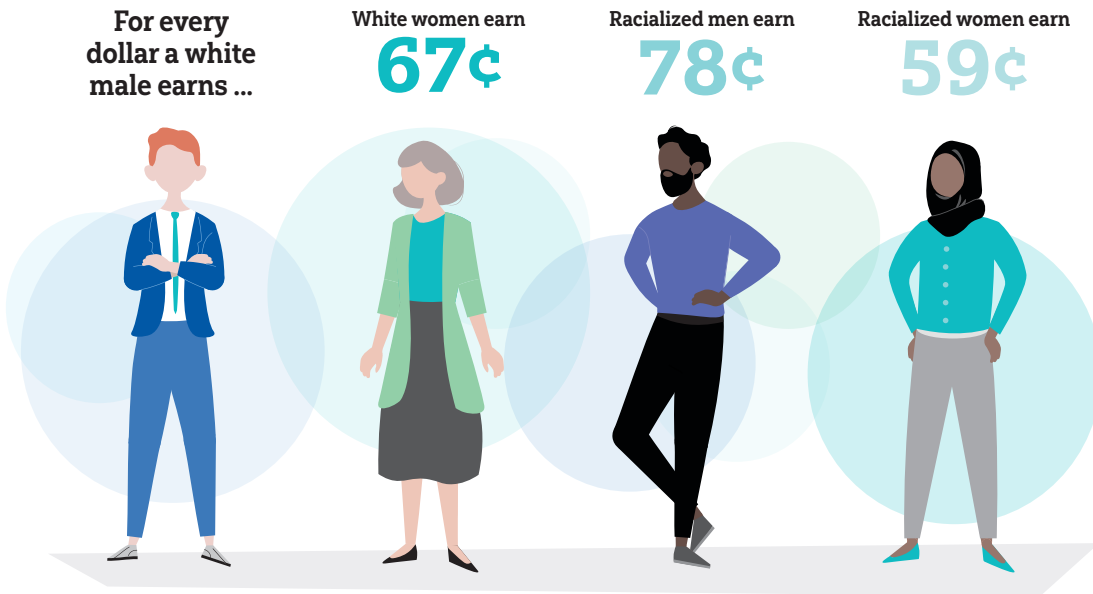
- 94% of Black youth aged 15 to 25 wanted to get a bachelor's degree, but only 60% thought they actually could. *2016*

The Black Experience Project in the Greater Toronto Area

- 49% indicate they felt that being Black presented challenges not faced by other students
- 37% never felt accepted by their teachers, and 41% said that school was not a welcoming place
- Having more teachers who are Black is associated with more positive school experiences. But, most (four in five) were educated in high schools where either a few or none of the teachers were Black

Employment

Systemic racism in employment is intended to uphold systems of power that benefit whiteness. Barriers are put in place that make it hard for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour to do well economically.



Low-income Prevalence

Low income prevalence tends to **decrease** generationally:

14% of first generation visible minority immigrants live with low income, compared to **9.1%** of third generation visible minority immigrants.

First generation **Arabic immigrants** experience the highest low income rate at

34.3%

versus third generation **Arabic immigrants**, who have a low income rate of

13.6%

First generation **Black immigrants** have a low income rate of

20.9%

Filipinos have the lowest low income rate —

4.6%

of first generation **Filipinos** live with low income, compared to

2.5%

of third generation **Filipino immigrants**.

2016

Income Inequality

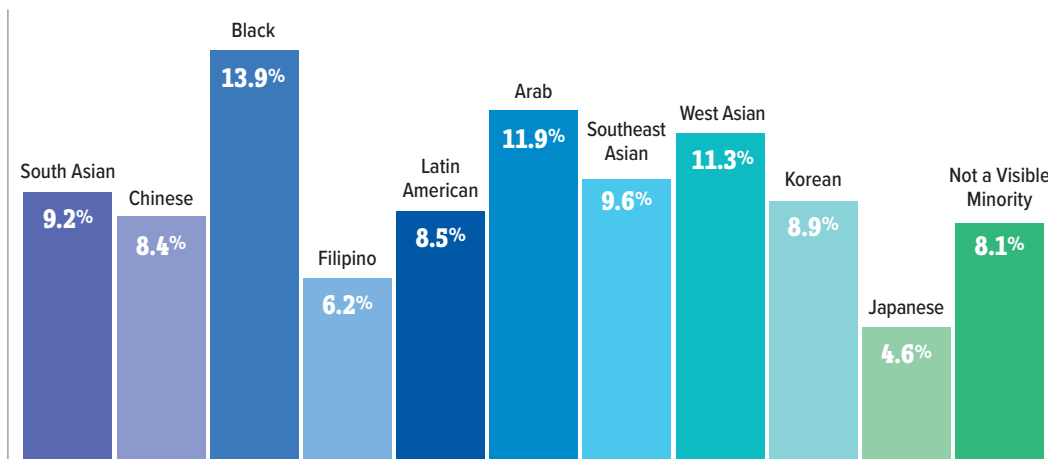
- Racialized Canadians make less than non-racialized Canadians.
- The biggest gap is in management occupations, where racialized Canadians make an average of \$82,364 and non-racialized Canadians make \$120,663.
- Racialized women managers made an average of \$67,420 and non-racialized men managers made \$177,122. 2016

Employment Inequities

- 50% of South Asian women intend to quit their current role.
- 60% of South Asian women reported their skills were underutilized — compared to 46% of all women.
- 59% of South Asian women say they sometimes feel out of place culturally at their job, compared to 35% of all women.
- 57% of South Asian women report feeling they are treated less fairly at work compared to peers, in comparison to 33% of all women.

Unemployment Rates in Edmonton (race is self-identified)

This data includes individuals of all levels of education and length of time in Canada.



Sources for these statistics are available at ecfoundation.org

Canada's Black Population: Education, Labour & Resilience

According to data from the 2016 General Social Survey, Black employees aged 15 or over were more likely than their counterparts in the rest of the population to report having experienced unfair treatment or discrimination at work in the 12 months prior to the survey.

- At the same time, 85% of Black women and 90% of Black men reported a high level of job satisfaction.
- 21% of the Black population aged 25 to 59 lived in a low-income situation, compared with 12% of their counterparts in the rest of the population. *Canada, 2016*

Further research from Toronto shows:

- About 70% of participants say that Black people are frequently treated unfairly because they are Black when seeking employment or work.
- One-third identified anti-Black racism in the workplace, whether explicit or an uncomfortable workplace culture.
- They cited negative experiences, such as having their level of competency questioned, dealing with racism and stereotypes, and having their qualifications overlooked or not recognized. *The Black Experience Project in the GTA, 2017*

Anti-Black racism in the labour force

- A study conducted in Toronto used the same resume and cover letter with the following differences: whether the applicant had a White-sounding or Black-sounding name, and whether the applicant referred to having a criminal record in the cover letter.
- The results showed that among those with no criminal record, the "White" resume received three times the number of call-backs as the "Black" resume. When both candidates indicated a criminal record, the difference jumped to 12x. The "White" applicants with a criminal record still got nearly twice as many call backs as the "Black" applicants with no record.

Income and Wealth Equity



20.8%
of racialized Canadians live with low income.



60%
of racialized families are in the bottom half of the income distribution.

12.2%

of non-racialized Canadians live with low income.



47%

of non-racialized families are in the bottom half of the income distribution. *2016*



Indigenous Employment

Alberta has the fourth highest percentage (4.9%) of Indigenous peoples living off-reserve in the working age population.

- About 40% of them live Edmonton.
- The unemployment rate for this group was 11.2% (Canada overall — 5.7%).
- The average hourly wage for this group was \$28.84 (\$3.31 higher than national average for Indigenous peoples living off-reserve). *Alberta, 2019*

Indigenous people's economic inequities today are directly linked to **colonial processes of dispossession**, the **theft of land and resources**, and **taking away Indigenous peoples' traditional ways** of supporting themselves. *Yellowhead Institute, 2021*

Low-income Prevalence amongst Indigenous People

Indigenous people living in Edmonton have a low income prevalence rate of

18.4%

First Nations = 12.10%
Métis = 13.5%
Inuit = 8.7%

By comparison, **non-Indigenous people in Edmonton** have a low-income prevalence rate of

8.7%

Working During the Pandemic

- Racialized women work as nurses aides, orderlies, patient service associates and home support workers at nearly 3 times their share of the total labour force. *Statistics Canada, 2016*
- During the pandemic, accommodation and food services; information, culture and recreation; and wholesale and retail trade accounted for 80% of job losses in Canada.
 - Racialized women represent 25% of workers in these industries
- 30.2% of Indigenous women were in occupations ranked in the top quartile of COVID danger via proximity to others.

COVID-19 did discriminate: Labour force data sheds light on economic disparities during pandemic (2021)

Whitening of Resumes

- "Resumes containing minority racial cues, such as a distinctively African American or Asian names, lead to 30–50 percent fewer callbacks from employers than do otherwise equivalent resumes without such cues"
- Many people are forced to "whiten" their resumes — by changing their names, removing experience with racial cues — to improve their labour market chances

Kang, S. K., DeCelles, K. A., Tilcsik, A., Jun, S. (2016)

Immigration Contribution to Canada

- Newcomers had a labour force participation rate of 83%. Refugees had a rate of 78% and economic immigrants 90% (vs. Canadian average 87%), 2019
- The more time in Canada, the more income an immigrant makes:
 - Economic immigrants make an average of \$51,900 in the first year after arriving, but make \$74,000 at 15 years.
 - Refugees also make more money the longer they are in Canada, but still lag behind — \$21,100 in the first year, \$35,600 at year 15.
- 42% of refugees used social assistance in the first year since landing, and 25% in year 10.
- Only 2% of economic immigrants use social assistance — much lower than the 6% Canadian average.

Majority of immigrants are economic

- The economic immigration class is the largest source of permanent resident admissions, at approximately 58% of all admissions in 2019 (196,658 persons)
- 106,422 immigrants were admitted to Canada under the economic class in 2020

Immigrants Contribute to the Economy

An influx of **1,000** immigrant families translates to

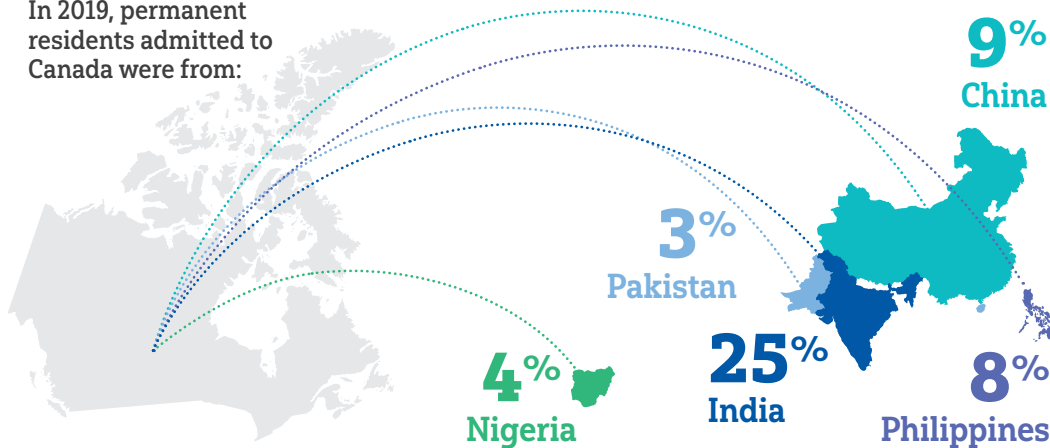
\$84 million in new household expenditures. 1,000 new families also generate

\$20 million per year in municipal, provincial and federal taxes.

State of Immigration and Settlement in Edmonton Annual Report, 2021

Permanent Residents by Country of Origin

In 2019, permanent residents admitted to Canada were from:



Credentials & Overqualification

In a Canada-wide study conducted with workers aged 25 to 49 with a university degree in 2006 and again in 2016:

- 29.3% of Immigrants experienced overqualification at least once, compared with 16.1% of non-immigrants.
- 33.8% of immigrant women and 25.3% of immigrant men experienced overqualification at least once.
- Nearly 10% of immigrants were persistently overqualified.

Working Without Status

Advocates estimate as many as 10,000 to 20,000 (former) Temporary Foreign Workers who have lost status are currently living in Alberta.

- Formal employment is closed off and these workers have to subsist through casual, informal, cash-based work through community networks and connections. These make them vulnerable to unsafe conditions such as not getting paid, being shortchanged and unsafe working conditions.

Luciano, M. and Foster, J. Parkland Institute, 2020



Immigrants Start Small Businesses

12.2% of small and medium enterprises in Canada were owned by visible minorities in 2017.

80.3% of this group was born outside of Canada.

SME Profile: Ownership demographic statistics

Newcomers to Canada are more likely to start a business that grows more quickly and creates more net jobs per enterprise than the Canadian-born population.

The entrepreneurial rate among newcomers is **more than double** the rate for people born in Canada. *Thevenot, S. (2019)*