

# Canada's 2023 Voluntary National Review

A CONTINUED JOURNEY FOR  
IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA  
AND THE SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS



This document was prepared by the Government of Canada's Sustainable Development Goals Unit, in collaboration with departments across the federal government along with partners and stakeholders representing the whole of Canadian society.

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**Canada's Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development  
2023 Voluntary National Review**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER



Combatting inequalities, protecting the planet, and providing every person with the opportunities they need to prosper are fundamental principles of sustainable development. With armed conflict, climate change, and economic, housing, and food insecurity on the rise, people are worried about what these challenges mean

for their families. In the face of these challenges, it is important that we understand the interconnected nature of these crises, both at home and abroad. The 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) chart the path to overcome these crises and build a future that is fair, equal, and peaceful, with clean air and clean water for everyone.

I am honoured to co-chair the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's SDG Advocates group, a responsibility that I do not take lightly. I continue working closely with my co-chair, the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, in uniting countries, governments, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector, and other partners, to accelerate progress and grow our ambition as we move toward 2030.

Since 2015, Canada has worked hard to help lift the most vulnerable out of poverty and make life more affordable across the country, fight climate change and protect the environment, and grow our economy to benefit everyone, while creating good, middle-class jobs. We have led the world in programs like our plan to deliver \$10-a-day child care across the country,

and we have a world-leading price on pollution that fights climate change and puts more money back in the pockets of families too.

Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy is aligned with and guides Canada's international implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Investing in women's organizations is not only a goal in itself but a means of achieving peace, stability, and prosperity around the world. Canada will continue to strengthen efforts to advance gender equality, promote the empowerment of women and girls, and make progress on other SDGs, such as tackling climate change, lifting people out of poverty, and ensuring no one is left behind.

With all ambitious endeavours, it is crucial to know where we are so we can know where we are going. That is what Canada's Voluntary National Review seeks to do. The presentation of this review to UN Member States and stakeholders during the High-Level Political Forum in July 2023 is an opportunity to recognize the whole-of-society efforts made to support Canada's progress toward the SDGs. It is also an important occasion to hold ourselves accountable, share our successes and challenges, and engage in key discussions about how we can continue to improve.

I am pleased to present this report which clearly demonstrates that Canada is making progress and continues to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Success lies in everyone working together. To get ahead we all need to take responsibility to protect our planet. I am relentlessly optimistic that we can and we will work together to deliver a peaceful, just, and sustainable future for all.

—Prime Minister of Canada, **Justin Trudeau**



# MINISTERS' MESSAGE



The 2030 Agenda and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide us with a vibrant and hopeful roadmap to build a better world together. As a federal government, we have an ambitious agenda on sustainability; socially, economically and environmentally. As such, advancing the SDGs at home and abroad continues to be a Government of Canada priority.

Building on the strong foundations achieved over the past eight years, Canada remains steadfast in its commitment to enabling and accelerating progress to achieve the SDGs in an inclusive, whole-of-society approach.

As we mark the halfway point of the 2030 Agenda, we are pleased to present Canada's second Voluntary National Review (VNR). The 2023 VNR evaluates progress made toward achieving the 17 SDGs. It reports on all SDGs with a focus on Canada's efforts to advance five national priorities: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

As a country, significant advancements have been made since the first VNR in 2018. In February 2021, we launched Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy, a whole-of-society approach to achieving the SDGs. This strategy was developed through extensive consultations with all levels of governments, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, the private sector, academia, international partners and many stakeholders. It is Canada's plan for working together on the SDGs and it guides our implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In July 2022, we released Taking Action Together—Canada's 2021 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, delivering on our commitment to report on progress while demonstrating our leadership, transparency and accountability on this important global agenda.

Canada is advancing the SDGs through partnerships with stakeholders and has fostered collaboration on a range of issues including social equity, poverty reduction, gender equality, climate change and affordable housing.

Internationally, Canada is leading on the 2030 Agenda, guided by our Feminist International Assistance Policy, which recognizes the importance of advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls to achieving the SDGs.

When we think about the world through the lens of the SDGs, we should feel inspired, empowered, and hopeful. The VNR recognizes the exceptional work happening in Canada and around the world—at all levels of governments. Together, we will continue to take action driven by an intersectional, gender-responsive and whole-of-society approach to ensure our efforts are effective, impactful and leave no one behind.

—Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, **Karina Gould**

—Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, **Harjit S. Sajjan**









# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada is committed to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a 15-year action plan adopted by all United Nations (UN) member countries. At the heart of the Agenda are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are a global call to action to address today's most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges. The SDGs recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth—all while tackling climate change and working to protect and preserve the environment. The 2030 Agenda is a shared responsibility that requires a whole-of-society effort to build stronger, safer, and more inclusive communities that leave no one behind.

Canada's 2023 Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports on Canada's achievements and experiences to advance the 2030 Agenda since the baseline assessment in Canada's first VNR in 2018—[Canada's Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Consistent with UN guidelines, Canada's second VNR describes how Canada established strong institutional mechanisms to implement the 2030 Agenda and built an enabling environment where dialogue and action on the 2030 Agenda converge and thrive across the country and internationally.

The VNR also assesses Canada's achievements and challenges since 2018 across all SDGs, with a focus on five of them: No Poverty (SDG 1), Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Climate Action (SDG 13) and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17). These priority SDGs are aligned with Canada's domestic and international priorities. The results for each of the 17 SDGs are measured against the most current Canadian data available as of the end of April 2023 the Global Indicator Framework and the Canadian Indicator Framework.

This VNR was developed through consultation and reflects collaborative efforts to advance the SDGs, including contributions and notable efforts from federal, provincial, and territorial governments, municipalities, National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs), not-for-profit organizations, academia, the private sector and other civil society actors. It also includes robust data and statistics to measure and quantify Canada's progress toward reaching targets for the SDGs. The VNR is complemented by an annex highlighting additional stakeholder and partner initiatives to localize the SDGs (Annex A). A Statistical Annex (Annex B) provides disaggregated data and a measure of progress that quantifies progress toward reaching identified target(s) for each of SDGs.

While Canada has made good progress to date, continued action is required to meet its ambitions. Each SDG chapter of this VNR highlights opportunities for action and improvements toward advancing the 17 SDGs. Building on the strong foundations achieved over the past eight years, Canada remains steadfast in its commitment to enabling and accelerating progress to achieve the SDGs in an inclusive, whole-of-society approach to ensure no one is left behind.

SECTION I

# **Building on a Strong Foundation for Action on the 2030 Agenda**





Canada, like all other United Nations (UN) member countries, made a commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda and work toward achieving each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, and building on the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2018, Canada has continued to create a solid foundation and make progress on the SDGs. Voluntary National Reviews are an important element of implementing the 2030 Agenda. They enable Canada and UN Member States to share lessons learned, good practices, collaborate and discuss milestones toward the 2030 Agenda. This VNR is a significant opportunity for Canada to reconfirm its commitments to sustainable development and to demonstrate leadership, transparency, and accountability.

[Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#) was released in 2021. It calls on all levels of governments, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, the private sector, academia, international partners, and other stakeholders to advance the 2030 Agenda. It sets a clear blueprint for ongoing dialogue, participation, and collaboration. It encourages all Canadians to find ways to act individually and collectively to advance the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind. By fostering partnerships and collaboration on a range of issues including equity, poverty reduction, gender equality, climate change and affordable housing, Canada is advancing the SDGs in partnership with whole-of-society stakeholders to build a more prosperous, healthy, and sustainable future for all.

This strategy was developed through extensive consultations with the whole-of-society with the aim of creating an enabling environment for all to take action to achieve the SDGs. It is Canada's plan for working together on the Goals, and it guides Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda in five ways:

1. Fostering leadership, governance and policy coherence;
2. Raising awareness, engagement, and partnerships;

3. Increasing accountability, transparency, measurement and reporting;
4. Advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples to advance the 2030 Agenda; and
5. Investing in the SDGs.

The Strategy also aims to accelerate progress for those left furthest behind, including Indigenous Peoples, racialized and religious minority, 2SLGBTQI+, disability, and official language minority communities, as well as other groups in vulnerable situations.

Canada is tracking its progress against the SDGs through the [Global Indicator Framework](#) and the [Canadian Indicator Framework](#) (CIF). First released in 2019 and refreshed in 2021, the CIF is a set of indicators that align with Canada's domestic SDG priorities. Canadian data for both indicator frameworks is available to the public in order to allow for an evidence-based dialogue across society on Canada's performance toward meeting each SDG.

Canada is committed to transparency in its progress toward advancing the SDGs. [Taking Action Together—Canada's 2021 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals](#) was released in July 2022. It highlights initiatives across Canada by all levels of government, Indigenous Peoples, a wide range of civil society organizations, the private sector and academia that contribute to advancing the SDGs at home and abroad. Partners and stakeholders across Canada are also carrying out their own respective Voluntary Local Reviews, conducting research studies and presenting local data on progress.

Canada is making significant progress in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the 17 SDGs domestically and abroad. Canada's second VNR evaluates progress since presenting its first VNR in 2018 and highlights efforts to advance the SDGs. This VNR was developed in consultation with all levels of government, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, academia, and individual Canadians. It is underpinned by data and takes stock of whole-of-society actions, achievements, and challenges.

## Creating an enabling environment for the whole-of-society to take action on the SDGs

Since 2018, Canada has engaged with Canadians—including provincial, territorial and municipal governments, Indigenous Peoples, civil society and the private sector—to define Canada’s approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda and develop [Moving Forward Together: Canada’s 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#) to catalyze action on the SDGs. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, partners and stakeholders have responded to the SDGs’ call to action by:

- taking ownership of the SDGs;
- integrating the SDGs into their existing work;
- raising awareness on the SDGs through their networks;
- fostering innovative partnerships to drive progress;
- strengthening data to measure progress on the SDGs; and,
- sharing knowledge, best practices and challenges on their respective and collective efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

An annex—Spotlight: Partners and Stakeholders Actions to Localize the SDGs (Annex A)—highlights additional initiatives from stakeholders and partners to localize and advance the SDGs.

In 2018, the Government of Canada committed \$59.8 million<sup>1</sup> over 13 years (2018 to 2031)<sup>2</sup> for the [SDG Funding Program](#) to foster local and community results. Not-for-profit organizations, governments, academia, the private sector, Indigenous communities and organizations, women, youth and other stakeholders are accessing the Program funding to:

- build engagement;
- increase public awareness of the SDGs;

- collect data to set baselines and track progress;
- conduct research, policy briefs and reports on the SDGs;
- develop partnerships and capacity-building;
- identify innovative approaches to advance the SDGs; and,
- contribute to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

To date, the [SDG Funding Program](#) has allocated \$22 million to support 131 projects that help to advance the 2030 Agenda. Since 2020, the Program has also funded three NIOs—the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and the Métis National Council (MNC)—to ensure Indigenous voices, views and traditional knowledge are reflected in Canada’s work to advance the SDGs.

## Strengthening institutional mechanisms and bringing about policy coherence to implement the 2030 Agenda

The Government of Canada has established a robust structure to implement the 2030 Agenda in a coordinated way, advance the SDGs and engage with Canadians. In 2018, the SDG Unit, housed in the Department of Employment and Social Development Canada, was created to lead coordination of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Canada.

To further establish accountability at the federal level, the Government of Canada released its [Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda](#) in 2021 that identifies a governance structure and accountability of federal departments and agencies to deliver on [Moving Forward Together: Canada’s 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#), make progress toward the SDGs and support the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

<sup>1</sup> Dollar amounts reported in the VNR are in Canadian Dollars unless indicated otherwise

<sup>2</sup> [budget.canada.ca/2018/docs/plan/budget-2018-en.pdf](https://budget.canada.ca/2018/docs/plan/budget-2018-en.pdf)

The Government of Canada is using the SDGs to enhance policy coherence and alignment across the federal government. The SDGs are also reflected in the Government of Canada's priorities through existing planning and reporting processes, including:

- [Gender-Based Analysis Plus \(GBA Plus\)](#), which assesses structural or systemic inequalities and the different experiences of diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse peoples to inform the development of initiatives and legislation. Applying a GBA Plus lens helps identify marginalized groups and vulnerable populations, data disaggregation requirements and gaps, and whether progress on the SDGs results in improvements for those of highest need in Canada.
- The [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](#), which brings together the Government of Canada's sustainable development priorities, establishes goals and targets, and identifies actions to achieve them. The 2022 to 2026 strategy is framed using the 17 SDGs, is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and highlights federal government actions to support the achievement of the SDGs.
- The [Quality of Life Framework](#), launched in 2021, aims to inform federal government budgeting and decision-making. The framework reflects the SDGs and other government priorities in decision-making and policy development.
- The SDGs have been included in Canada's parliamentary reporting by federal departments and agencies, such as in [Departmental Plans](#) and [Departmental Results Reports](#). This reporting ensures consistent and transparent information across federal departments and agencies on their respective contributions toward advancing the SDGs.

## Collecting robust data, measuring results and reporting on progress

Canada has also taken significant actions to ensure strong SDG measurement and reporting. Statistics Canada collects, collates, analyzes, and disseminates data for regular monitoring and progress reporting for both the Global and Canadian Indicator Frameworks.

The CIF was launched in 2019 and refined in 2021. It established 31 Canadian ambitions and 76 indicators to monitor and measure Canada's progress toward achieving the 17 SDGs. Canadian data is available to the public, through two interactive data hubs: the [CIF](#) and the [Global Indicator Framework data hub](#). These hubs provide disaggregated data that offers a more complete picture of disparities experienced by populations that are marginalized and/or living in vulnerable situations, which can help to inform efforts aimed at ensuring that no one is being left behind. To enhance Canada's reporting on the Canadian Indicator Framework, Statistics Canada launched a new "measure of progress" on its data hub, in 2023.<sup>3</sup> It presents a simplified illustration of Canada's progress toward achieving each of the SDGs, based on the assumption that the current trends will continue. The VNR and its Statistical Annex (Annex B) feature measures of progress for selected SDG indicators and targets.

Canada is reporting regularly and transparently on progress to advance the SDGs through annual reports and its 2018 and 2023 VNR. Canada's first annual report, [Taking Action Together—Canada's 2021 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs](#), was released in July 2022. In addition to an account of Canada's progress since 2015 toward its 2030 domestic ambitions and targets, the Report highlighted initiatives by all levels of governments, Indigenous Peoples, a wide range of civil society organizations, the private sector and academia to advance the SDGs at the national,

3 For more information on the methodology of the Progress Measurement for Canada's SDGs is available: [sdgcif-data-canada-oddci-donnee.github.io/methodology](https://sdgcif-data-canada-oddci-donnee.github.io/methodology)



regional and local levels.<sup>4</sup> As part of its efforts to increase awareness of Canada's progress toward achieving the SDGs, the federal government has created two series of [17 infographics](#) presenting Canada's progress on the SDGs to complement other reporting.

## Canada's international initiatives to implement the 2030 Agenda

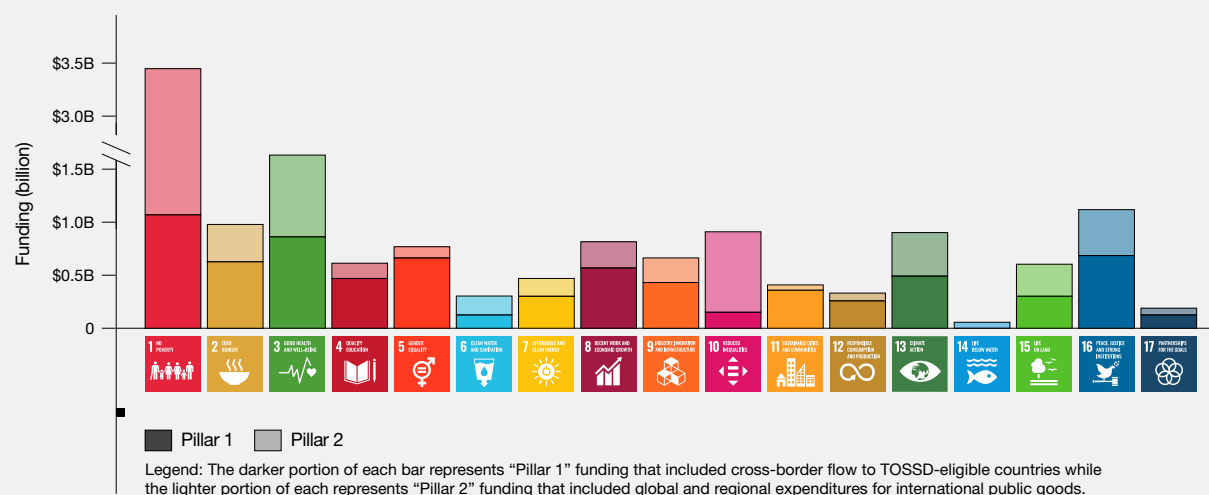
Canada's international contributions are guided by priorities identified in Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy, which incorporates its key [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#), [Canada's Inclusive Approach to Trade](#) and [National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#). Canada believes a stronger rules-based international system, lasting peace and security, access to justice, prosperity and human rights including diversity, inclusion and gender equality are essential for results across all SDGs.

Canada's international initiatives are aligned with ongoing, coordinated, whole-of-government and whole-of-society efforts to advance human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and respect for diversity. Through these efforts, all people, regardless of their background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other intersecting identities, can fully benefit from equal participation in economic, political, social and cultural life. In doing so, Canada aims to strengthen the rules-based international system, supporting lasting peace and security, and fostering inclusive and sustainable development and prosperity for all.

Through its Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD)<sup>5</sup> Canada supports sustainable development in developing countries. From years 2018 to 2021, Canada mobilized \$33.5 billion in TOSSD and, as a result of blended finance initiatives, mobilized a further \$635 million in private investments. Below is a breakdown of how much funding was mobilized for each SDG.

### SPOTLIGHT: Canada's Total Official Support for Sustainable Development by SDG, 2021

Figure 1  
Canada's support to the Sustainable Development Goals



<sup>4</sup> The Government of Canada works with partners and stakeholders to advance the 2030 Agenda through concrete actions on the 17 SDGs. A compendium of Government of Canada programs and policies that contribute to advancing each of the SDGs is also available: [canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/agenda-2030.html](https://canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/agenda-2030.html)

<sup>5</sup> Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) encompasses all officially supported resource flows to promote sustainable development in developing countries and to support developing countries enables and address global challenges. Note: For more information, consult: [tossd.org](https://tossd.org)

Canada supports the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development](#) as the primary financing framework for implementing the 2030 Agenda. To help mobilize all sources of financing, Canada has increased its engagement on key financing for sustainable development actions. This includes collaborating with multilateral development banks and the private sector on economic and social infrastructure, piloting innovative financing mechanisms, addressing debt vulnerabilities, improving remittance flows and supporting tax cooperation. In response to finance challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Trudeau, alongside Prime Minister Holness of Jamaica and UN Secretary General Guterres, launched the Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond Initiative (FFDI) in May 2020. The FFDI brought the international community together to develop practical policy approaches, respond to the socio-economic and financial impacts of the pandemic, and support renewed efforts toward achieving the SDGs.

## Leaving no one behind

Leaving no one behind is at the core of Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Canada is taking action to reduce poverty, advance gender equality, support the empowerment of women and girls, reduce inequalities, build more inclusive societies, confront discrimination, and fast track progress for those furthest behind. This includes First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, racialized and religious minority communities, 2SLGBTQI+ people, official language minority communities, and other marginalized groups in vulnerable situations. In the spirit of leaving no one behind, the Government of Canada is updating funding programs to expand access to underserved communities while pursuing action on anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion so that everyone can participate in, contribute to, and benefit from sustainable development.

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected groups living in vulnerable situations, amplified inequalities, and lead to substantial impacts on

SDG progress. On the path to an inclusive and resilient recovery, all levels of governments in Canada implemented financial supports and other initiatives to help those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

The SDG progress assessment in the VNR and the Statistical Annex (Annex B) provide disaggregated data for all 17 SDGs. This enables measurement on how well actions taken to advance the SDGs benefits certain populations and supports the identification of potential gaps.



## Advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

The federal government is engaging with Indigenous partners to achieve the 2030 Agenda and ensuring that reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is considered across all 17 SDGs. This includes actions through negotiated treaties, agreements and other arrangements recognizing and implementing Indigenous rights (SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG 14 (Life Below Water); SDG 15 (Life on Land); and, SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)).

A distinctions-based approach is needed to ensure that the unique cultures, rights and interests of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities are recognized and implemented. The Government of Canada and Indigenous partners have co-developed distinctions-based approaches to address gaps

in services and advance self-determination for Indigenous Peoples in areas such as: Indigenous post-secondary education, as well as early learning and child care (SDG 4); health and wellness (SDG 3); infrastructure (SDGs 9 and 11); and, new clean growth and climate change initiatives (SDG 13).

Through its continued implementation of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#), Canada aims to redress the legacy of Indian residential schools and advance the process of reconciliation. Many of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action propose specific measures that also seek to reduce inequalities (SDG 10) in key areas such as employment and training (SDG 8), housing (SDG 11), and health (SDG 3). They propose specific measures for increased access to justice and culturally-relevant supports for Indigenous justice (SDG 16).

By implementing the [2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#) (released in 2021), Canada aims to increase access to justice, culturally-relevant supports, the use of restorative justice practices for Indigenous Peoples within the Canadian justice system, and support for Indigenous justice (SDG 5 and SDG 16). In the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people](#), the Government of Canada makes commitments related to culture, health and wellness, human safety and security and justice that align with many SDGs.

Canada has endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The federal government committed to the Declaration's full and effective implementation as a lasting roadmap to advance reconciliation by adopting the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) domestically in 2021. The Act supports various SDGs and will advance actions to support

sustainable development, enable self-determination and Indigenous stewardship, respond to impacts of climate change on Indigenous Peoples and recognize their role in contributing to sustainable development (SDG 13). It also supports concrete measures to address injustices, combat prejudice and eliminate all forms of violence, racism and discrimination, including systemic racism and discrimination (SDG 10). The Act will help build stronger relationships, close socio-economic gaps, and promote greater prosperity for Indigenous Peoples and all Canadians (SDG 16). The Act requires the federal government to work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to take necessary measures to ensure federal laws are consistent with the Declaration, and to develop an action plan to achieve its objectives through collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Service transfer agreements are also allowing communities to move toward self-determination and support UNDRIP implementation.

Internationally, Canada is advancing the rights, cultures, and prosperity of Indigenous Peoples by enhancing the participation of Indigenous Peoples in designing solutions to global challenges through bilateral and multilateral fora.





## SPOTLIGHT: National Indigenous Organizations

### Assembly of First Nations

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization that works to advance the collective aspirations of First Nations individuals and communities across Canada, which includes more than 900,000 people living in more than 600 First Nation communities across the country.

First Nations have been practising sustainable development since time immemorial and have demonstrated leadership on environmental protection, conservation and climate change. No relationship is more valuable to First Nations than that with Mother Earth. AFN has a mandate to increase participation in decision-making processes relating to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. First Nations view sustainable development beyond the three pillars of economic, social and environmental aspects, and recognize culture as an important pillar of sustainable development, while also viewing sustainable development through a rights-based framework, most notably through UNDRIP.<sup>6</sup> A whole-of-government approach is necessary but challenging, as there needs to be policy coherence to effectively address First Nations priorities.

AFN advances SDG 5 (Gender Equality) by working with the Government of Canada to implement the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 231 Calls for Justice, the Indigenous-led [National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#), and the [First Nations Action Plan Report, Breathing Life into the Calls for Justice](#). SDG 5 is further advanced by AFN's creation of the National Caucus of Women Leaders to create a supportive environment and structure with intergovernmental relations between federal, provincial, and municipal governments, to ensure that First Nations women feel comfortable and supported as they work to implement goals they've set for their leadership. This caucus will complement the existing AFN Women's Council to ensure that First Nations women's interests are integrated throughout

the work of AFN. This includes implementing the National Action Plan to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Furthermore, AFN advances SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by including 2SLGBTQQIA+ voices within its Council. This will help create a diversity of voices within AFN's work that is inclusive and respectful of a variety of perspectives.<sup>7</sup>

### Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) is a national representative organization for 70,000 Inuit in Canada, the majority of whom live in Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland encompassing 51 communities across the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Quebec), and Nunatsiavut (Northern Labrador). ITK represents the rights and interests of Inuit at the national level through a democratic governance structure that represents all Inuit regions.

Since 2020, ITK has worked to increase awareness of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs through the "Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and The United Nations SDGs: Linkages Project". The project's final report describes the strong alignment between the SDGs and the various initiatives led by ITK to advance the rights of Inuit in Canada. It also describes the remaining SDG inequalities between Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat and the rest of Canada. It recommends ways to ensure that the 2030 Agenda can remain relevant for all, especially Inuit, including:

- establishing metrics, Inuit-specific commitments, and Inuit-specific indicators to better measure progress and track results;
- ensuring that Inuit self-determination is a foundational principle that underpins efforts by Canada to achieve the SDGs across Inuit Nunangat;
- taking action toward eliminating the inequities between Inuit Nunangat and the rest of Canada across all the SDGs; and,

<sup>6</sup> [fsds-sfdd.ca/en/introducing-the-strategy](https://fsds-sfdd.ca/en/introducing-the-strategy)

<sup>7</sup> [afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2021\\_Executive\\_ENG\\_compressed-1.pdf](https://afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2021_Executive_ENG_compressed-1.pdf)

- pursuing meaningful engagement with Inuit partners by ensuring programs, strategies, or funding designed to implement the SDGs within Canada are developed and implemented in collaboration with Inuit.

To advance the SDGs in Inuit Nunangat, the report highlights the importance of leveraging existing partnerships, structures and strategies. For example:

- The [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#) (2022) outlines an approach for the design and renewal of all federal initiatives that apply in Inuit Nunangat or benefit Inuit. It provides a space to coordinate efforts to tackle climate change and other environmental issues to advance SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life under Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) in Inuit Nunangat.
- Inuit partners and the Government of Canada co-developed the [Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy](#) (2019) through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC). The Strategy sets out a common vision and direction to improve housing outcomes in Inuit Nunangat. With a view to address the important housing needs in Inuit Nunangat—reducing overcrowding and reliance on social housing, increasing affordable housing options and improving housing quality—it provides direction for federal investments in Inuit housing. The implementation of the strategy will contribute to advancing both SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) in Inuit Nunangat.
- Ongoing data collection through the National Inuit Health Survey, Qanuippitaa will provide Inuit-specific data relating to Inuit health and well-being, and raise awareness of issues impacting Inuit health. It will be an important source of information to track progress on SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) in Inuit Nunangat.

## Métis National Council

The Métis National Council (MNC) is the national and international voice of the Métis Nation within Canada. The Métis Nation continuously advocates for at risk populations and those that are being directly impacted by climate change and unsustainable development.

Over the past years, MNC has increased Métis Nation engagement on the SDGs to provide its unique perspective on sustainable development. MNC has also highlighted interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and the closing of socio-economic gaps between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians. Several of MNC's initiatives to advance Métis rights and interests in Canada are well aligned with the SDGs. For example, since 2017, MNC has participated in the [Métis Nation—Canada Joint Table on Clean Growth Climate Change](#) (now known as the Goose Moon Table) to advance Métis climate change and related health priorities and shape community-based climate monitoring initiatives. MNC is also leading the development of a new National Métis Climate Strategy (SDG 13, Climate Action).

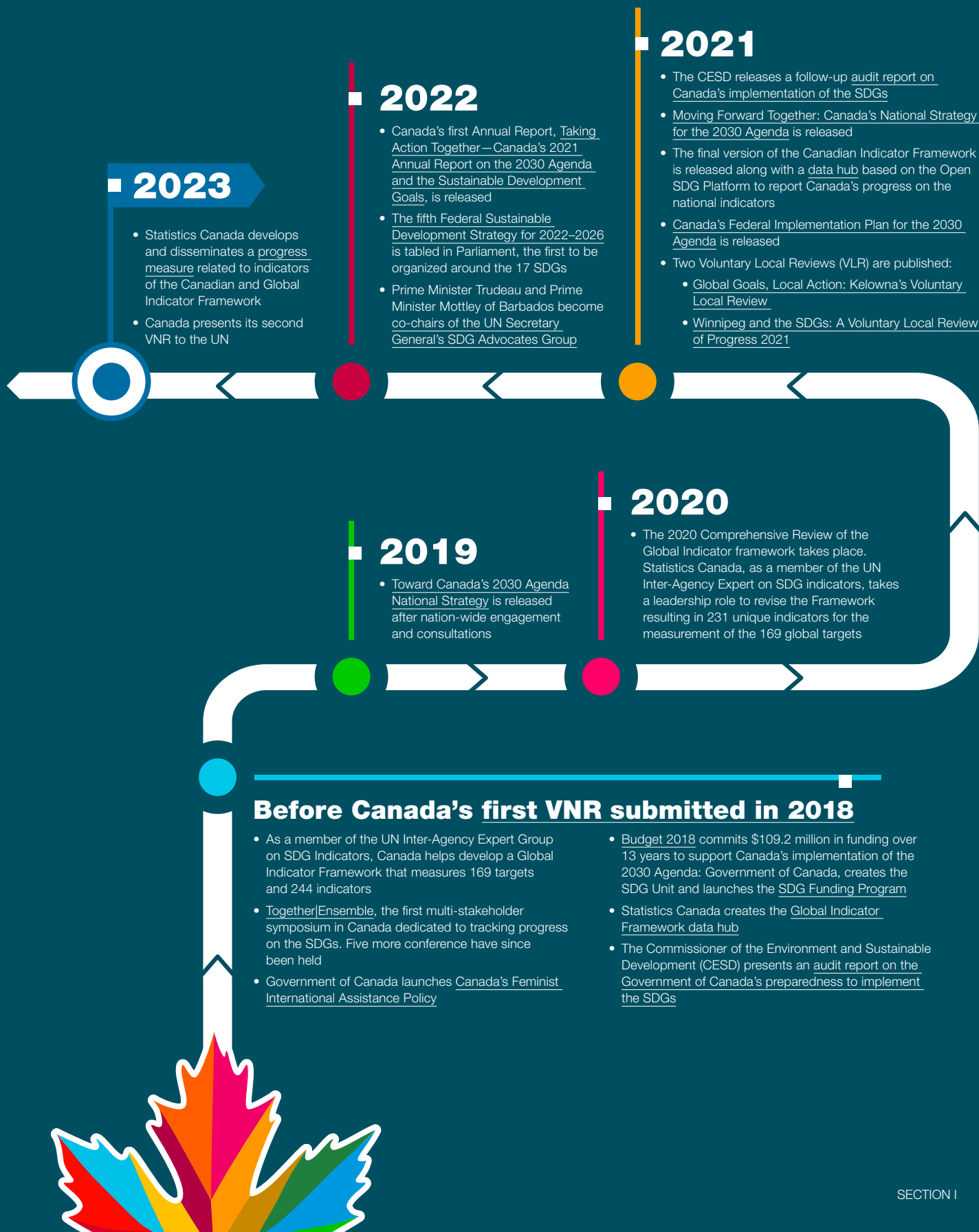
MNC's work toward the preservation and revitalization of the Michif language is core to achieving the 2030 Agenda's overarching objective to leave no one behind. The revitalisation of Indigenous languages is essential for ensuring the continuation and intergenerational transmission of culture, customs and history, but it is also important to address biodiversity loss and climate change.<sup>8</sup> While the Métis Nation has experienced significant growth in the last fifteen years, the number of citizens that speak the Michif language has continued to decline. MNC is developing strategies for language revitalization based on a shared vision for a future that will ensure the preservation of the Michif language. This work includes the development of a Michif Language Action Plan, and advancing the [10-year Canada-Métis Nation Michif Language Accord](#) (signed in 2017).

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8 [un.org/en/desa/protecting-languages-preserving-cultures-0](https://un.org/en/desa/protecting-languages-preserving-cultures-0)

Figure 2

## SPOTLIGHT: Key Milestones in Canada's Implementation and Advancement of the 2030 Agenda





SECTION II

## **Taking Action on Canada's Five Priority Sustainable Development Goals**





## SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

### CANADIAN AMBITION

- Reduce poverty in Canada in all its forms

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

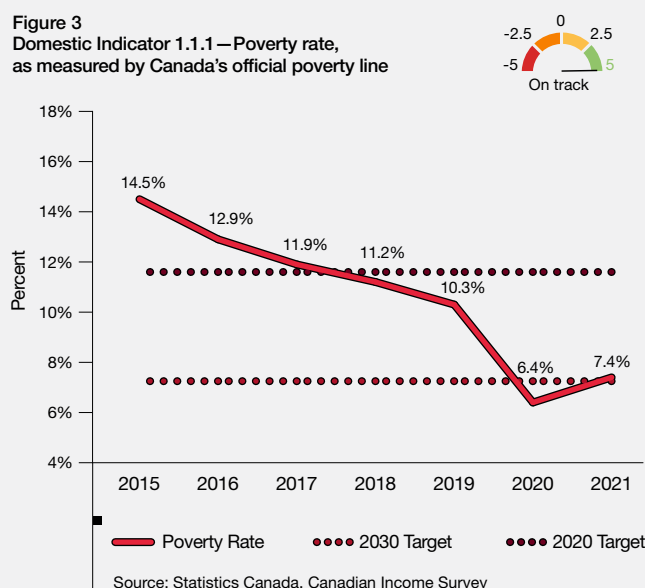
- In 2018, the Government of Canada launched [Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). The strategy sets targets for poverty reduction that align with SDG 1: a 20% reduction in poverty by 2020, and a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030, relative to 2015 levels.<sup>9</sup>
- Canada has been making tangible progress toward meeting its legislated poverty reduction targets. Canada has exceeded its interim target of a 20% reduction in poverty. Canada's poverty rate was 7.4% in 2021, nearly half the 2015 rate (14.5%). While recent data reflect the emergence of new challenges, including high inflation, Canada remains well-positioned to achieve a 50% decrease in poverty by 2030, based on 2015 levels.

### SPOTLIGHT: Poverty rates in Canada have been declining since 2015 but the most recent poverty data reflects the emergence of new challenges for vulnerable Canadians

Despite challenges for Canadians in poverty and at-risk of poverty, Canada remains well-positioned to attain its key legislated target of a 50% decrease in poverty by 2030, based on 2015 levels. In 2021, Canada's poverty rate was 7.4%, up by 1% from the historic-low of 6.4% in 2020 and markedly down from the pre-pandemic level of 10.3% in 2019, the last pre-pandemic year.

These results reflect the impacts of unprecedented temporary emergency income support programs introduced in response to the economic impact of COVID-19. This large and timely increase to income support prevented many Canadians unable to work from experiencing poverty in a year during which Canada faced a major crisis. However, these programs were designed as temporary measures from the outset and at least a partial return to pre-pandemic trends is expected in 2021 and 2022.

Figure 3  
Domestic Indicator 1.1.1 — Poverty rate,  
as measured by Canada's official poverty line



<sup>9</sup> Canada's Official Poverty Line is based on the Market Basket Measure, a made-in-Canada measure which compares the disposable incomes of individuals and families to the cost of a "basket" of goods and services needed to have a basic and modest standard of living in Canada.

- In response to the social and economic crisis and new disruptions created by COVID-19, the Government of Canada announced an Economic Response Plan in March 2020. This plan included several federal relief measures aimed at individuals, businesses, economic sectors, and communities. As part of these measures, the Government announced emergency response benefits in April 2020 with the [Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) for individuals, followed by the [Canada Recovery Benefit](#),

[Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit](#), and the [Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit](#). In 2021, the [Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit](#) was introduced and made available to impacted regions until May 2022.

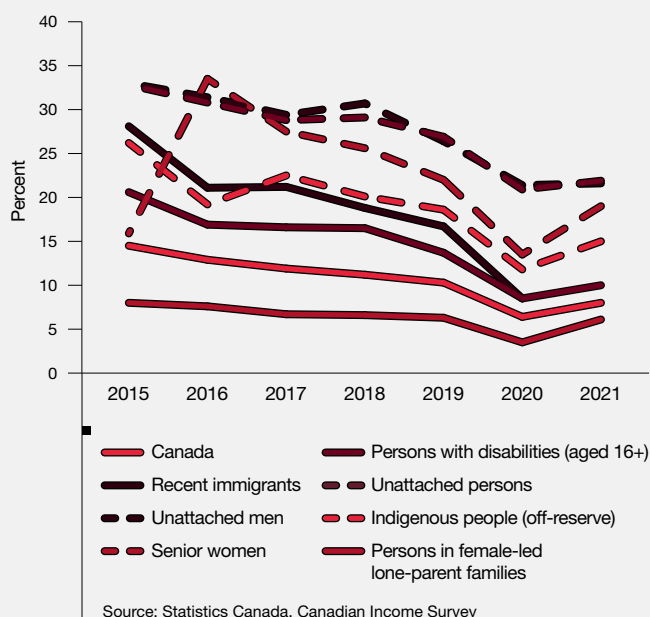
- Like many countries, Canada began to experience rising inflation in 2021. This impacted poverty rates, as the goods and services needed to establish a basic and modest standard of living became more expensive.

## SPOTLIGHT: Poverty continues to be experienced differently amongst some groups of Canadians

While signals of progress on national poverty rates are encouraging, poverty in Canada continues to be experienced differently among some groups of Canadians. Poverty rates for seniors remain below Canada's average. Groups of Canadians at greater risk of poverty include:

- Persons with disabilities
- Recent immigrants
- Indigenous Peoples
- Single persons
- Single mothers

Figure 4  
Poverty Rates of Canadians most at-risk of Poverty, 2015–2021



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

### Reducing Poverty in All its Forms

The Government of Canada released [Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) in 2018. It brings together significant investments made since 2015 to support the social and economic well-being of all Canadians. These investments include funding for key poverty reduction initiatives,

such as the [Canada Child Benefit](#) (representing an investment of more than \$25 billion per year), the [Canada Workers Benefit](#), the [Canada Learning Bond](#) and the [National Housing Strategy](#). As a complement to the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Government passed the [Poverty Reduction Act](#) in 2019. The Act entrenches into law Canada's poverty reduction targets, Canada's Official Poverty Line,<sup>10</sup> and the National Advisory Council on Poverty.

<sup>10</sup> Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy introduced an official poverty line for Canada. The Official Poverty Line is calculated using the Market Basket Measure (MBM). This measure includes the combined costs of a basket of goods and services that individuals and families require to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living.



Canada released its [Affordability Plan for Canadians](#) in 2022, providing additional support to Canadians as they face rising inflation, including new supports to improve housing affordability and to help pay for dental care for children up to 12 years old. Canada has a robust system of income supports for seniors, which includes the [Old Age Security pension](#), the [Guaranteed Income Supplement for low-income seniors](#), and the [Canada Pension Plan](#), as well as tax-based incentives for retirement savings. This system ensures that older Canadians have access to income after retirement and helps to reduce the number of seniors living in poverty. In 2021, the poverty rate for seniors (based on Canada's Official Poverty Line) was 5.6%, significantly lower than the overall population (7.4%) and all other age groups.

The Canada Child Benefit which provides more support for low-to middle-income families with children has helped reduced the number of children living in poverty by hundred of thousands since its introduction in 2016. Other key government benefits such as the Canada Workers Benefit and the [goods and services tax credit](#), which, like benefits for seniors and the Canada Child Benefit, are adjusted for inflation. This means benefits keep up with the rising cost of living over time.

Eligible Canadians also continue to receive [Climate action incentive payments](#), which are tax-free amounts paid to help individuals and families offset the cost of the federal pollution pricing, and benefit from expanded eligibility criteria for certain tax credits, such as the [Home Accessibility Tax Credit](#) and the [disability tax credit](#).



## Improving the Measurement of Poverty

Since 2018, Canada has renewed its efforts to strengthen poverty measurement, identify gaps, and gather data to guide the journey to 2030. This work included significant progress toward developing an Official Poverty Line that reflects life in Canada's North. As a result of these efforts, Canada has now adopted an official Northern Market Basket Measure methodology for two of the northern territories. Development of a provisional measure adapted to the realities of Inuit population in the territory of Nunavut is also underway. The Government of Canada is also working with NIOs and others to identify and co-develop indicators of poverty and well-being, including non-income-based measures of poverty, that reflect the multiple dimensions of poverty and well-being experienced by First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada is doing its part to end global poverty. There is increasing recognition of the importance of working collaboratively across sectors, to understand and address root causes of poverty and to respond with a multidimensional approach. [Canada's Official Development Assistance Accountability Act](#) requires Canada's Official Development Assistance to focus on reducing poverty. [Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy](#), released in 2017, is rooted in an intersectional feminist and human rights-based approach, to eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world. The Government of Canada increased its total international assistance resources since the release of the policy, from \$6.1 billion in 2017–2018 to \$8.4 billion in 2021–2022.

As a part of its commitment to a progressive trade agenda, Canada ratified the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2016. Canada's trade facilitation efforts align with its inclusive trade agenda, which recognizes that inclusive and sustainable economic growth is necessary to reduce poverty and inequality. By reducing trade barriers, including for under-represented groups, Canada is helping to promote fairer and more accessible trade, particularly for developing countries.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While progress on poverty reduction in Canada remains generally positive, the impacts of COVID-19 and recent increases to the cost of living are not yet fully known. As Canada continues its recovery from COVID-19, it is adapting its poverty reduction efforts to ensure that social protection systems are sufficiently meeting the needs and are returning to a pre-pandemic state. As new data becomes available, it will help to gain insights on how Canadians most at risk of poverty are recovering from this period of financial and economic challenges, and how social protection systems can maintain maximum readiness for evolving trends and future emergencies.

To meet its key target of a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030 based on 2015 levels, Canada will carefully examine where gaps in its social protection system exist and propose effective solutions to adequately support Canadians living in, and at-risk of, poverty. While improvements have been observed throughout the population, many groups remain at a higher risk of living in poverty. For example, non-elderly persons living alone were the most vulnerable with

more than 1 in 4 living in poverty in 2021. Additionally, Indigenous people aged 16 and older were almost twice as likely to be living in poverty in 2021 (13.9%) than non-Indigenous (7.4%). Furthermore, persons with disabilities (aged 18 to 64) are twice as likely to experience poverty as those without disabilities. In total, just over 4 million Canadians with a disability are of working-age, of which approximately 1.6 million individuals have a severe or very severe disability.<sup>11</sup> In response, the proposed [Canada Disability Benefit](#), a key commitment under the [Government of Canada's Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#), aims to reduce poverty and improve the financial security of working-age persons with disabilities. Legislation for the proposed benefit, the [Canada Disability Benefit Act](#), was introduced in Parliament in 2022.

To further support efforts to advance SDG 1, the Government of Canada created the [National Advisory Council on Poverty](#) in 2019. The Council provides independent advice on poverty reduction and reports to the Parliament of Canada on the country's progress toward poverty reduction.

## SPOTLIGHT: Provincial and Territorial Initiatives

Provincial and territorial governments are key in eliminating poverty in Canada. They design, develop and fund many of the key strategies and programs that provide income support to individual Canadians, families and households, either directly or through the tax system. They are responsible for programs and services that are essential to the commitment to leave no one behind, such as early learning and child development initiatives and supports for persons with disabilities.

Provinces and territories responded to COVID-19, recognizing the direct financial impacts on many households, particularly those already facing low incomes. During 2020 and 2021, many provincial and territorial governments provided specific support to community partners delivering programs and services to low-income individuals, families and households to address priority challenges such as food security and housing. Provinces and territories have also been moving forward on longer-term policies, programs, services and initiatives that are helping to reduce poverty, supporting achievement of SDG 1 and demonstrating a continuing commitment to leaving no one behind.

11 [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181128/dq181128a-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181128/dq181128a-eng.htm)

Provincial and territorial governments provide income supports. Many of these supports are targeted particularly at seniors and families with children. Rising inflation and its impacts have encouraged many governments to increase these supports and provide new or special one-time income benefits. For example, in 2022, the Government of Manitoba launched a [Family Affordability Package](#) to ease the burden of high-inflation. As part of this package, the Government of Manitoba provided every qualifying family in the province with children under age 18 \$250 for the first child plus \$200 for each additional child under 18; provided \$300 to all qualifying seniors; increased the basic rate for income assistance; and offered one-time financial relief to food banks.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is developing a [Social and Economic Well-Being Plan](#) to improve overall social and economic well-being of Newfoundlanders and Labradoreans, with a specific focus on increasing supports in the early years to set children up for success; supporting access to quality education and lifelong learning; increasing access to stable, affordable and appropriate housing; reducing poverty; improving food security; and fostering community belonging.

Ontario released Building a [Strong Foundation for Success: Reducing Poverty](#) in Ontario in 2020, which focuses on connecting people experiencing poverty with training, health and other supports so they can participate in their communities and, where possible, find meaningful employment. The strategy's four pillars are: encouraging job creation and connecting people to employment; connecting people to the right supports and services; making life more affordable and building financial resiliency; and accelerating action and driving progress. The

province's 2020–2025 Poverty Reduction Target is to increase the number of social assistance recipients exiting to employment each year from 36,000 in 2019 to 60,000 by 2024.

The Government of Manitoba announced a new Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2019, [Pathways to a Better Future: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). Informed by extensive stakeholder consultations, the strategy takes a whole-of-government approach to improve the lives of Manitobans. The Strategy recognizes the importance of collaboration with communities, different levels of government and other partners in developing and carrying out its policies and programs. It has a strong focus on advancing reconciliation with Indigenous communities. Manitoba now releases a poverty reduction budget paper alongside its provincial budget each year. In addition, Manitoba's [Access to Free Menstrual Products](#) initiative aims to increase access to free menstrual products for low-income persons, the homeless and marginalized groups by providing free menstrual products through schools and other agencies. Furthermore, Manitoba released its first provincial homelessness strategy, [A Place for Everyone](#), in early 2023. The strategy will invest \$126 million to modernize Manitoba's emergency response, provide housing with supports, prevent homelessness, develop person-centered service, and build rural and northern capacity. To date, Manitoba has committed over \$31 million in new funding to help address homelessness including improving access to basic needs and shelter benefits for low-income Manitobans, increased funding to reflect the actual costs of operating overnight shelters, expanded support programs for homeless support programs and increased funding for transitional housing.





## SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### CANADIAN AMBITION

- Canadians have access to inclusive and quality education throughout their lives

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Canada has a highly educated population and continues to strengthen an already-robust system of quality education. High school completion rates continue to trend upwards. In 2021, Canada's high school completion rate for persons aged 15 years and over was 82% (83.4% of women and 80.4% of men). This represents an increase of approximately 3 percentage points (ppts) compared to 2016 (79.3% of persons aged 15 years and over had completed high school including 80.8% of women and 77.7% of men).<sup>12</sup> The rate of post-secondary education (PSE) attainment in Canada has also been increasing for years.
- Equity issues remain a challenge for Canada's education system. The high school completion rate for the Indigenous population aged 25 to 64 was 73.9% in 2021, compared to 89.1% for the non-Indigenous population.<sup>13</sup> There are still large inequities in access to education for people living in the Canadian North, compared to other parts of the country, particularly when it comes to accessing post-secondary education programming.
- The percentage of youth with disabilities in school drops considerably as they transition from high school age to young adulthood, from a rate of 93% for ages 15 to 16, to 55% for ages 17 to 20, to 27% for ages 21 to 24 years old. As well, over half of youth with a more severe disability feel that their condition influenced their choices of courses or career.<sup>14</sup> Women with disabilities (27%) are more likely than men with disabilities (17%) to have discontinued their formal education or training due to their condition.
- Canada has implemented and continues to work on a number of initiatives to support quality education and lifelong learning and to ensure that families have access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care (ELCC).

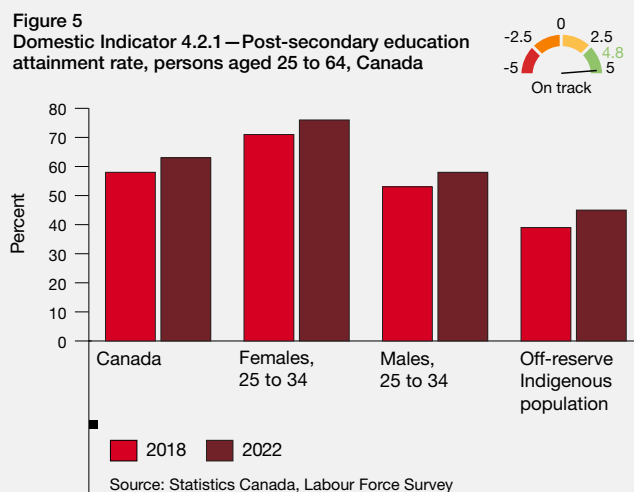
<sup>12</sup> [census.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/index-eng.cfm](https://census.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/index-eng.cfm); [www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E](https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E)

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0420-01 High school completion by Indigenous identity, Indigenous geography, and labour force status: Canada, provinces and territories

<sup>14</sup> Statistics Canada (2019). Educational experiences of youth with disabilities [Infographic] [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019049-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019049-eng.htm)

## SPOTLIGHT: The rate of post-secondary education attainment in Canada has been increasing for years

Overall, 63% of persons in Canada between the ages of 25 and 64 had attained post-secondary education in 2022, an increase from 58% in 2018. Among women aged 25 to 34, 76% had attained post-secondary education in 2022, the highest rate of attainment in Canada. On the other hand, 58% of younger men had achieved comparable levels of education. Post-secondary attainment rates among Indigenous people living off-reserve increased substantially between 2018 and 2022 (39% to 45%). From 2015 to 2018, the proportion of gay men and lesbians aged 25 to 64 with a bachelor's degree or higher (43.2% and 37.7%, respectively) was higher than the proportion for heterosexual men (30.3%) and heterosexual women (34.3%).<sup>15</sup>



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

### Ensuring Canadian families have access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care

Announced in 2021, the Government of Canada made historic new investments totaling close to \$30 billion over five years to build a [Canada-wide early learning and child care \(ELCC\) system](#) with provinces, territories, and Indigenous partners. The Government of Canada is providing funding to provincial and territorial governments to support and grow the ELCC system within their jurisdictions, including goals of reducing fees for regulated child care for children under age six to \$10-a-day on average and creating 250,000 new child care spaces across the country by March 2026. As of April 2023, six provinces and territories are providing regulated child care for an average of \$10-a-day or less. All other provinces and territories have reduced fees for regulated child care by at least 50%.

In addition, the Government of Canada is working with Indigenous partners to implement the co-developed [Indigenous ELCC Framework](#).

The Framework guides the design, delivery and governance of Indigenous ELCC, is supported by Government of Canada investments, and is implemented through collaboration with Indigenous governments and organizations. Together, these actions aim to enhance access to culturally appropriate, affordable, high-quality, flexible, and inclusive ELCC for Indigenous children and families.



<sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada (2022). Just the Facts: Educational Participation and Attainment of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual People in Canada.

## Ensuring Canadians have access to affordable and quality post secondary education

Over the past five years, the Government of Canada has continued to implement a number of initiatives to make PSE more affordable and accessible by supporting the cost of education. The [Canada Student Financial Assistance \(CSFA\)](#) Program offers grants and loans to full-time and part-time students. Additionally, the [Canada Apprentice Loan \(CAL\)](#) and [Apprenticeship Grants](#) help apprentices complete their training. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary measures were introduced to support students struggling to afford PSE, including the doubling of student grants (extended until July 2023), increasing the [Canada Student Loans \(CSL\)](#) limit, removing the expected student and spousal contributions when assessing financial need, and a waiver of interest on student and apprentice loans. In addition, the [Canada Emergency Student Benefit \(CESB\)](#)<sup>16</sup> provided financial support to post-secondary students, and recent post-secondary and high school graduates who were unable to find work due to COVID-19. More than 2 million CESB claims were processed, providing approximately \$2.9 billion in relief payments to approximately 700,000 students and recent graduates. Recently, the CSFA Program has been improved to permanently eliminate interest on all Canada student and apprentice loans. These measures will offer relief for all current and future graduates coping with the high cost of living.

Following a comprehensive and collaborative review of federal programs supporting Indigenous students who wish to pursue post-secondary education, investments for distinctions-based Indigenous strategies aimed at increasing access and success for Indigenous students, were announced in 2019. The respective [First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation PSE strategies](#) provide recipients with the flexibility to fund programs and services. Furthermore, in response to the inequities in access to education for people living in the Canadian North, a Task Force

on Northern PSE was created in 2020 and released its final report in 2022—[A Shared Responsibility: Northern Voices, Northern Solutions](#). The report highlights the challenges and barriers that exist across the North in accessing PSE and identifies important strengths and new opportunities for culturally relevant, Northern-based, Northern-focused and Northern-led post-secondary programs and institutions.

Through the [Supports for Student Learning Program](#), funding is provided to a range of youth-serving organizations that offer supports such as tutoring, mentorship, and scholarships/bursaries to help learners, particularly students from Indigenous and other equity-deserving groups, complete high school and succeed in post-secondary education. In 2021–2022, more than 32,000 students from marginalized groups and/or in vulnerable situations received supports through the program.

The federal government continues to maintain support for students and post-doctoral fellows through important investments in Canada's federal granting agencies. These investments have supported the creation of 600 new Canada Graduate Scholarships and increases in the value of a number of awards, scholarships and fellowships granted through granting agencies for students and fellows.

## Ensuring Canadians have access to lifelong learning opportunities

Established in 2018, the [Canada Service Corps](#) program, promotes civic engagement among youth aged 15 to 30 by removing barriers to accessing service opportunities. The Program provides funding to nearly 100 organizations, primarily not-for-profit organizations and those serving Indigenous and under-served populations, to deliver volunteer service opportunities to youth volunteers. Participants gain skills and leadership experience while making a difference in their communities.

16 The CESB was available for four months from May 2020 to August 2020, with students able to retroactively apply for the benefit until September 30, 2020.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

The impact of COVID-19, multiple conflicts and climate change has led to an unprecedented global education crisis. In 2016, an estimated 75 million children affected by crisis globally required support for education. That number rose to [222 million](#) in 2022. The pandemic also disrupted education for learners around the world, risking this generation of students [losing \\$21 trillion in lifetime earnings due to school closures \(equivalent to 17% of today's global Gross Domestic Product\)](#). Those living in extreme poverty, particularly girls and people with disabilities, are being left furthest behind.

Between 2018 and 2021, Canada invested over \$1.3 billion in access to safe, quality, gender-responsive education and skills training. As a result of efforts made during the 2018 G7 Summit in Charlevoix, a historical [\\$3.8 billion](#), including \$400 million from Canada, was pledged in support of the [Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries](#). A further [\\$527 million](#) was pledged at the 2018 United Nations (UN) General Assembly. Canada's Charlevoix investments reached more than 4 million girls and women.

In 2021, Canada launched a three-year international campaign, [Together for Learning](#), to promote quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for children and youth who are refugees, or forcibly displaced and in a host community. In 2022, Canada hosted a youth-led [Together for Learning Summit](#) in coordination with the [Refugee Education Council](#). This led to a [Youth Manifesto](#), including a call to action around five core areas: inclusion, mental health and psychosocial support, digital learning, gender equality, and accountability. In response, governments, civil society, multilateral organizations, and private sector

partners released the [Together with Youth—Summit Outcome Document](#). Canada also helps advance inclusive and equitable access to quality education through its [International Scholarships Program](#) as part of its Aid for Academic Relations Program. This provides a diverse group of talented international students and researchers, particularly from developing countries, with opportunities to study and conduct research in Canada.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As with other SDGs in Canada, groups that face socio-economic disadvantages, such as persons with disabilities, people in rural and remote areas, recent immigrants, and Indigenous people, can have gaps in education and learning attainment due to insufficient supports. Canada is implementing initiatives to close these gaps. For example, [Canada's Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#) addresses physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from fully participating in communities and the economy. This includes funding the production of alternate format reading materials for persons with print disabilities until 2024 and the creation of the new Equitable Access to Reading Program that will launch in 2024.

Canada will continue to draw on evidence to address issues of access, quality, equity and accountability in global education. This includes using innovative approaches and engaging partnerships to provide international assistance, to ensure that the hardest to reach groups, including girls and displaced populations, have access to safe, quality, gender-responsive and inclusive education and skills training.



## SPOTLIGHT: Provincial and Territorial Initiatives

Education, at all levels of learning, is the responsibility of the provinces and territories in Canada. Each province and territory may choose to work toward SDG 4 in its own way, to reflect its unique demographic, geographic, linguistic, and cultural realities. The [Council of Ministers of Education, Canada](#) (CMEC) provides leadership in education on the pan-Canadian and international stages, supporting the provinces and territories in exercising their exclusive jurisdiction over education. Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all is both an Agenda 2030 goal and a founding belief for education systems in Canada. In 2020, CMEC released the [Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education: Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Canada](#) report, which outlines some of the work underway across Canada to achieve SDG 4. A number of initiatives, summarized below, align with SDG 4 and the cross-cutting themes of leaving no one behind and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Quebec's [Strategy to provide academic assistance and support well-being at school](#) supports all students' educational success. The initiative provides the foundation for the implementation of various measures to support students, their parents, and educational staff. The strategy is divided into two components: academic assistance (increased educational support for students experiencing occasional or persistent difficulties), and student well-being at school (support for the school system in implementing initiatives to foster student well-being at school). This strategy is intended to be inclusive and to address the challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It also empowers schools by encouraging innovations and adaptability in post-pandemic pedagogical practices and student-focused interventions, thereby helping to ensure the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the actions taken.

New Brunswick is working on a three-year refresh of the province's Social Studies Curriculum for grades 4 to 8 in the francophone sector, with the goal to diversify the perspectives represented within it. Working in collaboration with Indigenous Elders and Black and African-descendant groups, New Brunswick aims to include First Nations, Black, and African-descendant perspectives in the curriculum. This work will also include the development of resources to support teachers with the new materials and the provision of training with respect to intercultural skills.

Newfoundland and Labrador developed the Multicultural Education Framework and Indigenous Education Framework in 2020. The Multicultural Education Framework guides the implementation of multicultural education in schools, with the aim of addressing the needs of newcomer students and students with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Indigenous Education Framework guided their education system to work actively toward developing curricula, policies, and programs in a context reflective of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action for Education.

Ontario has revised its curricula in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to ensure that the content is factually accurate, appropriate, and culturally responsive. For example, throughout the revised curricula, students learn about contributions to STEM from people with diverse lived experiences and from various communities. This will allow students—and particularly those from diverse backgrounds—to feel inspired to engage with STEM at every level.

The success of Indigenous students at all educational levels continues to be a priority for CMEC. Many provinces and territories have renewed curricula and implemented Indigenous education policy frameworks, according to the needs of their province or territory. For example, in 2022, the Manitoba government launched [Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With—An Indigenous Education Policy Framework](#). This framework is organized around four policy directives: 1) authentic involvement; 2) putting students at the centre; 3) understanding world views, values, identities, traditions, and contemporary lifestyles; and 4) inclusive and culturally safe learning

environments. Mamàhtawisiwin, which reflects Indigenous languages, cultures, and identities in teaching and classroom practices, also aims to support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis learners toward holistic success. This is just one example of numerous frameworks among provinces and territories that are intended to further support students and educators by helping them embed Indigenous ways of knowing, being, learning, and doing in the curriculum and pedagogy, as well as to progress along a path of truth and reconciliation in their school communities.



## SDG 5: Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Eliminate gender-based violence and harassment
- Gender equality in leadership roles and at all levels of decision-making
- Canadians share responsibilities within households and families

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Canada has a longstanding commitment to gender equality and is taking concrete action to ensure women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people can thrive in all aspects of life. In 2022, Canada ranked 25th globally according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report,<sup>17</sup> which tracks progress toward closing gender gaps through cross-country comparisons. While progress has been made, critical barriers remain to the full participation of women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people in economic, social and democratic life in Canada.
- Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to have harmful impacts on the lives of women and 2SLGBTQI+ people, their families, and their communities throughout Canada. Indigenous women and girls are at a disproportionate risk, and face among the highest rates of violent and non-violent victimization of all population groups in Canada.<sup>18</sup> GBV also disproportionately impacts 2SLGBTQI+ people and people with intersecting lived experiences, including Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ people, Black and racialized 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and 2SLGBTQI+ people with disabilities.
- Women are more likely than men to experience intimate partner violence (IPV). Among younger women, 29% reported experiencing IPV in 2018.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2018, 30% of women reported having been sexually assaulted at least once since age 15, a rate almost four times higher than that for men (8%).<sup>20</sup>
- The employment rate of women aged 25 to 54 was 81.4% in 2022, compared with 88.1% among same-aged men. The employment rates increased for both core-aged women (+2.3 pts) and core-aged men (+2.2 pts) compared to 2021 and surpassed the 2019 pre-pandemic levels (+1.4 pts for women and +1.2 pts for men).<sup>21</sup> However, the gender wage gap persists.<sup>22</sup>
- Women's workforce experience can reflect barriers due to their unequal share of household responsibilities. Women in Canada continue to perform a larger percentage of unpaid domestic and care work.<sup>23</sup>

17 [www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2022.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf)

18 [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00007-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00007-eng.htm)

19 [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00003/tbl/tbl01a-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00003/tbl/tbl01a-eng.htm)

20 [women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/ministers-responsible-status-women/national-action-plan-end-gender-based-violence/first-national-action-plan-end-gender-based-violence.html](https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/ministers-responsible-status-women/national-action-plan-end-gender-based-violence/first-national-action-plan-end-gender-based-violence.html)

21 [www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410032701](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410032701)

22 The Gender wage gap is described under the chapter focusing on SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth.

23 [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00081-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00081-eng.htm)

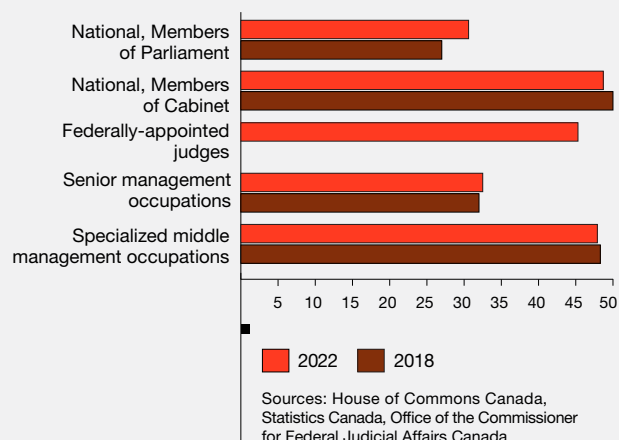
## SPOTLIGHT: The representation of women among some leadership positions has been increasing since 2018

Among members of federal Parliament, 30.6% were women in 2022, up from 27.0% in 2018. Meanwhile, women accounted for nearly half (48.7%) of the members of the federal Cabinet in 2022, slight change from 2018 (50%).

Women remain underrepresented in senior management roles in Canada, accounting for just under a third of all senior managers in 2022, essentially unchanged from 2018. However, among specialized middle management occupations<sup>24</sup>, women accounted for nearly half of all managers in both 2018 and 2022.

Furthermore, in 2021, women held 20% of board seats for all public corporations compared to 17% in 2020.<sup>25</sup>

**Figure 6**  
Domestic Indicators 5.2.1 — Proportion of women among leadership positions, Canada



- Furthermore, 2SLGBTQI+ people are more likely to live in poverty. Intersecting factors, including Indigeneity, race, disability and immigration status, compound poverty among 2SLGBTQI+ individuals. In 2018, the average personal income of 2SLGBTQI+ income earners was significantly lower (\$39,000) than those of non-2SLGBTQI+ (\$54,000) people in Canada.<sup>26</sup> Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are more likely to earn lower incomes, experience discrimination on the job,<sup>27</sup> and encounter barriers in finding and advancing in employment, relative to their heterosexual counterparts.<sup>28</sup>
- Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people are subject to alarming rates of violence and are over-represented among victims of crime.<sup>29</sup>

Violent hate crimes targeting Indigenous and Muslim populations are more likely than other hate crimes to target women. Women with a disability were twice as likely to be victims of violent crime and are more likely to experience repeated violence over a 12-month period than women who do not have a disability.<sup>30</sup>

- Currently, 2SLGBTQI+ people, racialized Canadians, Indigenous people, women and youth from underserved communities face the highest sexual and reproductive health risks and the greatest barriers to accessing support, information, and services. This has an impact on their ability to participate in all aspects of life, which further contributes to gender-based inequalities.

<sup>24</sup> Specialized middle management occupations include administrative services managers and managers in financial and business services, communication (except broadcasting), engineering, architecture, science and information systems, health care, public administration, education, social and community services, public protection services, art, culture, recreation, and sport.

<sup>25</sup> [ised-isde.canada.ca/site/corporations-canada/en/data-services/diversity-boards-directors-and-senior-management-federal-distributing-corporations-2021-annual](https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/corporations-canada/en/data-services/diversity-boards-directors-and-senior-management-federal-distributing-corporations-2021-annual)

<sup>26</sup> [women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/free-to-be-me/2SLGBTQI+-Federal-Action-Plan.pdf](https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/free-to-be-me/2SLGBTQI+-Federal-Action-Plan.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00015-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00015-eng.htm)

<sup>28</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2022001/article/00003-eng.html](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2022001/article/00003-eng.html)

<sup>29</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00004-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00004-eng.htm)

<sup>30</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm)



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Canada will continue efforts to advance gender equality and take concrete action to ensure women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people are valued and empowered. This includes efforts to support them to have control over their own lives, fully participate as decision-makers in their homes and societies, and contribute to and benefit from development and prosperity equally. Since 2018, Canada has implemented key initiatives that contribute to this goal, including:

- Establishing the Department for Women and Gender Equality (previously Status of Women Canada) (2018) to advance equality with respect to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression through the inclusion of people of all genders, including women, in Canada's economic, social, and political life.
- Legislating gender and diversity budgeting through the [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#) (2018), enshrining Canada's commitment to decision-making that considers policy impacts on diverse groups of Canadians.
- Implementing [Canada's Gender Results Framework \(GRF\)](#) (2018) that identifies six key areas where change is required to advance gender equality.
- Enhancing the [Women's Program's](#) ability to support women's and equality-seeking organizations through investments aimed at sustaining community action.
- Launching the [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#) (2022) to advance rights and improve social, economic, and health outcomes for 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians. The Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan was launched to address the substantial and persisting inequities faced by 2SLGBTQI+ people and communities. The Plan:
  - takes an intersectional approach and considers the disproportionate health,

social and economic inequities experienced by some 2SLGBTQI+ communities, which are exacerbated by colonialism, systemic racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, classism, as well as other interconnected factors that inhibit the inclusion of 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canadian society; and,

- identifies a pathway for an updated GRF so that it better reflects the realities of 2SLGBTQI+ communities and can track progress toward achieving 2SLGBTQI+ equality in Canada and around the world.
- Establishing the Government of Canada's first-ever program funding dedicated to strengthening 2SLGBTQI+ community organizations ([2SLGBTQI+ Community Capacity Fund](#), 2019) and to projects addressing barriers to 2SLGBTQI+ equality in Canada (2SLGBTQI+ Projects Fund, 2021).
- Making important investments, through the [Sexual and Health Reproductive Fund](#), to support populations that face the highest sexual and reproductive health risks and barriers to accessing support.
- Providing information and services that improve access to sexual and reproductive health care, including access to abortion.

## Ending Gender-Based Violence

The Government of Canada and provincial and territorial governments have taken important steps to address and end gender-based violence (GBV). The [National Action Plan to End GBV](#) was launched in 2022 to create a Canada free of gender-based violence, with support for victims, families, and survivors no matter where they live. The National Action Plan to End GBV was developed in collaboration with, and has been endorsed by, provincial and territorial governments<sup>31</sup> and engagement with Indigenous partners, GBV experts and stakeholders. The National Action Plan to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people (2021)

31 GBV is a priority for the Government of Québec, which has invested significant funds to end violence against women. However, although it supports the overall objectives of the National Action Plan to End GBV, the Government of Québec cannot adhere to it because it intends to retain its full responsibility in this area on its territory. Through an agreement that respects its autonomy, the Government of Québec expects to receive its fair share of federal funding to support the programs, initiatives, and services to end GBV that it puts in place based on the needs of its territory.

aligns with and is complementary to the National Action Plan to End GBV. It will drive transformative change to end systemic racism and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people and address gender-based violence.

Canada also implemented a [National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking](#) (2019–2024) to prevent human trafficking (which disproportionately affects women and girls), prosecute perpetrators, and support vulnerable populations. Under this strategy, Canada has raised awareness on human trafficking and provided funding to organizations that offer trauma-informed services to victims and survivors.

### Supporting Gender Equality in Leadership Roles and At All Levels of Decision Making

Canada invested to advance gender equality and diversity in all spheres of leadership and decision-making by:

- introducing [amendments to the Public Service Employment Act](#) (2021) to affirm the importance of a diverse and inclusive workforce;
- launching the [50–30 Challenge](#) (2020) to promote gender equality and diversity in Canadian organizations;
- increasing public awareness and knowledge around sexual harassment in the workplace and provide legal information and advice to complainants of workplace sexual harassment; and,
- funding projects to empower and increase Indigenous women’s leadership and democratic participation.

### Supporting Economic Empowerment

Canada has also made investments to support women’s participation and success in the economy by:

- expanding the [Women Entrepreneurship Strategy](#) to provide greater access to financing, mentorship, and training for women;

- establishing a new Apprenticeship Service to support women in the skilled trades and equality in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM);
- building a Canada-wide, [ELCC](#) system (funding announced in 2021) so that families have access to affordable, high-quality, flexible and inclusive ELCC to enable parents, particularly mothers, to enter, remain in and re-enter the job market, and provide jobs for workers in the ELCC sector, the majority of whom are women;
- launching the two-year [Women’s Employment Readiness Pilot Program](#) to fund organizations to provide and test pre-employment and skill development supports for women who face multiple barriers; and
- passing the [Proactive Pay Equity](#) legislation in 2018, with Pay Equity Regulations that came into force in 2021, to ensure that those working in federally regulated workplaces receive equal pay for work of equal value.



## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada's feminist approach to international engagement is based on the conviction that all people, regardless of their background, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or intersecting identities, should fully benefit from equal participation in economic, political, social and cultural life. Canada is the top OECD ranked donor for the share of aid supporting gender equality, and among the top-ranked for investments supporting women's rights organizations and ending violence against women and girls. Canada advocates for gender equality, women and girls' rights, sexual and reproductive rights and the human rights of 2SLGBTQI+ people and communities in bilateral and multilateral contexts.

Canada more than tripled investments to prevent and respond to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) between 2017–2018 and 2020–2021, in key areas of leadership that include preventing and responding to school-related GBV and addressing SGBV in conflict, crisis and humanitarian contexts. Canada shows leadership through leading on the annual Elimination of Violence against Women resolution at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva and co-leads with Zambia the biennial resolution on child, early and forced marriage at the UN General Assembly. Canada's investments have also yielded significant results in other areas, with the Women's Voice and Leadership Program surpassing its initial goals, reaching over 900 Women's Rights Organizations as of 2021–2022.

In [labour cooperation agreements and labour chapters in free trade agreements \(FTAs\)](#), the Government of Canada is applying a two-pronged approach to trade and gender. This includes working to include a standalone chapter on trade and gender, along with mainstreaming gender by including other gender-related provisions throughout FTAs.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While Canada continues to make progress on advancing gender equality, critical barriers remain for women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Women and 2SLGBTQI+ people continue to be more at risk of experiencing GBV and their labour force participation and employment earnings in Canada continue to lag behind. Women continue to shoulder more care-giving and domestic responsibilities. Indigenous women and girls face among the highest rates of violent and non-violent victimization of all population groups in Canada. As Canada and the world emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated existing inequalities, the rising cost of living continues to highlight ongoing economic inequalities for women and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Canada will continue to take an intersectional approach as it advances the 2030 Agenda, so that progress and benefits are shared equitably among all, including women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Canada's efforts to make progress on gender targets across the SDGs further accelerate Canada's efforts to leave no one behind.

## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

Stakeholders across Canada are mobilizing efforts toward achieving gender equality at home and abroad. For example, the [Fund for Innovation and Transformation](#) is a national innovation program, launched in 2019 by the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils—a coalition of eight provincial and regional Councils for International Cooperation committed to global social justice and social change—and the Government of Canada.

The Fund is administered by the Manitoba Council of International Cooperation—a coalition of over forty organizations involved in international development and global sustainability. Guided by Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, the Fund has supported over 50 Canadian organizations working closely with their partners in the Global South to design and test innovative solutions with the aim of advancing gender equality and support vulnerable

communities. To date, it has funded 54 testing projects and committed over \$11 million in support of innovative ways to support gender equality. While these innovative solutions work toward many SDGs, the overarching goal is gender equality. Organizations are [sharing results and lessons learned](#) from their projects. As most organizations have finished testing work, we are seeing how these innovative solutions are addressing gender barriers and as a result are having a positive impact on women's access and agency. For example, [CAUSE Canada](#) is a project in Sierra Leone which tested community-based solutions to reduce child marriages. The project prevented 127 child marriages across 20 communities.

Similarly, the Community Foundations of Canada, the national leadership organization for Canada's 191 local community foundations across the country, partnered with the Equality Fund to develop the [Fund for Gender Equality](#). The Fund is a five-year initiative that supports ambitious local projects that advance gender equality. It builds on efforts aimed at empowering women, girls, Two-Spirit and gender-diverse people. Through the Fund, dozens of community foundations shifted their internal systems and processes to advance gender equality. To date,

over 198 community-led, gender equality projects are financially supported across Canada.

The [Mothers Matter Centre's Women's Insight Project](#) aims to empower women by building their capacity and confidence to lead changes at the community level. The project enables women from Indigenous, refugee, and newcomer communities address community-specific barriers and find solutions to SDG implementation. The project mobilizes and builds the capacity of three groups of women from low-income and marginalized communities in Vancouver, enabling them to identify and address SDG gaps locally. Participating women developed a comprehensive understanding of the SDGs, local leadership, and established a grassroots approach to responsive program planning and implementation. They designed and implemented community led projects to bridge the gaps. For example, the Mélange Project supported community-building and offered opportunities for refugee and immigrant women to break their isolation through various activities. The Mothers Matter Centre continues to document and synthesize the findings from these community-led projects to serve as a model for advancing the SDGs in marginalized communities through community-led action.

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## SPOTLIGHT: Provincial and Territorial Initiatives

Provinces and territories are also recognizing the importance of achieving gender equality through training and reskilling initiatives for women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, as well as funding for organizations that provide a continuum of healing for survivors of family violence, and implementing action plans to address gender-based violence.

For example, the Government of Yukon has released a five-year [LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan](#) designed to help end discrimination make their programming more inclusive of the LGBTQ2S+ community. In addition, the Yukon provides funding to women's organizations and to LGBTQ2S+ organizations to support advocacy and public education on gender-based violence prevention.



## SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 to 45% below 2005 levels by 2030
- Canadians are well-equipped and resilient to face the effects of climate change

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Canada's total GHG emissions in 2021 were 670 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq), a 1.8% increase from 659 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq in 2020. From 2005 to 2021, Canada's GHG emissions decreased by 8.4% (62 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq).<sup>32</sup>
- The stay-at-home measures introduced in 2020 due to the pandemic created an industrial slowdown and significant reductions in trade and travel by air and land. These impacts contributed to the GHG emissions decrease. Following

the partial recovery of economic activities in 2021, a rebound in emissions was observed compared to 2020. The emissions observed in 2021 remained below the pre-pandemic level of 2019.<sup>33</sup>

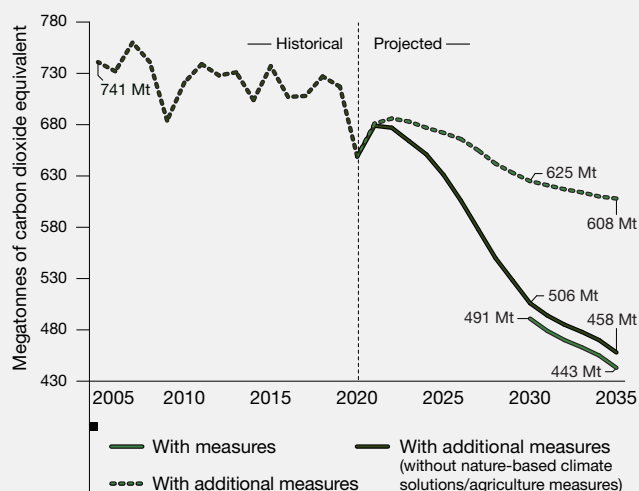
- Communities across Canada are experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change and witnessing the compounding effects that single events and hazards can have on systems and services. In 2022, the Government of Canada invested \$1.6 billion in adaptation measures. This builds on the \$4.9 billion that has already been invested in adaptation since 2011.

### SPOTLIGHT: Historical greenhouse gas emissions and projections, 2005 to 2035<sup>34</sup>

Under the scenario including all policies and measures funded, legislated and implemented by federal, provincial and territorial governments up to November 2022 and contributions from the land use, land use change and forestry sector ("with measures" scenario), emissions in Canada are projected<sup>35</sup> to be 625 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq in 2030 (or 16% below 2005 levels).<sup>36</sup>

Under the "with additional measures" scenario, which adds in policies and measures that are under development but have not yet been fully implemented, emissions are projected to decline to 491 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq in 2030 (or 34% below 2005 levels).

Figure 7



Source: Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program: Greenhouse gas emissions projections

<sup>32</sup> Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program: [Greenhouse gas emissions](#)

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*

<sup>34</sup> Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program: [Greenhouse gas emissions projections](#)

<sup>35</sup> To estimate future GHG emissions, Canada develops GHG projections on an annual basis, using the most up-to-date assumptions of the key drivers that influence Canada's emissions. The indicator uses the latest GHG emissions projections to present the forecast progress toward Canada's 2030 target.

<sup>36</sup> [canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/greenhouse-gas-emissions-projections.html](https://canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/greenhouse-gas-emissions-projections.html)

## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

### Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

To achieve projected results, Canada continues to take coordinated, national climate action building upon the [Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change](#) (2016). The Framework resulted in many new measures to achieve emissions reductions across all sectors, and established the Canadian Centre for Climate Services to help Canadians understand and reduce their vulnerability to climate change.

In 2016, the federal government committed to strengthening its collaboration with Indigenous Peoples as partners in climate action. Following joint commitments made by the Prime Minister and the National Leaders of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and the Métis National Council (MNC), the federal government established three distinctions-based senior bilateral tables. These tables support Indigenous Peoples as full and effective partners in advancing clean growth and addressing climate change goals to reduce emissions based on the recognition of rights, co-operation, and partnership. The tables foster a collaborative approach to ongoing engagement on a range of climate initiatives, including the advancement of an Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda to support self-determined action in addressing Indigenous Peoples' climate priorities.

In December 2020, Canada published a strengthened climate plan, [A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy](#). It included 64 new and strengthened and federal policies, programs and investments to cut pollution and build a stronger, cleaner, more resilient and inclusive economy. Canada adopted the [Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act](#) in 2021. It enshrines in law Canada's enhanced target to reduce emissions by 40 to 45% below 2005 levels by 2030 and the commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. As required under the Act, [Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#) was released in 2022. Canada has also implemented and strengthened

a national pollution pricing system. Putting a price on pollution remains one of the most effective and low-cost ways to fight climate change and Canada's approach to returning proceeds minimizes the impacts on affordability for Canadians.

In 2021, Canada joined the Global Methane Pledge to reduce human-caused methane emissions across economic sectors by at least 30% from 2020 levels by 2030. With the current and planned methane reduction measures and supporting programs outlined in [Faster and Further: Canada's Methane Strategy](#)—the Government of Canada estimates domestic methane emissions will be reduced by more than 35% between 2020 and 2030.



### Building Resilience to Face the Effects of Climate Change

Since 2018, Canada has invested in accelerating the implementation of climate-resilient infrastructure. The [Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund](#) has committed over \$2.29 billion for 81 built and natural infrastructure projects to increase the resilience of communities that are impacted by natural disasters triggered by climate change. The Government of Canada is also investing in the built environment to minimize GHG emissions, through the construction of net zero buildings and energy retrofits of existing public buildings.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Internationally in both bilateral and multilateral fora, Canada advocates for ambitious action on climate change. Canada recognizes that developing countries, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable, are the hardest hit by climate change, and that many have limited capacity to prevent and cope with its consequences. Therefore, at the 2021 G7 Leaders' Summit, Canada announced a \$5.3 billion commitment (2021–2026) to help low and middle-income countries already affected by climate change transition to sustainable, low-carbon, climate-resilient, nature-positive and inclusive development. To help them build resilience to climate change impacts, Canada committed that 40% of this funding will go toward adaptation projects. Canada aims to allocate 20% of this funding to nature-based solutions and projects that provide biodiversity co-benefits. In line with its [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#), Canada has pledged to ensuring that 80% of projects integrate gender equality considerations.

Canada and nearly 200 other countries agreed on the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan at COP27 in 2022. Canada worked to maintain the global commitment to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 Celsius and was an early advocate for the need for COP27 to make progress on the issue of loss and damage. Canada announced initiatives totalling \$84.25 million to respond to the needs of developing countries in the areas of loss and damage, access to climate finance and climate governance.

Over the past five years, Canada has continued to support other global climate change and health initiatives by:

- focusing on building climate resilience and adaptation to help inform countries' efforts to protect their populations from current, emerging, and future health impacts and threats of climate change;
- informing the development of technical publications to support the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Environmental Health to build sustainable health systems and strengthen climate resilience in response to countries' requests for technical support; and,
- working to establish—in collaboration with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and our NATO allies—a NATO Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence to better understand and address the security challenges associated with climate change.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The effects of climate change are being felt across Canada. Canadians are seeing more extreme temperatures and precipitation as well as more frequent and severe wildfires, heatwaves, droughts and flooding. Canada is warming at two times the global rate, and this rate is even greater in the Canadian Arctic. Meanwhile, rising sea levels, along with less-visible effects such as increased acidity and reduced levels of oxygen in the oceans, are damaging ecosystems and industries such as fisheries. Climate change is one of the top drivers of global biodiversity loss, which further threatens ecosystems and the beneficial services they provide to society.

Managing for resilient forests, grasslands, and other ecosystems also helps to mitigate climate change by sequestering and storing carbon. Improved land use can increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Natural spaces also support adaptation to climate changes like extreme heat by providing shade, which can reduce temperatures.

The science is clear: reducing carbon pollution to net zero by 2050 is our best chance of keeping the planet livable for our children and grandchildren. Canada is investing in clean energy (SDG 7), creating green jobs (SDG 8), moving toward a circular economy (SDG 12), green infrastructure, including low carbon transportation (SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities), and climate-resilient and energy efficient buildings (SDG 9). Climate change cannot be addressed without decisive action to preserve biodiversity and natural ecosystems (SDG 14 and SDG 15). Meeting emissions reductions targets will benefit human health and well-being (SDG 3) and help to build resilient and sustainable communities (SDG 11) that benefit Canadians.

Climate change is a shared responsibility across all levels of governments and with all members of society. Moving forward, the Government of Canada will continue to work with provinces and territories, international partners, Indigenous partners, civil society, industry, and other stakeholders to advance shared priorities. The [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#) (ERP) is the most comprehensive emissions reduction plan in Canada's history. It includes \$9.1 billion in new investments and reflects economy-wide measures such as the [Clean Fuel Regulations](#) while also advancing target actions across all sectors. These include reducing energy costs for homes and buildings; driving down carbon pollution from the oil and gas sector; increasing the supply of renewable electricity; helping industries to develop and adopt clean technologies; investing in natural climate solutions; and maintaining Canada's approach to pricing pollution. Measures coming in 2023 include taking steps to become the first major oil and gas producer to put in place a cap on oil and gas sector emissions.

To adapt and build resilience to the impacts of climate change, the Government of Canada released [Canada's National Adaptation Strategy](#) (NAS) in 2022. The NAS establishes a shared vision for climate resilience in Canada, identifies

key priorities for increased collaboration, and establishes a framework for measuring progress at the national level. The Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan, released alongside the NAS in November 2022, represents the federal government's contribution to the implementation of the NAS.

Next steps related to Canada's climate action include:

- continuing to implement Canada's climate actions and measures announced through the [2030 ERP](#) (2022), the [Strengthened Climate Plan](#) (2020), and the [Pan-Canadian Framework](#) (2016);
- leveraging the negotiation and implementation of Free Trade Agreements to build support and drive climate action in bilateral and multilateral contexts;
- introducing a new [Buy Clean Strategy](#) to support the use of made-in-Canada low-carbon products in Canadian infrastructure projects;
- accelerating action to achieve a 100% net-zero electricity supply by 2035;
- capping oil and gas sector emissions;
- continuing to advance work related to nature-based solutions to climate change, including delivering on Canada's commitment to plant 2 billion trees;
- advancing the Global Carbon Pricing Challenge;
- accelerating Canada's G20 commitment to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies;
- working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis to advance an Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda;
- expanding the [Green Municipal Fund](#) by up to \$530 million, to support a minimum of 1400 community-based climate change adaptation initiatives;



- finalizing [Canada's Green Buildings Strategy](#), and [Canada's Carbon Management Strategy](#), and continuing to implement other key plans such as the Hydrogen, Critical Minerals, and Methane Strategies;
- developing bilateral action plans with provinces and territories to advance shared priorities under the [National Adaptation Strategy](#);
- increasing knowledge, capacity, and tools on the human health impacts and adaptation approaches to climate change available to healthcare and public health professionals, emergency preparedness officials, and provincial and local decision-makers across Canada;
- increasing the level of awareness among Canadians, including disproportionately impacted populations, of climate change health risks (e.g. from extreme heat), and ways to protect themselves and reduce health risks;
- continuing to mobilize climate finance through the \$5.3 billion commitment to help developing countries better address climate change and adapt to its impacts; and,
- developing a [Sustainable Agriculture Strategy](#) to support the agriculture sector's actions on climate change and other environmental priorities toward 2030 and 2050.

### SPOTLIGHT: Provincial and Territorial Initiatives

Provincial and territorial governments in Canada are key partners in advancing SDG 13 (Climate Action) through their strategies, legislations, action plans and directives in order to offer their citizens a better and more sustainable future for all. They are responsible for and uniquely positioned to develop meaningful and localized approaches to combatting climate change and its impacts, and addressing the specific needs of their province or territory. Over the past few years, several provinces and territories have made net-zero commitments and invested in clean energy and innovation.

For example, the Government of Yukon announced a 10-year climate emergency strategy in 2020: [Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy](#). It outlines the territory's top priorities for the next 10 years to address climate change, meet energy needs and build a green economy. The strategy was developed in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, and Yukon municipalities over

the course of three years. Since 2020, the Yukon government has been implementing and building on the actions of this strategy, including:

- committing to reduce greenhouse gas emission by 45% from 2030 compared to 2010 levels;
- completing a climate risk and resilience assessment in 2022;
- tracking greenhouse emissions in line with national reporting and implemented actions that enable emissions reductions, such as increasing the supply of renewable energy, incentivizing the use of zero-emission vehicles, transitioning to renewable heating sources, and passing legislation to require reporting; and,
- sharing accessible information on climate change through reports and social marketing campaigns to empower and build capacity among citizens.



## SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

### CANADIAN AMBITION:

- Canada fosters collaboration and partnerships to advance the SDGs

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

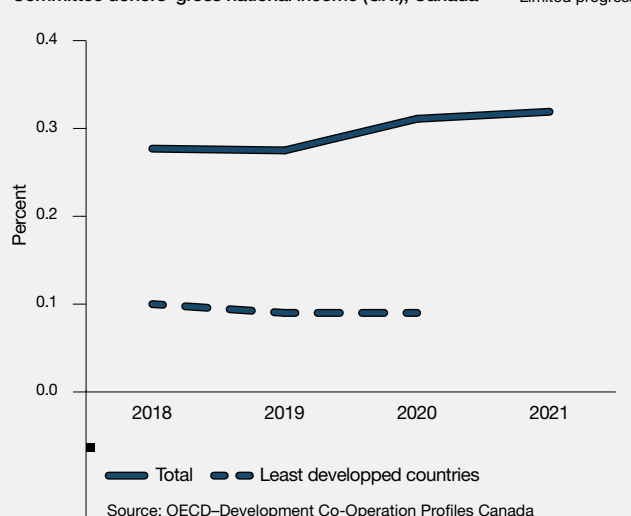
- Every year since 2011, Canada has increased its Official Development Assistance (ODA).

### SPOTLIGHT: Increasing Official Development Assistance over the years

Canada's monetary aid to promote economic development and welfare in developing countries has increased to account for 0.319% of the country's Gross National Income (GNI). Looking back at the last Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2018, the share of GNI attributed to total Official Development Assistance (ODA) was 0.277%.

While the total share of net ODA to Canada's GNI grew between 2018 and 2021, it remains substantially below the target of 0.7%, therefore insufficient to achieve the target of 0.7% of ODA/GNI. Among G7 countries, Canada posted the fifth-largest share of GNI attributed to net ODA and among OECD countries, Canada ranked 14th. The share of total net ODA to Canada's GNI directed to the least developed countries was 0.09% in 2020, which was a slight decrease from 0.10% in 2018. This represented a proportion slightly less than half of the target for this indicator (0.20%).

**Figure 8**  
Global Indicator 17.2.1—Net official development assistance, total, as a proportion of the OECD Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI), Canada



- [Canada's Inclusive Trade Agenda](#) supports the promotion of an equitable multilateral trading system by seeking to ensure that everyone can take advantage of and benefit from the opportunities that may flow from trade and investment.
- In 2018, the Government of Canada committed \$60 million over 13 years to support Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda under the [SDG Funding Program](#). Since 2018, up to \$22 million was allocated to 131 projects across Canada. Other funding initiatives also support the SDGs, such as the Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy, and the [Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative](#).

- Through its [Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda](#) (released in 2021), the Government of Canada established federal accountabilities to implement the 2030 Agenda, enhances policy coherence and supports effective cooperation with other levels of government and other stakeholders.
- [Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy](#), launched in 2022, presents a comprehensive road map to deepen Canada's engagement in the Indo-Pacific region over the next decade. This strategy will help advance sustainable development by prioritizing partnerships that: invest in and connect people; and build a sustainable and green future. This includes expanded Scholarships and Educational Exchanges for Development programs that will deepen Canada's ties with Asian institutions, universities, think-tanks, and research centres, creating a Canada-Asia knowledge network. Through the Powering Past Coal Alliance, Canada will provide guidance on transitioning from coal power to clean energy. Canada will also support oceans management initiatives and expand measures against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Indo-Pacific, including through our Dark Vessel Detection Program, which uses Canadian technology to find illegal fishing vessels and protect fish stocks.

## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

### Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships to Advance the SDGs at Home

Canada recognizes that partnerships are at the heart of delivering the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs. The Government of Canada works closely with a wide range of partners, including civil society organizations, the private sector and multilateral organizations. These partnerships are critical in supporting Canada's efforts to eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world.

In addition to the SDG Funding Program, Canada strengthens partnerships and finances the SDGs through several initiatives. For example, the [Social Development Partnerships Program](#) supports investments in not-for-profit organizations to help improve life outcomes for persons with disabilities, children and families and other vulnerable population. Activities funded by the program are expected to lead to the development and sharing of knowledge of existing and emerging social issues; the creation of collaboration, partnerships, alliances and networks; and the development of approaches to respond to existing and emerging social issues.

The [Social Innovation and Social Finance \(SI/SF\) Strategy](#) was launched in 2019. It includes \$100 million invested to date in the Investment Readiness Program and \$755 million announced for the Social Finance Fund to support Social Purpose Organizations (SPOs)—charities, non-profits, social enterprises, co-operatives, and businesses with a social mission. SPOs are key to Canada's advancement of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. The SI/SF Strategy was designed to promote social equity and helps SPOs reach diverse, underserved and equity deserving Canadian populations, including women, Indigenous people, low-income people, Black Canadians and other racialized peoples, people with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, official language minority communities and recent immigrants and refugees. The Strategy provides SPOs with support to develop new solutions and effective partnerships with private organizations and public institutions as well as to address pressing social and environmental issues. Finally, it enhances their ability to attract public and private investments that generate positive social and environmental impacts, while fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth. As of 2021, the Investment Readiness Program provided capacity building grants to approximately 700 SPOs and enabled stronger partnerships, new resources and tools to alleviate barriers faced by SPOs to accessing investment.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

### Financing the SDGs

Canada has made significant progress in helping lead global financing for development initiatives to mobilize predictable and robust sources of financing for the SDGs. This has included collaborating with international financial institutions and the private sector on economic and social infrastructure; piloting innovative financing mechanisms; addressing debt vulnerabilities; improving remittance flows and supporting tax cooperation. Throughout this work, Canada has facilitated inclusive partnerships. For example, through a project with the International Labour Organization, Canada is promoting and protecting the rights of migrant workers in Asia, partnering with national ministries, regional bodies, workers' organizations, the private sector, civil society organizations and academic institutions. To date, more than 36,000 people (of which 43% women) from Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states have been trained on labour migration governance and more than 157,000 migrant workers (of which 45% women) have been provided with individualized support services through a network of 30 Migrant Worker Resource Centres, including awards of over US\$4 million in compensation for labour rights violations and workplace injuries.

To help maximize financing for the SDGs, Canada launched the [International Assistance Innovation Program](#) (IAIP) and the [Sovereign Loans Program](#) (SLP) in 2019. Canada has committed nearly \$300 million to date for IAIP initiatives that support climate-smart agriculture and infrastructure, financing for small and medium-sized enterprises, and gender-lens investing. For example, Canada is supporting the BUILD Fund, a blended finance vehicle mobilizing public and private investment to help demonstrate the viability of investing in least developed countries. The Fund supports entrepreneurs, business owners (including women business owners), suppliers, consumers and users through improved access to quality goods and services.

Canada used its G7 Presidency in 2018 to pioneer new approaches to innovative development finance in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. To this end, three signature initiatives were launched at the Charlevoix Summit: the Charlevoix Commitment on Innovative Financing for Development; the 2X Challenge, through which G7 development finance institutions proposed to collectively mobilize \$3 billion in support of women's empowerment and gender equality; and the Investor Leadership Network, designed to facilitate and accelerate collaboration by leading institutional investors toward a sustainable and inclusive global economy. The 2X Challenge raised gender lens investments totalling US\$ 16.3 billion from 2021–2022, benefitting 473 businesses across Asia, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

FinDev Canada launched its operations in 2018 and is dedicated to providing financial services to the private sector in developing countries and mobilizing private capital with the objective of stimulating sustainable economic growth for the benefit of local populations, and women in particular. FinDev Canada has a mandate to contribute to poverty reduction through job creation, women's economic empowerment, and climate change mitigation. For example, FinDev is supporting M-KOPA to help bring solar power to a million more low-income African homes. They also provided an equity investment in Miro Forestry Development Ltd., a West-African sustainable forestry and timber products business which will enable the firm to expand its forestry plantations and industrial wood processing operations.

### Supporting the Global Economic System

To maximize the impact of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) historic US\$650 billion Special Drawing Rights (SDR) general allocation, Canada and many G7 and G20 countries with strong external positions have agreed to channel 20% of their newly allocated SDRs to the benefit of low-income and other vulnerable countries.



Canada was the first country to announce that it had exceeded its SDR channeling commitment and to date has channeled almost 40% of its newly allocated SDRs, including through a \$1 billion contribution to the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust; a \$2.4 billion contribution the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Trust, which helps low-income and vulnerable middle-income countries build resilience to external shocks such as those caused by climate change; and \$4.35B to the IMF Administered Account for Ukraine.

Against the backdrop of a growing number of trade restrictions imposed globally in response to COVID-19, Canada both led and contributed to a number of international statements committing to ensure the flow of medical supplies and essential goods. Through Canada's leadership in the Ottawa Group on World Trade Organization (WTO) Reform, in 2020, the group agreed to a Joint Statement focused on COVID-19 that established key actions for member countries to support an inclusive, sustainable and resilient global economic recovery. Work on this initiative contributed to the outcomes on pandemic preparedness at the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference in 2022. Canada is committed to a WTO that works for all members, supports the global economic system, and in this regard is engaged in work on WTO reform, including through the Ottawa Group.

### **Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships to Advance the SDGs Abroad**

Canada continually seeks to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships and share knowledge to achieve development impact for the poorest and most vulnerable. Canadian, international and local partners provide technical expertise, local knowledge, and policy advocacy in support of Canada's bilateral and multilateral engagement around the world.

Civil society has a significant role in promoting, coordinating and advocating for engagement on the SDGs both nationally and globally. Through programs such as Inspiring Action for Global Citizenship, the Canadian provincial and regional councils that make up the Inter-Council Network are supporting more Canadians, in particular youth, engaged in campaigns, workshops, and training on international development issues that address the SDGs.

Prime Minister Trudeau's role as Co-chair, along with Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley, of the [UN Secretary General's SDG Advocates](#) prioritizes working with partners and stakeholders to bring renewed focus on the SDGs. As an SDG Advocate Co-Chair, the Prime Minister works alongside the 17 SDG advocates to inspire and raise awareness among global leaders to work toward achieving the SDGs during this [Decade of Action](#) (2021–2030).

### **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Canada has learned to further adapt and develop more agile and effective ways to engage with its development partners to respond to a global context of multiple intersecting crises including climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict. In response to the development finance challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, Prime Minister Trudeau, alongside Prime Minister Holness of Jamaica and UN Secretary General Guterres, launched the [Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond Initiative](#) (FFDI) in May of 2020. The FFDI brought the international community together to develop practical policy approaches to respond to the socio-economic and financial impacts of the pandemic and support renewed efforts toward achieving the SDGs. Additionally, Prime Minister Trudeau's role as Co-chair, along with Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley, of the [UN Secretary General's SDG Advocates](#) prioritizes working with partners and stakeholders to bring renewed focus on the SDGs.

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## **SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions**

[Together|Ensemble](#) 2022 was the fourth (since 2017) in a series of symposia and conferences of Canada's diverse and growing whole-of-society community dedicated to achieving SDGs. The first edition was organized by the Alberta Council of Global Cooperation and hosted by the University of Calgary back in 2017. The conference represents a whole-of-society approach to addressing Canada's toughest sustainable development challenges, bringing together the private sector, academia, government, and civil society. In 2022,

the three-day online event was organized by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network and hosted by the University of Waterloo. The event was energized by an impressive mix of 26 sessions, more than 110 speakers and 700 attendees. This included a full day of dynamic side events organized by leading SDGs groups from across Canada. Discussions at 2022 Together|Ensemble were notably shaped by broad-ranging conversations covering the 17 SDGs, and the measurement of progress on achieving the SDGs at the halfway point to 2030.

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SECTION III

## **Taking Action Across All Sustainable Development Goals**





## SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canadians have access to sufficient, affordable and nutritious food
- Canadian agriculture is sustainable

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

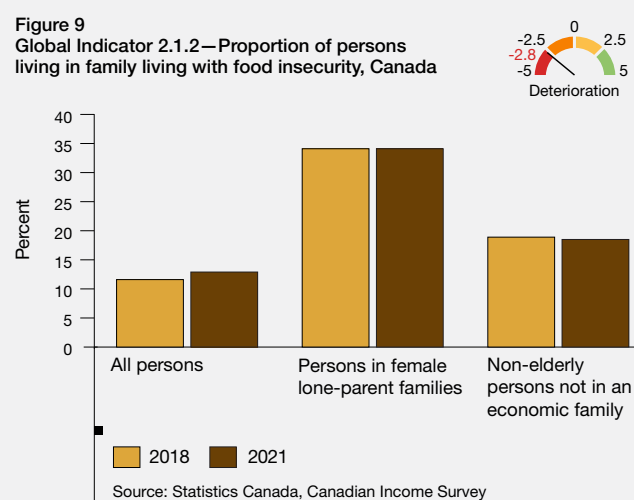
- Rising food prices and economy-wide inflation are making it more difficult for many families to consistently afford nutritious food.

### SPOTLIGHT: Food insecurity is present in Canada at varying levels across regions and socioeconomic profiles

Food insecurity increased among Canadians from 11.6% in 2018 to 12.9% in 2021. This shows that there has been a deterioration of progress toward the goal of ending hunger and food insecurity in Canada. Female lone-parent families are at a higher-risk of food insecurity, with 34.1% living in moderate or severe food insecurity, unchanged from 2018. Among persons younger than 65 (non-elderly) who did not live in an economic family, 18.5% lived in food insecurity in 2021, a rate substantially higher than the national average of 12.9%.

Food insecurity is higher in the Canadian territories than in the provinces, with 49.5% of people in Nunavut, 20.4% in Northwest Territories, and 21.2% in Yukon living in moderately or severely food insecure households in 2020.<sup>37</sup> Indigenous households also experience higher rates of food insecurity than the general Canadian population.<sup>38</sup> In 2016, 50.8% of First Nations adults living on reserve experienced food insecurity<sup>39</sup> and, in 2017, 77.1% of Inuit adults living in Inuit Nunangat experienced food insecurity.<sup>40</sup>

**Figure 9**  
Global Indicator 2.1.2—Proportion of persons living in family living with food insecurity, Canada



<sup>37</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey

<sup>38</sup> [fnfnes.ca](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/92-629-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>39</sup> 2015–2016 First Nations Regional Health Survey

Note: For more information on the survey, consult: [fnigc.ca/online-library/?wpv\\_aux\\_current\\_post\\_id=409&wpv\\_aux\\_parent\\_post\\_id=409&wpvview\\_count=516&wpv-publication-topic%5B%5D=first-nations-regional-health-survey-phase-3](https://fnigc.ca/online-library/?wpv_aux_current_post_id=409&wpv_aux_parent_post_id=409&wpvview_count=516&wpv-publication-topic%5B%5D=first-nations-regional-health-survey-phase-3)

<sup>40</sup> 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey

Note: For more information on the survey, consult: [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/89-653-X#wb-auto-2](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/89-653-X#wb-auto-2)



- Organizations and partners continue to strengthen food systems in Canada by improving access to culturally acceptable food, enhancing food literacy in schools, and working to advance northern and Indigenous food security, among other initiatives.
- Canada has increased investments in agri-environmental programs to help farmers increase sustainable production and promote greater food security.

## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

The Government of Canada launched the [Food Policy for Canada](#) in 2019 with a vision that all people in Canada are able to access a sufficient amount of safe, nutritious, and culturally diverse food, and that food systems are resilient and innovative, sustain the environment and support the economy. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada provided additional investments in support of that vision through initiatives such as, the [Emergency Food Security Fund](#) and the Indigenous Community Support Fund. Through its COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the Government of Canada provided \$20 million per year in 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 to respond to emerging vulnerabilities in inspection capacity due to COVID-19 and ensure an adequate, safe and reliable food supply for Canadians.

Canada continues to improve and expand its food security programming in Canada's North. [The Harvesters Support Grant](#) was developed in 2020 in direct collaboration with Indigenous partners to increase their access to traditional foods. Since its launch, it supported more than 5500 harvesters across 108 eligible communities, with more than 85 new food-sharing initiatives and 113 community hunts and harvests taking place. Partners have welcomed the Grant's design and flexibility and described it as an important step toward reconciliation. In 2021, Canada expanded the Grant and added a new [Community Food Programs Fund](#) to support the local food infrastructure in 112 isolated communities to strengthen food sovereignty. These investments seek to encourage a return to traditional diets and practices, reduce reliance on store-bought

foods, and increase food sharing activities that support the most marginalized. Canada also funds and supports nutrition education initiatives in all eligible isolated northern communities to increase knowledge of healthy eating and help develop skills in selecting and preparing healthy food.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada provides agriculture and food systems development assistance to address the root causes of hunger, and allocated \$650 million in global humanitarian food and nutrition assistance in 2022. This included \$100 million to support small and medium-sized agri-food enterprise growth in Africa through the African Development Bank to increase food security, and \$52 million for agricultural solutions including temporary grain storage equipment in Ukraine. Canada also provided \$30 million in humanitarian funding to the World Food Programme to facilitate the transport, storage and distribution of Ukrainian grain moving through the Black Sea Grain Initiative toward countries grappling with acute food insecurity. Additionally, Canada has supported Canadian civil society organizations to benefit hundreds of thousands of smallholder farmers, fishers and small livestock producers in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latin America, particularly women, through improved food security, nutrition and livelihoods.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Many Canadians are facing increased strain due to inflation and other economic factors and are increasingly concerned about food insecurity, especially those living in vulnerable households. Global conflict also has implications for food security across the world.

The Government of Canada delivers a range of initiatives to alleviate immediate financial pressures on Canadian households and support broader, longer-term community solutions to strengthen food and social systems. The Government is also making improvements in the measurement of food security drivers and outcomes. More recently, the federal government made a commitment to work with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners, and stakeholders to develop a National School Food Policy and to explore how more Canadian children can receive nutritious food at school.

Ensuring the long-term vitality of the food and agriculture sector and securing a stable, safe supply depends on a healthy environment and resilience to climate change. The Government of Canada has committed over \$1.5 billion in funding to accelerate the agriculture sector's progress on reducing emissions, enhance climate resiliency, and becoming a global leader in sustainable agriculture. Additionally, the new Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a \$3.5 billion, 5-year agreement between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, is making an important contribution to promote and increase sustainable agricultural production in the Canadian agriculture sector. The [Sustainable Agriculture Strategy](#) will also help set a shared direction for collective action to improve environmental performance in the sector over the long-term, support farmers' livelihoods and strengthen the business vitality of the Canadian agricultural industry.

### SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

Organizations and farmers across Canada are improving access to food, promoting sustainable agriculture, and reducing food waste. The Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC), the national organization representing egg farmers across the country, strives to deliver a constant supply of a healthy, whole food items to Canadians while contributing to the food security of communities and supporting vibrant rural communities where egg farmers operate. Egg farmers contribute to advancing SDG 2 by ensuring Canadians have year-round access to fresh, local, affordable and high-quality eggs throughout the country. EFC regularly partners with organizations such as Food Banks Canada and the Breakfast Club of Canada to deliver millions of eggs

to Canadians in vulnerable situations and to children through breakfast programs each year. Through the [Women in the Egg Industry Program](#), EFC aims to address and overcome the barriers women may face in the industry (SDG 5, Gender Equality). The organization also invests in ongoing climate research to explore best practices for sustainability and reduce the industry's environmental footprint while continuing to meet Canada's demand for local and affordable eggs (SDG 13, Climate Action). In the past 50 years, Canadian egg farmers have reduced the environmental impact of egg production by 68% in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, 69% in terms of sustainable water use, 81% in terms of land use, and 41% in energy use.

In addition, EFC partners with international organizations to provide vulnerable communities with access to a dependable source of protein-rich eggs, which were named a 'star ingredient' by the United Nations (UN) during World Food Day 2021. For instance, their work with the Canadian-led humanitarian organization [Heart for Africa](#) has bolstered egg production in Eswatini by sharing Canadian farming expertise to train and support local farmers (SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals). In addition to operating a large-scale farm and employing local community residents, this project supplements a meal program that reaches 4,500 community members on a weekly basis. Over 11 million eggs have been locally produced and delivered to the community since 2016.

CropLife Canada is the trade association representing the manufacturers, developers and distributors of plant science innovations, including pest control products and plant breeding innovations, for use in agriculture, urban and public health settings. Launched in 2018, its [Manage Resistance Now initiative](#) has provided farmers and resellers the ability

to search and locate relevant best-practice strategies that provide crucial and timely advice on managing pest resistance. The initiative is a collaborative effort of industry, academia and government experts to increase knowledge and promote the adoption of strategies that will lead to a reduction of weed, insect and disease resistance. Since launching, it has successfully delivered 19 factsheets, 11 case studies, 16 videos, feature articles, active social media and a [grower contest](#) to facilitate information transfer to farmers and ensure awareness and understanding of resistance management. It also helps advance the SDGs through its outcomes to:

- safeguard crops from domestic and invasive pest species;
- provide safe and nutritious food security in Canada and abroad; and,
- ensure farmers can continue to responsibly use crop protection technologies to produce a sustainable, high-yielding crop.



## SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canadians adopt healthy behaviours
- Canadians have healthy and satisfying lives
- Canada prevents causes of premature death

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Although Canadians enjoy relatively good health and well-being, they do not experience it equally for reasons that include social, political, and economic inequalities.
- The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated health inequities, particularly for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, as well as other racialized and marginalized populations that continue to experience gaps in health determinants

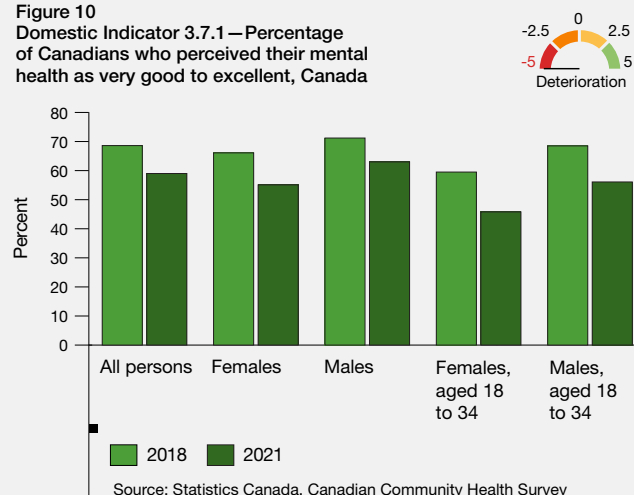
and outcomes. For example, Indigenous communities face disproportionately high rates of tuberculosis compared to non-Indigenous populations in Canada. In 2021, the incidence of active tuberculosis (per 100,000) was: non-Indigenous Canadian-born (0.2), persons born outside Canada (13.4), Inuit (135.1), First Nations (16.1) and Métis (2.1).

- The COVID-19 pandemic also had a negative impact on overall health and well-being, including a decline in mental health, which has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

### SPOTLIGHT: More Canadians perceived their mental health as worsening in 2021 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020

Canadians perceived their mental health as worsening in 2021 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and its continuing societal impacts. Among Canadians, 59.0% perceived their mental health as very good to excellent in 2021, representing a decline from 68.6% in 2018, and indicating a deterioration toward the ambition that Canadians have healthy and satisfying lives. Mental health among women was reported as particularly worse than their male counterparts in both 2018 and 2021. In 2021, 55.1% of women reported very good to excellent mental health compared to 63.0% among men. Among younger women aged 18–34, less than half (45.8%) reported very good to excellent mental health in 2021, substantially fewer than in 2018 and a much lower rate than their male counterparts. While younger men also reported an impact on their mental health between 2018 and 2021, the proportion reporting very good to excellent mental health remained higher than among women.

**Figure 10**  
Domestic Indicator 3.7.1 — Percentage of Canadians who perceived their mental health as very good to excellent, Canada





## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

The [Wellness Together Canada](#) portal was created in response to a rise in mental health and substance use concerns since the COVID-19 pandemic. As of April 2023, more than 3.42 million individuals across Canada had accessed the portal in over 9.59 million web sessions.

Canada continues to support improving mental wellness in Indigenous communities through Indigenous-led community-driven approaches to suicide prevention, life promotion, crisis response and culturally-appropriate substance use treatment and prevention services. This also includes funding for access to trauma-informed mental health, cultural, and emotional supports for those impacted by intergenerational and childhood trauma, including Survivors of Indian Residential Schools and their family members, former students of federal Indian Day Schools and their family members, and those affected by the national tragedy of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

As a first step to address inequities in accessing dental care services, the interim [Canada Dental Benefit](#) was launched in 2022 enabling parents access to direct payments for eligible children under 12 (for two years, up to \$1,300 per child) to support the costs of dental care services. It is estimated that over 500,000 children will benefit.

In addition, [Canada's Collaborative Self-Government Fiscal Policy](#) (launched in 2019) has begun to set a new fiscal relationship between self-governing Indigenous governments and Canada and includes a component on social well-being, which is intended to help close gaps through successful, evidence-driven initiatives that recognize culture, language and heritage as foundational elements of social-well-being. Twenty-five self-governing Indigenous governments received \$189.2 million in 2018 to support collaborative process initiatives, including funding to help close social well-being gaps.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada has been a longstanding leader in global health. [Canada's 10 Year Commitment to Global Health and Rights](#), builds on the Muskoka Commitment (2011 to 2020) and reinforces its support for SDG 3. The new 10-year Commitment includes \$1.4 billion annually for global health programming starting in fiscal year 2023–24, including \$700 million dedicated to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights. In 2020, Canada provided over \$3.5 billion in additional funding for pandemic response. Additionally, in 2021–2022, the International Health Grants Program provided \$2.3 million in funding to international recipients to contribute to improved health and well-being, including projects to protect people from pathogen and toxin-related risks; fostering health and gender equity and protecting vulnerable populations; enabling timely and coordinated response to future pandemics; improving water safety; and tackling climate change.

Canada continues to address challenges related to infectious diseases and vaccines, such as decreases in child routine immunization. In 2022, Canada contributed \$1.21 billion to replenish the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria. Canada's support for the [Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator](#) (ACT-A) helped the COVAX Facility deliver more than 1.9 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines globally, increasing access to COVID-19 tests and treatments and reinforcing health systems. Canada has contributed over \$2 billion to ACT-A partners to address ongoing gaps in access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics for high-risk populations in low and middle-income countries into 2024. This includes Canada's Global Initiative for Vaccine Equity, a \$275 million signature initiative, launched in 2022, aimed at bolstering vaccine delivery and distribution, reinforcing health system capacity and diversifying local vaccine manufacturing in 12 countries.

Canada's leadership of the Ottawa Group on WTO reform contributed to a [Trade and Health Initiative](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020. Under the Initiative, the Ottawa Group called for further cooperation among all WTO members to strengthen global supply chains and facilitate the flow of essential medical goods, including vaccines, amid the pandemic.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Significant and unique mental health challenges are disproportionately experienced by youth, Indigenous people, Black and racialized Canadians, and members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community. Perceived mental health has been impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, there has been an increase in Canadians screening positive for symptoms of depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Canada will continue to work to improve health and well-being outcomes under SDG 3 to address the challenges and set-backs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Next steps and opportunities include:

- building on the interim Canada Dental Benefit, the Government of Canada is working to create a comprehensive, long-term Canada-wide dental care program to address inequities in access to dental services for many Canadians.

- continuing to work closely with Indigenous partners to support improved access to mental wellness services, particularly culturally-relevant, trauma-informed mental wellness supports that meet the unique needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.
- introducing the 9-8-8 service, a new 3-digit number for people across Canada to call or text when in need of suicide prevention and mental health crisis support. To prepare for the launch in November 2023, Canada is engaging with stakeholders, Indigenous organizations, and representatives from provincial and territorial governments on implementation of the 9-8-8 service.



## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

[Black Youth Helpline](#) is a nation-wide, charitable organization delivering direct services while driving innovative strategic change initiatives focused on prevention of social breakdown across populations of the most vulnerable children, youth and families. It serves all youth and specifically responds to the need for a Black youth-specific service, positioned and resourced to promote access to professional, culturally-appropriate support for youth, families and schools. In addition to delivering direct

services, the Helpline drives initiatives focused on alternatives to exclusion from schools, access to professional mental health care and community development with approaches prioritizing primary prevention and cultural relevancy. The organization is currently working in partnership with 84 school districts across Canada, and has seen an increase in partnerships and engagement with health systems leaders seeking pathways into effective mental health care.



## SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

### CANADIAN AMBITION

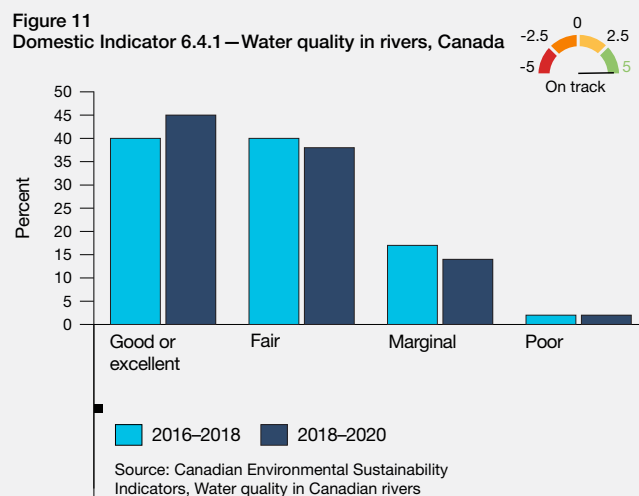
- Canadians have access to drinking water and use it in a sustainable manner

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Between November 2015 and February 2023, First Nations have lifted 138 long-term drinking water advisories (LTDWAs) on public drinking water systems on reserve. In comparison, 57 LTDWAs had been lifted from public drinking water systems on reserve in 2018.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2018–2019, 65% of public wastewater systems on reserve produced treated water that met requirements specified in the Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations, and 56% of public water systems on reserve had low risk ratings. By 2019–2020, these numbers increased to 66% and 57% respectively.<sup>42</sup> The Government of Canada is targeting 70% of public wastewater systems on reserve to meet regulations by 2024, and 68% of public water systems on reserve to have low risk by 2026.

### SPOTLIGHT: Maintaining and improving water quality in Canadian rivers

Water quality in Canadian rivers is an indicator of the overall water quality in Canada. For the period 2018–2020, slightly less than half (45%) of rivers were rated as having good to excellent quality water—an increase from 40% in 2016–2018. An increase in the proportion of rivers rated as having good to excellent water quality demonstrates a trend that is on track toward the ambition that Canadians have access to drinking water and use it in a sustainable manner. On the other hand, 16% of rivers were rated as having water of marginal to poor quality, a slight deterioration from 15% in 2016–18. Looking at the longer-term trends, water quality has not changed between 2002 and 2020 at over half of the sites (60%) across southern Canada. Where it has changed, it has deteriorated (30%) more often than it has improved (10%).<sup>43</sup>



<sup>41</sup> Lifting advisories is the decision and responsibility of Chief and Councils

<sup>42</sup> Annual Performance Inspections for 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and full data results are not available

<sup>43</sup> Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program, Water quality in Canadian rivers

## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Canada continues to support First Nations on reserve communities to ensure that they have funding and resources for sustainable water systems. In 2021–2022, \$1.29 billion was committed to be delivered over two years (2022–2024) under the [First Nation Water and Wastewater Enhanced Program](#). This includes, \$247 million toward water and wastewater infrastructure to support projects focused on lifting remaining LTDWAs on reserve and \$1.04 billion for new water and wastewater capital projects for both new builds, as well as system repairs and upgrades. Beyond First Nations on reserve, the Government of Canada invests in infrastructure projects across the country through the [Canada Community Building Fund](#). These investments aim to: reduce the number of communities that experience interruptions in drinking water service and the amount of water consumed per person in Canada; improve wastewater treatment to reduce the pollution of rivers, lakes and oceans; and provide long-term stability to support planning for future systems improvements.

The Government of Canada also takes action to prevent harmful pollution and monitoring water quality, in lakes, rivers, coasts, and in the North. For instance, the administration of regulations developed under the pollution prevention provisions of the [Fisheries Act](#) protects waters frequented by fish from the threat of pollution; and the [Northern Contaminated Sites Program](#) (2002) supports research and monitoring of plastic pollution across the North as well as related capacity development through environmental monitoring and research projects.

The [Clean Water and Wastewater Fund](#) (2016) and Investing in [Canada Infrastructure Program](#) (2018) has helped communities reduce air and water pollution, provide clean water, increase resilience to climate change and create a clean-growth economy; build strong, dynamic and inclusive communities; and ensure Canadian families have access to modern, reliable services that improve their quality of life. Additionally, the Freshwater Action Plan (funded in 2017 and 2022) has helped to reduce phosphorus

pollution; clean-up contaminated sediments, and eliminate other beneficial use impairments in major waterbodies; and coordinate science-based projects to improve water quality, conserve biodiversity, and promote the sustainable use of several Canadian water resources.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

A lack of clean water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) disproportionately affects women and girls. Through the Feminist International Assistance Policy, the Government of Canada is working with international partners to promote access to WASH around the world. COVID-19 shifted global priorities and highlighted the importance of clean water and sanitation as a pandemic response, prevention and preparedness tool. As part of Canada's global COVID-19 response through the [ACT Accelerator](#), Canada provided \$155 million to the World Health Organization for health systems strengthening efforts that include technical assistance to improve WASH and waste management. This enabled the creation of a COVID-19 [checklist](#) for critical WASH and waste services and a [global analysis](#) on COVID-19 health care waste. Canada also partnered with UNICEF contributing \$170 million through [Canada's Global Initiative for Vaccine Equity](#) to support COVID-19 integration into routine immunization services, including the provision of gender sensitive WASH and infection prevention and control services.

Canada recognizes that progress on SDG 6 in conflict-affected areas requires dedicated attention. Canada is providing \$5 million for the Gender Responsive WASH Assistance to Conflict-Affected Populations in the Gaza Strip 2020 to 2023 humanitarian project, led by Action Against Hunger Canada. Canada is also providing \$1.9 million to the Centre for Water and Sanitation Technology to implement the Women-Led WASH for Healthy Homes initiative in Ethiopia (2022 to 2026), which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of 77,348 women, girls, men and boys through interventions focused on building positive knowledge, skills and behaviours around WASH.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Global shortages of supplies, equipment, and capacity, as a result of the pandemic and international conflict, may impact project schedules and the federal government's ability to provide sufficient funding. This may affect the ability to meet previously-established target lift dates for the remaining LTDWAs on reserve.

An increase in the frequency and intensity of precipitation events linked to climate change makes it more difficult for cities to manage stormwater runoff. Untreated stormwater runoff, as well as untreated water discharges from combined stormwater and wastewater drainage networks, contribute to water pollution in urbanized watersheds.

Next steps and opportunities include:

- continuing support for First Nations on reserve to build their operational capacity; maintain their water and wastewater facilities; meet their freshwater objectives, including tracking and promoting compliance with the Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations and increase support for wastewater projects;
- continuing support for Indigenous-led engagement processes, including the ongoing work with First Nations on the development of new safe drinking water and wastewater legislation, which proposes to enable the development of regulations on First Nations lands;
- implementing a strengthened Freshwater Action Plan, including historic investments to provide funding to protect and restore large lakes and river systems; and,
- creating a new Canada Water Agency to find the best ways to keep Canada's water safe, clean and well-managed.

## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

The Conseil Patronal de l'Environnement du Québec (CPEQ) is the umbrella organization that represents the Quebec business sector on environmental and sustainable development issues and on important general and common interests by coordinating its member companies' objectives. Amongst other initiatives, the [Adaptation aux changements climatiques pour la gestion de l'eau](#) [French only] (adaptation to climate change for water management) initiative aims to better manage the quantity and quality of stormwater in the Brome-Missisquoi Regional County Municipality, through the use of green infrastructure in the context of climate change. The project aims to reduce the duration and frequency of overflow episodes, minimize sediment inputs to a drinking water source, and redevelop an agricultural watercourse. The municipality has set up various projects aimed at experimenting with a social innovation approach and measuring the

effectiveness of several types of green infrastructure in three different environments: urban, mountainous and agricultural. In addition, a degraded watercourse was redeveloped with environmental improvements in an agricultural setting, including the vegetation of the riparian strip. This agronomic support approach has made it possible to encourage and help producers to adopt practices that promote soil conservation and to set up hydroagricultural facilities. In urban areas, a program to disconnect gutters from the municipal sewer system was developed. In mountainous areas, an approach to assist landowners during soil remodeling work and training in public works have been implemented. Furthermore, erosion control structures in road rights-of-way, at the scale of a mountainous watershed, have been implemented.





## SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canadians reduce their energy consumption
- Canadians have access to clean and renewable energy

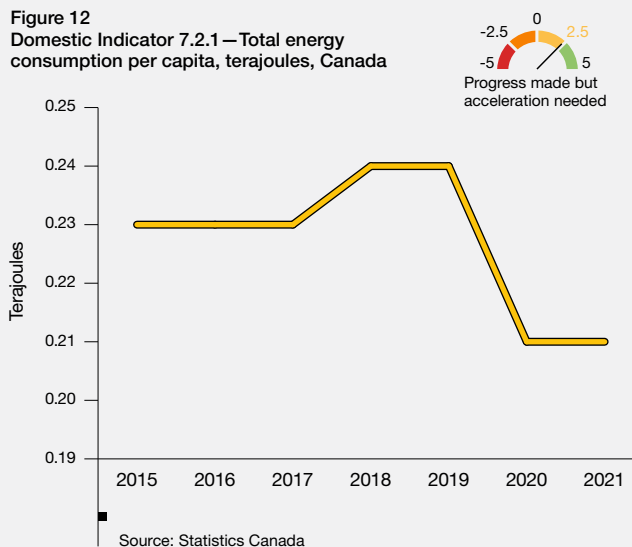
### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Over the past two decades, energy efficiency improvements in Canada have achieved a total energy savings of 9,944.3 petajoules representing a 12.8% increase in energy efficiency since 2000.<sup>44</sup>
- As of May 2023, the \$1.56 billion [Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program](#) (SREPs) is fully allocated, supporting 73 smart renewable energy and grid modernization projects, and adding over 2,700 megawatts of new renewable energy to Canada's electricity system. In its Budget 2023, Canada announced \$3 billion over 13 years in Natural Resources Canada funding, including for SREPs.
- Nearly 83% of the electricity produced in Canada in 2020 was from non-GHG gas emitting sources, with a national commitment to achieve 90% by 2030 and a net zero electricity system by 2035.
- The Government continues to collaborate with industry stakeholders, provincial and territorial governments, and Indigenous partners in implementing the [Hydrogen Strategy](#) for Canada. The strategy is supported through investments including the \$1.5 billion [Clean Fuels Fund](#).
- In 2022, up to \$3.8 billion was allocated over eight years to implement the [Critical Minerals Strategy](#), including \$144 million to critical minerals research and development to support responsible extraction and processing for applications including batteries and electric vehicles.

### SPOTLIGHT: Total energy consumption per capita

As a result of the large variations in temperature experienced throughout the year and the geographical vastness of the country, Canadians are considered one of the largest consumers of energy in the world on a per capita basis. In 2021, the average Canadian consumed 0.21 terajoules, down from 0.24 in 2018, which shows progress has been made but acceleration is needed to achieve the Canadian SDG ambition of reducing energy consumption. Between 2018 and 2021, total energy consumption decreased by 7.3%, largely precipitated by the reduced economic activity observed at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. While total energy consumption started to increase in 2021, it remained below pre-pandemic levels.

**Figure 12**  
Domestic Indicator 7.2.1 — Total energy  
consumption per capita, terajoules, Canada



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

[Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan \(ERP\)](#), released in 2022, outlines a roadmap for Canada to reduce its emissions to at least 40% below 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050, with \$9.1 billion in new spending above and beyond the existing \$100 billion in investments. Under the ERP, Canada will fight climate change with investments in clean and affordable energy (such as enhancements to clean fuels production capacity, renewable electricity, small modular reactors and grid modernization); and through initiatives such as development of clean electricity regulations and improving the energy efficiency in Canada homes, buildings and industrial facilities.

The Canada [Greener Homes Initiative](#), launched in 2021, helps homeowners save money and reduce GHG emissions by providing grants and loans toward eligible energy-efficient home retrofits. This includes the [Oil to Heat Pump Affordability Program](#), which helps low-to-median income homeowners switch from oil heating to highly efficient heat pumps.

Canada continues to support the [Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program](#), with an additional \$300 million five-year investment announced in 2022. This includes new funding for the Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative, a training and funding program that supports Indigenous-led climate solutions in diesel-reliant remote communities.

In addition to the [Smart Grid and Emerging Renewable Power](#) programs under the [Investing in Canada Plan](#), clean power investments by the Canada Infrastructure Bank and active efforts to phase out unabated domestic coal-fired electricity, Canada has continued to invest in the [Energy Innovation Program](#), [green infrastructure research, development and demonstration](#), and the [energy research and development](#). These initiatives will continue to advance the development and deployment of new technologies, knowledge, and solutions to accelerate energy systems transformation.

Established in 2022, the [Regional Energy and Resource Tables](#) are joint partnerships with the federal government and provinces and territories, in collaboration with Indigenous partners and key stakeholders. The Tables identify and accelerate opportunities for transforming traditional resource industries and advancing emerging ones for a net-zero future. One of the expected benefits of these regional processes will be a clearer picture of the capital, labour, and skills requirements of a low-carbon economy.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada is supporting developing countries' transition to clean energy by phasing out coal-powered emissions and promoting equitable access to reliable and cost-effective clean energy solutions and energy efficient technologies. These include in areas where Canadian companies are well-positioned with leading expertise in renewable energy such as solar, wind, marine, and hydrogen as well as energy transmission and storage through smart grid technologies.

Since 2021, Canada has supported developing countries to achieve the climate mitigation goals outlined in their Nationally Determined Contributions or to establish their plans and targets. For example, Canada is contributing \$1 billion to the [Climate Investment Fund's Accelerating Coal Transition program](#) to help developing countries transition from coal-fired electricity to clean power. Canada co-led with the United Kingdom the Powering Past Coal Alliance, which is a world-leading initiative to accelerate the global phase out of emissions from coal power. The G7, including Canada, has expanded Just Energy Transition Partnerships to raise the level of ambition on developing countries' energy transition and coal phase-out while ensuring that workers and vulnerable communities are protected.

In 2019–2020, Canada invested \$786.8 million in clean energy research, development and demonstration through Mission Innovation in collaboration with external partners. Canada is also advancing international collaboration on critical minerals through implementation of the [Canada-US Joint Action Plan on Critical Minerals Collaboration and the Canada-EU Partnership on Raw Materials](#).

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

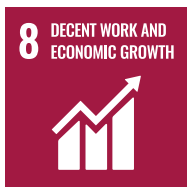
Energy production is one of the dominant contributors to climate change, accounting for about 80% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>45</sup> Though this underscores the challenge of reaching net-zero emissions in Canada, it also highlights the potential for innovation through targeted initiatives that increase Canadians' access to clean energy such as the [Arctic Energy Fund](#).



Clean and affordable energy is essential to Canada's and the world's aspirations to decarbonize the economy and achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. Canada will continue to collaborate with key stakeholders as an active participant in Mission Innovation and a member of the International Energy Agency and the International Renewable Energy Agency to support the development and deployment of new clean energy technologies, positioning Canada as a clean energy leader.

Increasing access to reliable and affordable clean energy is vital for enhancing economic development and for meeting the climate change targets. The interim [Sustainable Jobs Plan](#) announced in early 2023, outlines a federal governance, engagement and accountability framework to advance economic prosperity and ensure workers benefit from the opportunities presented by a low-carbon economy. The Plan outlines the Government's intent to introduce legislation requiring that a Sustainable Jobs Action Plan is released every five years starting in 2025 to guide and organize efforts to support workers as Canada builds a net-zero economy.

45 [Natural Resources Canada's Energy Fact Book](#), p. 16.



## SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canadians have access to quality jobs
- Canadians contribute to and benefit from sustainable economic growth

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Canada was significantly impacted by the effects of pandemic-related restrictions, but 2022 data shows labour market indicators have recovered to their pre-pandemic levels.
- Canada's GDP was \$57,058 US dollars per capita in 2022. This was the 17th highest GDP per capita among all OECD countries.<sup>46</sup>
- While the unemployment rate (15 years and over) rose sharply when the pandemic hit in early 2020, going from 5.8% in 2018 to 9.7% in 2020, it fell to 5.3% in 2022, the lowest rate since comparable data became available in 1976.<sup>47</sup> The unemployment rate for women is often lower than that of men. In 2022, women aged 15 and over had an unemployment rate of 5.1%, as compared to 5.4% for men in the same age group.<sup>48</sup>
- Throughout 2022 the employment rate of core-aged women hovered around record highs. On average over the course of the year, 81% of core-aged women were employed, the highest annual rate on record since 1976 and 1.3 ppts higher than in 2019.<sup>49</sup>
- The proportion of youth (aged 15 to 29) not in education, employment or training (NEET) rose from 12% in 2018 to 14% in 2020 and 2021, but then fell to 11% in 2022.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> [data.oecd.org/gdp/gross-domestic-product-gdp.htm#indicator-chart](https://data.oecd.org/gdp/gross-domestic-product-gdp.htm#indicator-chart)

<sup>47</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410032701](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410032701)

<sup>48</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0327-01 Labour force characteristics by sex and detailed age group, annual

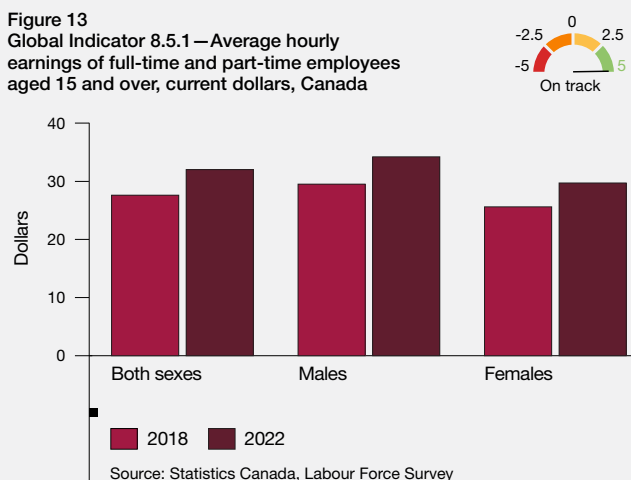
<sup>49</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/230106/dq230106a-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/230106/dq230106a-eng.htm)

<sup>50</sup> [doi.org/10.25318/3710019601-eng](https://doi.org/10.25318/3710019601-eng)

## SPOTLIGHT: Although the average hourly wages of employees have increased since 2018, the gender wage gap persists

Wages are an important component of equitable and decent work, and in recent years their movements reflected the impact of ongoing economic events resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. In Canada, average hourly wages of employees increased 15.9% since 2018 to reach \$32.00 per hour in 2022. This increase indicates that this indicator is on track toward the target of achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all. However, the average hourly gender wage gap has remained largely unchanged since 2018 as women were still earning on average around \$4.50 less per hour than men in 2022. Among various age groups, employees aged between 25 and 54 earned the most with an average of \$34.55 per hour in 2022. Younger employees aged between 15 and 24 earned the least with an average of \$19.17 per hour in 2022.

**Figure 13**  
Global Indicator 8.5.1—Average hourly earnings of full-time and part-time employees aged 15 and over, current dollars, Canada



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Since 2018, Canada has continued to implement initiatives that support inclusive and robust economic growth. These aim to promote job creation, provide skills training and employment supports, and address systemic barriers to labour market participation. Each year, through the [Labour Market Development Agreements](#) and the [Workforce Development Agreements](#), the Government of Canada provides provincial and territorial governments approximately \$3 billion for individuals and employers to obtain skills training and employment supports.

Technological progress, new business models, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic are changing workplaces and expectations at work, impacting the skills Canadians need for jobs and the way they develop these skills. Future Skills, launched in 2019, helps Canadians take advantage of new opportunities, better prepare for jobs of the future, and supports employers so they have access to a skilled workforce.

In 2021, the Government of Canada strengthened its commitment to closing the gender wage gap by implementing the [Pay Equity Act](#), ensuring that workers in federally regulated workplaces receive equal pay for work of equal value. The federal government also continues to introduce various legislative initiatives to update federal labour standards, including a proactive pay equity regime, new pay transparency measures, and provisions to strengthen violence and harassment prevention in the workplace.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Internationally, Canada is an active member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and plays a key role in contributing to the advancement of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda. Canada is also the current chair of the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) Steering Committee, a strategic, multi-stakeholder partnership which aims to assist UN Member States in achieving the SDGs. In 2023, Canada ratified the ILO Convention 190 concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.



Canada recognizes that international trade can be an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction that can promote sustainable development. Canada is a founding donor of the African Trade Policy Centre and supports activities aiming to reduce trade barriers to women entrepreneurs and traders in Africa and reducing trade-related gender discrimination and gender-based barriers to trade policy implementation. Canada's Aid for Trade contributions of over \$1 billion in 2020–2022 have included projects supporting COVID-19 recovery, clean energy transition, resource sector management and gender equality. [Canada's inclusive approach to trade](#) reduces systemic barriers for women and under-represented groups and mainstreaming gender and inclusivity in trade contributes to sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Although Canada enjoys a strong economy, some challenges remain. Inflation, the changing nature of work, an aging population, and labour shortages will continue to impact Canada's labour market and economic growth. Additionally, unemployment rates remain higher for specific underrepresented groups, including newcomers, Indigenous people, and racialized groups. Young Canadians saw more job losses due to the pandemic than any other age demographic. While employment in general has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, many youth continue to require support. In response, various

programs aim to increase the participation of youth and underrepresented groups in the labour market, such as:

- the [Youth Employment and Skills Strategy Program](#), helping young people aged 15–30 get the supports required to gain the skills, work experience and abilities needed for a successful transition into the labour market;
- the [Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program](#), helping Indigenous people improve their skills and work toward their long-term career goals;
- the [Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities](#), which assists persons with disabilities to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment or self-employment, as well as advance in their careers;
- the [Skills for Success](#) program is helping Canadians get access to fundamentals skills like reading, writing and other basic skills that will allow people to break into the workforce and do so with confidence; and,
- to remain adaptable and responsive to the changing labour market, the Sectoral Workforce Solutions Program is training hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers to help them get good jobs in sectors where we know demand is highest—in sectors like health care, green tech and hospitality.

In addition, to help reduce challenges faced by foreign workers, the [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#) is continually improved to maximize workers' protections and strengthen regulations to improve their housing and working conditions.



## SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canada fosters sustainable research and innovation
- Canadians have access to modern and sustainable infrastructure

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Canada is taking action to green its industries, including through efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which has contributed to improve sustainable economic growth in Canada since 1990.
- Governments and key partners are working together to invest in modern, low-carbon public infrastructure and build inclusive, connected and climate-resilient communities across Canada.
- For example, since 2016, Canada has greatly increased the number of zero-emission vehicle charging and refuelling stations completed or under development along major travel routes, making low-carbon transportation options more accessible to Canadians. The Government of Canada has provided support toward 43,000 electric vehicle chargers, 22 natural gas stations and 29 hydrogen stations, with 4924 electric vehicle chargers, 13 natural gas stations and six hydrogen stations currently in operation.<sup>51</sup>
- Canadians also increasingly have access to reliable, high-speed internet, with 91.4% of Canadians having broadband internet service at speeds of 50/10 Mbps in 2021.<sup>52</sup>
- Progress has also been made to boost innovation capacity, with Canada's innovation ecosystem performance ranking 15<sup>th</sup> on WIPO's Global Innovation Index in 2022, its best ranking since 2016.<sup>53</sup>

51 Natural Resources Canada

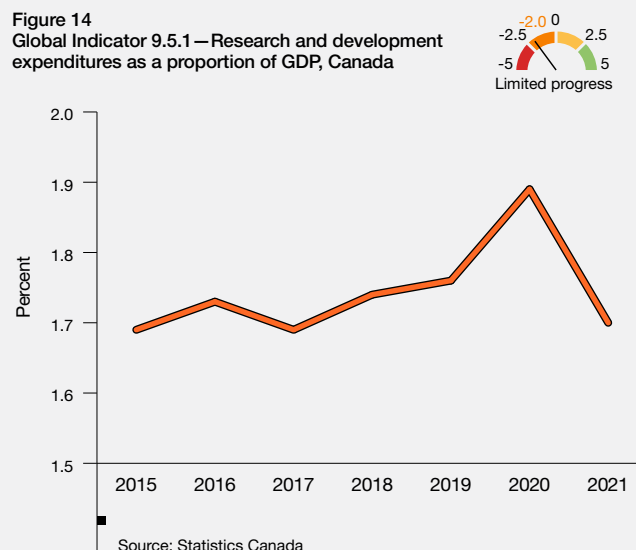
52 [sdgcif-data-canada-oddcic-donnee.github.io/9-3-1](https://sdgcif-data-canada-oddcic-donnee.github.io/9-3-1)

53 [Global Innovation Index 2022: What is the future of innovation-driven growth? \(wipo.int\)](https://wipo.int) (page 48)

## SPOTLIGHT: Investment in research and development continued to lag in 2021, falling below the OECD average<sup>54</sup>

Canada expenditures accounted for 1.70% of the GDP in 2021, lower than in the 3 previous years and substantially less than the OECD average<sup>55</sup> of 2.5%. Between 2018 and 2021, the proportion of research and development to GDP peaked in 2020 at 1.89% but has since declined to 1.70%. Total expenditures on research and development grew almost 10% between 2018 and 2021, virtually mirroring the rate of GDP growth over the same period. As a result, the ratio of research and development expenditures to GDP remains relatively stable, which corresponds to limited progress toward the target of enhancing scientific research and upgrading technological capabilities of industrial sectors. Among all sectors, the business enterprise sector accounted for the largest share of research and development at 44% of total expenditures while higher education and the federal government accounted for 19% each.

**Figure 14**  
Global Indicator 9.5.1 — Research and development expenditures as a proportion of GDP, Canada



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Canada continues to make headway toward building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. Canada's increasing price on carbon pollution is a central pillar of Canada's approach to climate action and industrial decarbonization. It is complemented by a suite of federal initiatives that aim to accelerate development and deployment of low-carbon solutions, and growth of existing and emerging sectors. Among these initiatives, the [Sustainable Development Technology Canada](#) supports the development and demonstration of clean technologies and, the [Strategic Innovation Fund's Net-Zero Accelerator](#) supports projects that advance decarbonization of large emitters,

transforming Canada's industrial base to low-carbon models, as well as the development of battery ecosystems and clean technologies. The [Energy Innovation Program](#) invests in research and development and demonstrations and has accelerated the commercial viability of carbon capture, use and storage technologies, clean fuel production, and industrial fuel switching in hard to abate industries. Additionally, the [Clean Growth Hub](#) is the government's focal point for clean technology, dedicated to helping Canadian clean technology innovators and adopters navigate federal programs and services most relevant to their needs. Furthermore, the Government of Canada's Industrial Decarbonization Team engages with companies to help facilitate and support the development and financing of transformative projects in Canada's industrial sectors.

<sup>54</sup> [statista.com/statistics/1259057/berd-as-a-share-of-gdp-oecd](https://statista.com/statistics/1259057/berd-as-a-share-of-gdp-oecd)

<sup>55</sup> [data.oecd.org/rd/gross-domestic-spending-on-r-d.htm](https://data.oecd.org/rd/gross-domestic-spending-on-r-d.htm)

The Government of Canada also has a suite of programs to support innovation, research and development, and technology adoption, including, among others, the [Strategic Innovation Fund](#), Canada's five [Global Innovation Clusters](#), the [Industrial Research Assistance Program](#), the regional development agencies, and [Innovative Solutions Canada](#).

Canada is also investing in green infrastructure. The [Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program](#) improves the resilience of communities, supports the transition to a clean growth economy, and improves social inclusion and socio-economic outcomes for Canadians. The [Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program](#) supports communities in making green and accessible retrofits, repairs or upgrades to existing public community buildings. It also funds the construction of new publicly accessible community buildings that serve high-need, underserved communities.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

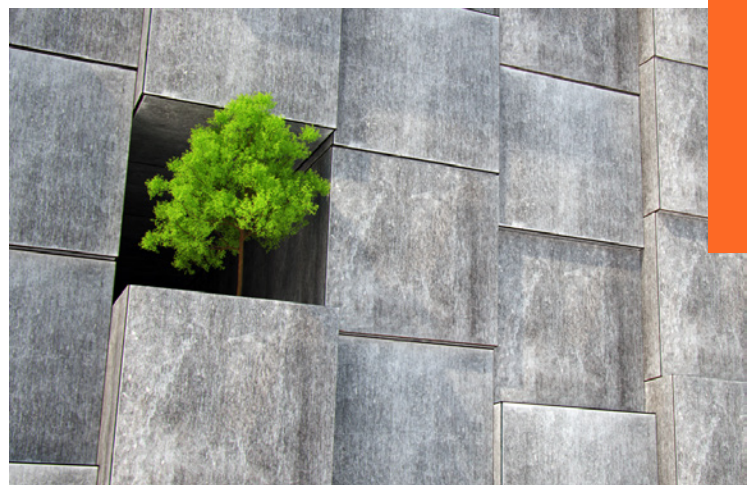
Canada's [Investing in Inclusive Infrastructure](#) project, through a repayable contribution to GuarantCo, aims to enhance provision of affordable and sustainable infrastructure services in low-income countries and fragile states to combat poverty and help economies grow. GuarantCo is part of the Private Infrastructure Development Group and addresses the shortage of long-term, patient funding, and the lack of local currency infrastructure financing and local capital market development in Africa and Asia.

In its 2022 [Indo-Pacific Strategy](#) announcement, Canada expanded the regional mandate and capacity of its development finance institution, FinDev Canada, to support high quality sustainable infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region, in alignment with Canada's objectives under the G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Going forward, the Government of Canada will continue to work with other levels of governments, academia, industry and Canadians to leverage Canada's world-class value proposition—stable fiscal policies, vast natural resources, low-cost electricity and a highly-skilled and educated workforce—to seize opportunities to compete in the net-zero global economy and provide key resources to the world. Clear regulatory signals, support for clean technology innovation and deployment, tax incentives, green procurement, partnerships, and skills development programs are cornerstones of Canada's approach to creating sustainable industries, infrastructure, and communities for the future, and economic prosperity and jobs in every region.

To help turn Canadian ideas and technologies into globally competitive products, services and growing businesses, the Government of Canada has created the [Canada Innovation Corporation](#), which will provide funding and advisory services to encourage more Canadian firms across all industries and regions to invest in research and development activities. Additionally, the new [Canada Growth Fund](#), will use innovative financing mechanisms to help unlock private capital needed to transform and grow Canada's industrial base, commercialize and deploy low-carbon technologies and resources and grow clean technology businesses.



## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

The [Chemistry Industry Association of Canada](#) (CIAC) represents leaders in Canada's chemistry and plastics sectors. Through their membership on the International Council of Chemical Associations, CIAC is committed to accelerating progress toward the 17 SDGs. Through Responsible Care and a commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement, CIAC members continue to invest in pollution prevention, energy efficiency, and resource conservation. CIAC tracks its members' reductions in GHGs and criteria air contaminant emissions through the National Emissions Reduction Masterplan. Achieving net-zero emissions for all of Canada by 2050 will require chemistry- and plastics-based solutions across the economy, including in green building, sustainable transportation and clean energy applications. For example, chemistry and plastics-based solutions, such as carbon fibre, can reduce a vehicle's weight

by an average of 100 kg and cut its emissions by 10 g CO<sub>2</sub>e/km through improved fuel efficiency while innovative insulation, window treatments and reflective roofing can dramatically reduce heating and cooling requirements and the corresponding emissions associated with buildings. The chemistry and plastic sector are actively engaged on a pathway for decarbonization. Canada's chemistry industry is delivering made-in-Canada low-carbon chemistry products. Through their low emissions electricity grid, the electro-chemistry sector is already close to achieving net-zero production. Similarly, Canada's abundant low-carbon resources (natural gas and natural gas liquids, hydroelectricity, and biomass) give its chemistry sector a built-in advantage over competitors that rely on more carbon-intensive feedstocks and energy sources.





## SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

### CANADIAN AMBITION

- Canadians live free of discrimination and inequalities are reduced

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- While Canada has continued to make progress on reducing income inequality, COVID-19 caused an unprecedented decrease in market income and a sharp increase in government transfers from emergency COVID-19 income support measures. These events significantly impacted the results on key indicators of income inequality, particularly between 2019 and 2020.
- The Gini coefficient<sup>56</sup> shows that income inequality has trended down among Canadians. Between 2018 (0.304) and 2020 (0.281)<sup>57</sup>, the adjusted after-tax Gini dropped by the largest historical amount for a two-year period since data became available in 1976. While the downward trend was somewhat attenuated with an uptick to 0.288 in 2021, it remains below pre-pandemic level of 2019.
- The share of adjusted after-tax income that went to the bottom four income deciles grew from 20.8% in 2018 to 21.8% in 2021.<sup>58</sup>
- The divergence between Gini coefficients based on market income and after-tax income (which captures the effects of government transfers) attests to the critical importance of government benefits and programs on reducing income inequality.
- Data shows modest signs of regression reflecting, in part, the fact that many temporary emergency COVID-19 income support benefits were phased out in 2021 and that Canada's social protection system re-entered a state of pre-pandemic normalcy in terms of eligibility criteria and levels of support.

<sup>56</sup> The Gini coefficient is a standard way of assessing how equally income is distributed among the population with 0 representing perfectly equal distribution and 1 representing perfectly unequal distribution. Gini coefficient data cited in this VNR is based on the adjusted after-tax income of Canadians, which captures taxes paid and government transfers received by individuals and families.

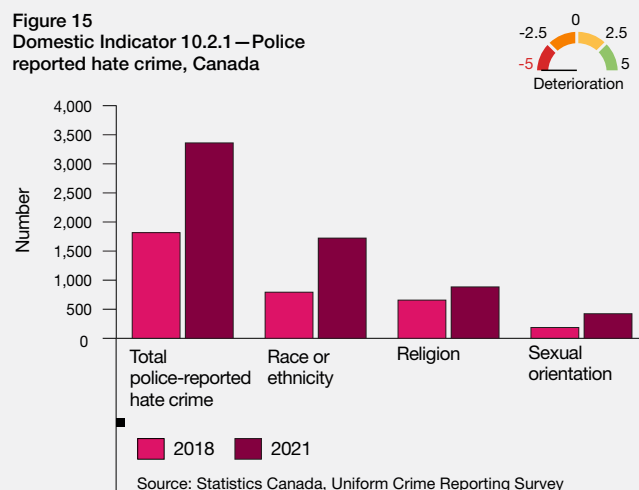
<sup>57</sup> [Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0134-01 Gini coefficients of adjusted market, total and after-tax income](#)

<sup>58</sup> [Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0193-01 Upper income limit, income share and average of adjusted market, total and after-tax income by income decile](#)

## SPOTLIGHT: Discrimination continues to be experienced by many Canadians and some forms have worsened in recent years

In Canada, police-reported hate crimes totalled 3,360 incidents in 2021, an increase of almost 85% from 2018.<sup>59</sup> This increase in police-reported crime indicates a deteriorating trend toward the ambition that Canadians live free of discrimination and that inequality is reduced. More than 1 in 2 police-reported hate crimes in 2021 targeted race or ethnicity, more than twice the amount reported in 2018. The second-highest target was religion, with 884 reported crimes, an increase of 35% since 2018. Hate crimes targeting sexual orientation more than doubled since 2018, totalling 423 crimes in 2021. Among all police-reported hate crime violations, mischiefs, uttering threats, and level 1 assaults<sup>60</sup> were the most prevalent in 2021. A total of 13 hate-motivated homicides occurred in 2021.

**Figure 15**  
Domestic Indicator 10.2.1—Police reported hate crime, Canada



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Canada continues to address income inequality by supporting low- and modest-income Canadians through key federal income support programs like the [Canada Child Benefit](#), as well as the [Canada Pension Plan](#), the [Old Age Security Program](#) and the [Canada Workers Benefit](#), which were recently enhanced to better support seniors and low-income workers. Restoring the age of eligibility for Old Age Security from 67 to 65 helped to prevent about 100,000 future seniors from falling into poverty, while enhancing the Guaranteed Income Supplement for the lowest-income single seniors helped nearly 900,000 seniors to better meet their needs. Further, Canada has made it possible for low-income seniors who choose to stay in or return to the labour market to earn more income

while still receiving the income-tested Guaranteed Income Supplement. Similarly, the expansion of the Canada Workers Benefit in 2021 provided support to about 1 million additional Canadians in low-wage jobs, lifting nearly 100,000 people out of poverty. Canadians also have access to a wide range of income support programs delivered by provincial and territorial governments.

Emergency COVID-19 financial supports provided to Canadians who faced financial challenges were decisive factors in preventing and reducing both poverty and inequality, particularly in 2020. Canada released its [Affordability Plan for Canadians](#) in 2022, providing additional support to Canadians as they face rising inflation, including new support to improve housing affordability and to help pay for dental care for children.

<sup>59</sup> Over the past two decades, police services across Canada have continued to advance their identification and reporting of hate crime incidents. Changes in reporting practices can have an effect on hate crime statistics. For example, an increase in the number of hate crime incidents reported can be influenced by the introduction of a hate crime awareness campaign.

<sup>60</sup> Level 1 assaults refer to assaults committed without the use of a weapon and ones that do not cause bodily harm. They are not considered, “aggravated assaults.”

Canada is implementing several initiatives to eliminate racism in Canada and to better support Canadians with disabilities so that they can fully participate in society and the economy, such as the establishment of the [Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat](#) (2019), investments in the [Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy](#) (2019 to 2022), the introduction of the landmark Accessible Canada Act (2019) in order to help realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040 and the launch of the [Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#) (2022). To advance the economic empowerment and social inclusion of Canadians of African descent, Canada has invested in the [Black Entrepreneurship Program](#), the [Black-Led philanthropic Endowment Fund](#), and the [Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative](#). To date, through the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative, more than 1,370 projects were funded for a total investment of almost \$82 million to continue empowering Black-led and Black-serving community organizations and their work to promote inclusiveness. Furthermore, Canada has been working toward full implementation of the 94 Calls to Action delivered by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that aim to reduce inequality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians and close socio-economic gaps.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada is advancing equality and inclusion within and among countries through, for example, the ongoing implementation of the [LGBTQ2 International Assistance Program](#) to advance human rights and improve socio-economic outcomes for LGBTQ2 people in developing countries.

At the UN Human Rights Council, Canada leads on several key resolutions. For example, Canada is part of the cross-regional core group for the resolution on the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Canada also leads the annual resolution on the elimination of [violence against women](#).

Canada remains an active member of the [Equal Rights Coalition](#), working in collaboration with state and civil society partners to promote the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by LGBTQ2 persons worldwide. Canada is also a member of the [Global Action on Disability Network](#), which seeks to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in international development and humanitarian action. At the [2022 Global Disability Summit](#), Canada pledged to provide greater assistance to people with disabilities in developing countries.

Canada has continued to champion the promotion of balanced narratives on migrants and refugees in an effort to reduce xenophobia and support the inclusion of newcomers. To advance this work, Canada has created a permanent international platform within the Global Forum on Migration and Development and has demonstrated leadership in the creation and oversight of "[It Takes A Community](#)".

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Overall trends relative to the key indicators of income inequality remain positive, but the full effects of COVID-19 along with the subsequent phasing-out of emergency income support measures across Canada are not yet fully known. Post-COVID-19 increases in the cost of living continue to be felt across Canada, affecting many families' and individuals' abilities to afford basic necessities. It will be crucial for Canada to continue monitoring data to gauge the extent to which these factors are tempering progress on reducing income inequality, and identify potential responses that may mean more support for low and modest-income Canadians. Canada will continue to deliver on its existing initiatives aimed at ending racism and discrimination, while also engaging with Canadians of all backgrounds on how to take further steps toward achieving equality.

## SPOTLIGHT: Provincial and Territorial Initiatives

Provincial and territorial governments in Canada are making important, ongoing contributions to SDG 10 through legislation, policies and supports of many kinds designed to enable Canadians to live free of discrimination and to reduce inequalities. For example, human rights protection laws provide vehicles for individuals to raise and act on complaints about discrimination. Programs and services focused on income support, housing and food security seek to address income inequalities and their most fundamental impacts on people with lower incomes as part of leaving no one behind. Since 2018, provincial and territorial governments in Canada have taken action across many elements of SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples has become a major commitment for many provincial and territorial governments.

The Government of Ontario released [Pathways to Safety: Ontario's Strategy in Response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#) in 2021. The strategy includes commitments organized under six pathways that seek to help eliminate the root causes of violence and advance meaningful reconciliation. Annual progress reports are describing actions underway and investments in areas such as safety and security, justice, health and wellbeing and culture. Furthermore, the Ontario Youth Violence and Human Trafficking Prevention Program is part of the provincial [Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy](#) (GGVRS), a \$65 million cross-government investment in local prevention, enforcement and prosecution efforts. The program funds community-based prevention initiatives that address the key factors putting youth (ages 12–29) and their communities at increased risk of violence and victimization, including human trafficking.

In 2022, Yukon released [Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy](#). The strategy outlines 31 actions items, 12 priority action items and key objectives to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirited people.

Provinces and territories are also focusing on the needs of under-represented communities in ways that align with SDG 10. They are tackling systemic barriers to full inclusion. For example, the Yukon government issued [Breaking Trail Together](#) in 2019, a plan for an inclusive public service with increased representation of underrepresented populations within the public service. Intersectional approaches are increasingly being incorporated into standardized decision-making processes to ensure the potential for disproportionate impact on diverse groups is considered in government decision-making.

The [Accessibility Act](#) in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2021 has set the stage for that government to outline principles and goals for an accessible province. The Act will improve accessibility by identifying, preventing and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from full participation in society.

In Manitoba, the [Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#) outlines a process to identify, remove and eliminate accessibility barriers through standards in five key areas: customer service, employment, information and communication, transportation, and, the design of outdoor public spaces. Each standard is developed in consultation with stakeholders and includes requirements for public and private sector organizations to introduce policies, practices and training. Manitoba has enacted the first three standards and the final two will come into force in 2023 and 2024.

## SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canadians have access to quality housing
- Canadians live in healthy, accessible, and sustainable cities and communities

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

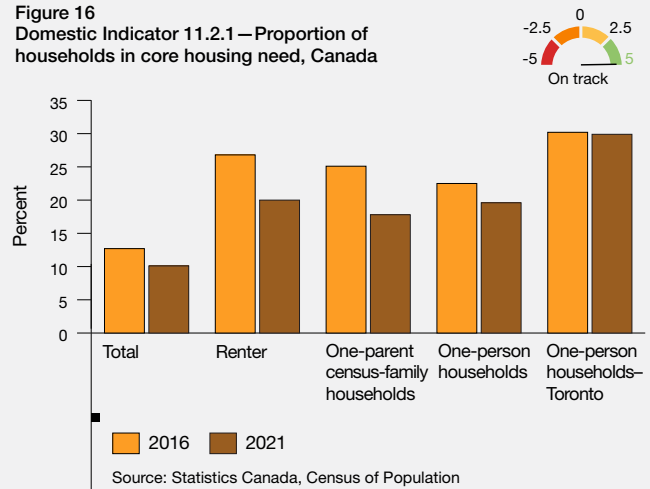
- In Canada, the percentage of households living in core housing need has decreased at the

national level since 2016. However, the growth rate of chronic homelessness in Canada from 2016 to 2019 was 14.7%.

### SPOTLIGHT: The proportion of households living in core housing need has decreased

In Canada, 10.1%<sup>61</sup> of households lived in core housing need in 2021, down from 12.7% in 2016, which shows this indicator is on track to meeting the ambition of ensuring that Canadians have access to quality housing. The proportion of renters living in core housing need decreased from 26.8% in 2016 to 20.0% in 2021. However, they remained two times more likely to be living in core housing need than the average Canadian household. Among one-parent census family<sup>62</sup> households, 17.8% lived in core housing need in 2021, a decline from 25.1% in 2016, accounting for one of the larger declines among all household types. However, they remained the household type, alongside one-person households, most likely to be living in core housing need, with a rate substantially higher than the national average. The share of households living in core housing need was higher in Canada's larger cities.

**Figure 16**  
Domestic Indicator 11.2.1 — Proportion of households in core housing need, Canada

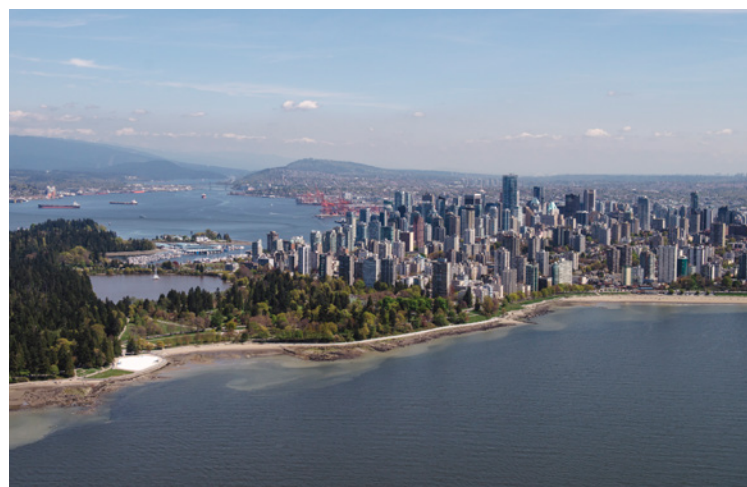


<sup>61</sup> Core housing data used here are from the Census of Population 2021, instead of the Canadian Housing Survey as in the CIF to leverage new data availability.

<sup>62</sup> Census family is defined as a married couple and the children, if any, of either and/or both spouses; a couple living common law and the children, if any, of either and/or both partners; or a parent of any marital status in a one-parent family with at least one child living in the same dwelling and that child or those children. All members of a particular census family live in the same dwelling. From: Census of Population 2021



- In 2021, Indigenous people were almost twice as likely to live in crowded housing, compared to Canada's non-Indigenous population (17.1% versus 9.4%). Although the number of First Nations and Métis people living in crowded housing declined slightly between 2016 and 2021, this number increased for Inuit in Nunavut, the Inuvialuit region, and outside Inuit Nunangat.
- In 2021, Indigenous people were almost three times more likely to live in a dwelling in need of major repairs (16.4%) than non-Indigenous people (5.7%). Nevertheless, between 2016 and 2021, this gap declined by 2.3 ppts.
- From 2018 to 2021, the percentage of Canadians aged 12 and over reported to have a strong sense of belonging to their communities increased from 68.4% to 69.5%.<sup>63</sup>
- Between the 2005 to 2007 and 2017 to 2019 reporting periods, the percentage of Canadians living in areas where outdoor concentrations of air pollutants were less than or equal to all of the 2020 Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards increased from 63% to 71%.<sup>64</sup>
- In 2019, Canada launched its [Emergency Management Strategy: Toward a Resilient 2030](#). The Strategy builds on the foundational principles articulated in the Emergency Management Framework and the Sendai Framework in order to establish priorities to strengthen Canada's ability to assess risks, and help prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.
- Federal supports for public transit, in partnership with provinces and territories, have helped transit agencies manage costs as ridership recovers since the peak of the pandemic, supporting existing Canadian transit systems that are estimated to avoid 4.7 megatonnes transport-related emissions annually due to modal shift.



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Launched in 2017, [Canada's National Housing Strategy](#) is a more than \$82-billion plan to improve housing accessibility for Canadians. In 2019, the Government of Canada passed the [National Housing Strategy Act](#), which recognizes the right to adequate housing as a fundamental human right affirmed in international law, and commits Canada to further the progressive realization of the international right to adequate housing. Under the Act, Canada created a National Housing Council in 2020 and appointed a Federal Housing Advocate in 2022 to promote participation and inclusion in housing policy and advise the federal government.

The federal government has committed more than \$6.7 billion since 2015 to support housing in Indigenous communities. This includes \$4 billion over seven years starting in 2022–2023 to accelerate work to close the Indigenous housing gap.

Canada invested nearly \$4 billion over nine years, including \$1.3 billion during the pandemic, in [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy](#), a community-based program to prevent and reduce homelessness. Between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2022, Reaching Home supported more than 5,000 projects, which provided more than 87,000 people with homelessness prevention support and placed over 46,000 people in more stable housing.

<sup>63</sup> [sdgcif-data-canada-oddcic-donnee.github.io/11-7-1/](https://sdgcif-data-canada-oddcic-donnee.github.io/11-7-1/)

<sup>64</sup> [canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/population-exposure-outdoor-air-pollutants.html](https://canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/population-exposure-outdoor-air-pollutants.html)

In response to COVID-19, Canada launched the [Rapid Housing Initiative](#) in 2020. Now a \$4-billion initiative, the RHI facilitates rapid construction of housing and acquisition of existing buildings to create permanent affordable housing. As of December 2022, the initiative has committed to support the creation of nearly 10,250 new affordable units, including for Indigenous people, people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and seniors. In addition, the [Indigenous Community Support Fund](#) helped alleviate the disproportionate impact of the pandemic in Indigenous communities, with funding for new shelters for women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people fleeing violence, and the construction and renovation of education, supportive care and other public buildings.

The Government of Canada works with provinces and territories to improve air quality through the Air Quality Management System, including establishing [Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards](#) to drive continuous improvement in air quality. Canada also puts in place regulatory and non-regulatory measures to address air pollutant emissions from industry, vehicles, engines and fuels, and consumer and commercial products.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

The World Urban Pavilion, established through a partnership between UN-Habitat, the Government of Canada, the Urban Economy Forum Association and the Daniels Corporation, opened in Toronto in 2022. The Pavilion is a global knowledge exchange hub focused on best practices for inclusive urban development, to which Canada has committed \$2.25 million over five years.

The Government of Canada has also collaborated with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, a national organization representing more than 2,000 municipalities. Over \$420 million has been invested in support of over 70 initiatives around the world to strengthen governance capacity, support economic development and promote women's participation in municipal governance.

Canada also works to address air pollution originating from outside its borders through international agreements such as the [Canada-United States Air Quality Agreement](#) and the [Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution](#) and its [Gothenburg Protocol](#).

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Canada is dealing with the long-term impacts of the pandemic, including inflation, slow-to-rebound transit ridership, and high construction costs and delays. Investments are needed for sustainable, climate-resilient infrastructure and community services. Canada also estimates that it needs an additional 3.5 million housing units to restore housing affordability by 2030. The Government of Canada will make permanent its investments in public transit, with \$3 billion per year starting in 2026 for communities to maintain and expand their transit systems. An additional \$5.9 billion starting in 2021 will support the expansion of large urban transit systems, electrification of bus fleets, active transportation infrastructure and transit for rural communities.

## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

Public libraries have an important role in making communities inclusive. They help to reduce inequality by providing safe, civic spaces open to all, equitable access to print and digital resources, and access to technology to address the digital divide in both urban and rural areas. They support literacy programmes, provide a safe space for learning, and support researchers to access, apply and reuse research and data to create new knowledge. They are integral to a vibrant democracy, a strong economy and thriving communities.

The [Canadian Urban Libraries Council](#) represents 51 public library systems in the country, serving more than 8 million active users who annually visit 721 libraries and use its virtual services. In 2019, member public libraries loaned over 200 million items, and had more than 560 million users in person and online. They offer 12,000 public computers with internet access as well as free Wi-Fi, and programs to support digital literacy. Through these services, public libraries help address the digital divide for people living in poverty who do not have access to computers and the internet, and support equitable access to digital resources and services for everyone in Canada. Public libraries also foster community engagement and civic participation through local programmes and partnerships with other civil society organizations and local governments. In research conducted by the Toronto Public Library, 58% of respondents who used technology at a library indicated that the library was their only access to the internet and 78% of these respondents increased their level of community engagement via their library.

Public libraries are also taking actions to respond to local needs and improve education by providing hands-on computer classes, after-school support and programmes addressing subject areas with high failure rates. They are also creating early literacy spaces to support school preparedness for

children from birth to age 6. These spaces also serve as a place where parents and caregivers can feel comfortable, safe, engaged, and connected with each other, while interacting with their children and learning how they can help their child in their educational journey, regardless of their financial situation. Canada's public libraries deliver more than 245,000 programs per year related to learning and literacy for all ages, reaching more than 5 million people. They are responding to the need for early literacy skills that build school readiness through story time and early literacy programs, intended to introduce a love of reading and a foundation of early literacy skills for children. The Regina Public Library found that 96.7% of parents/caregivers reported that, four to six months after an early literacy program ended, they were using what they learned at home. The Vancouver Public Library found that 95% of parents/caregivers felt more confident helping their children learn following an early literacy program.

While Canadian libraries contribute to the SDGs in their communities, they also have an important impact at the national and international level. The [Canadian Federation of Library Associations](#) created a strategic committee to advance climate action in Canadian libraries in 2022. The committee seeks to amplify regional efforts to address the climate crisis, platform the work of member associations to support cross-sectoral and interprovincial collaboration, and identify opportunities to contribute to efforts on an international scale on the implementation of the SDGs through the International Federation of Library Associations. Through this committee, the federation is implementing the SDG framework and localizing climate action through individual library associations and municipal library boards. Efforts include creating a national benchmarking across Canadian libraries to demonstrate how libraries are addressing climate change.

## SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

### CANADIAN AMBITION

- Canadians consume in a sustainable manner

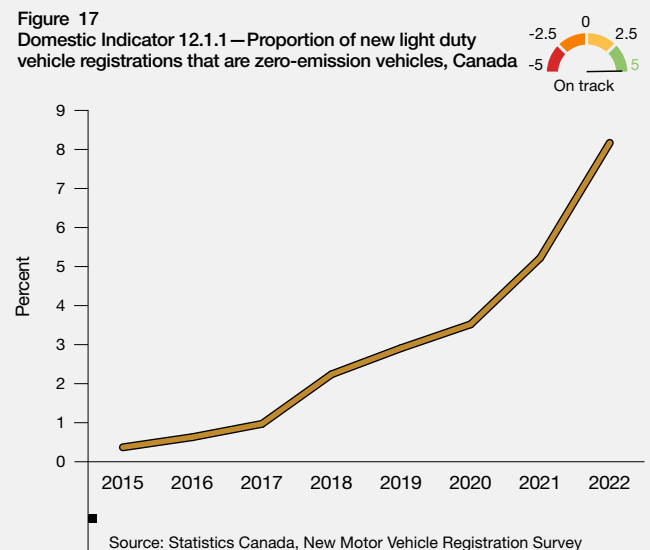
### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- As of January 31, 2023, the Incentives for Zero-Emission Vehicles (iZEV) program has helped over 189,000 Canadians and Canadian businesses transition to ZEVs by providing

point-of-sale incentives of up to \$5,000 for eligible ZEVs. These are accelerating Canada toward the goal that ZEVs represent 30% of new light duty vehicle sales by 2030 and 100% by 2035. An incentive's program toward the purchase of Medium- and Heavy-Duty Zero-Emission Vehicles was launched in 2022.

### SPOTLIGHT: Zero-emission vehicles have grown noticeably in popularity in recent years

Zero-emission vehicles have grown noticeably in popularity in recent years. This increase has been helped by a series of government programs to incentivize the adoption of zero-emission vehicles by Canadians. Zero-emission vehicles accounted for 8.2% of new vehicles purchased in 2022, more than three and half times the proportion of these types of vehicles purchased in 2018 (2.2%). A rapidly increasing trend demonstrates that this indicator is on track to meeting the target of having 30% of new light-duty vehicle sales being zero-emission vehicles by 2030. Among provinces and territories, the largest proportion of zero-emission vehicles were found in provinces with active credit programs, in addition to the newly launched and federally administered program. For example, in British Columbia and the territories, 16.3% of vehicles purchased in 2022 were zero-emission, the highest share in Canada. In Quebec, zero-emission vehicles accounted for 12.3% of all vehicles sold in 2022, the second-largest share in the country. Among new zero-emission vehicle registrations in 2022, nearly 40% were in Quebec, despite the province accounting for just under a quarter of all vehicle registrations that year.



- With the vast majority of businesses in Canada having environmental protection activities and management practices (90.3% in 2018; 86.6% in 2019<sup>65</sup>), governments are now using regulatory changes to focus on key sustainability priorities.
- Recent research estimates that 20% (or 11 million tonnes) of all the food produced in Canada annually becomes avoidable food loss or waste, and that an estimated 13% of fruits and vegetables grown in Canada go unharvested or are discarded following harvest.<sup>66</sup>

## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Transitioning to a cleaner and more circular economy can help Canadians use resources wisely, protect the environment and strengthen the economy. Many efforts have been made since 2018 to adopt approaches to minimizing waste throughout the economy and to ensure Canadians consume in a sustainable manner. In 2018 and 2019, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment launched the [Canada-wide Strategy and Action Plans on Zero Plastic Waste](#), taking a circular economy approach to plastics and providing a framework for Canada. The federal government is taking a multi-faceted approach to transition to a circular economy and progress toward its Zero Plastic Waste objective. It is supporting this transition with a variety of tools including regulations banning six single-use plastics, with standards and exceptions.<sup>67</sup> This ban, which came into effect in December 2022, will eliminate more than 1.3 million tonnes of hard-to-recycle plastic products and about 22,000 tonnes of plastic pollution within the next decade. Jurisdictions across Canada have been making headway toward the Council's 2018 aspirational goal of reducing the 706 kg average per capita weight of all types of waste thrown away, as of 2014, by 30% by 2030, and 50% by 2040.<sup>68</sup>

Under its first [Food Policy for Canada](#), the Government of Canada is supporting innovation through its [Food Waste Reduction Challenge](#). Launched in 2020, the Challenge aims to deliver solutions to food loss and waste and accelerate their rollout across Canada's food systems. It generated more than 500 ideas spanning a diverse range of areas including production, inventory management, transportation, food waste measurement, market-place solutions, food safety, food recovery, upcycling, and organic waste treatment. Other jurisdictions have started incorporating food waste prevention messaging in their public education and outreach campaigns targeted to Canadian households.

Canada has also introduced initiatives on green procurement of goods and services, and is implementing new embodied carbon standards under the [Policy on Green Procurement](#) across the federal government.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Building on its ongoing efforts to champion the [Ocean Plastics Charter](#), and its work to support the Global Plastic Action Partnership, Canada continues to advocate for the transition to a circular economy for plastics both at home and abroad. As an inaugural member of the High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution, Canada will work with other countries and partners to develop an ambitious legally binding global agreement on plastic pollution.

In line with the 2030 Agenda target to encourage companies to adopt sustainable practices, in 2022, Canada launched its [Responsible Business Conduct Abroad: Canada's Strategy for the Future](#). This five-year strategy (2022–27) will support Canadian companies active abroad to adopt responsible business practices, help them mitigate risks to the environment, people and society, and contribute to a strong and inclusive economy. The Strategy strengthens Canada's balanced

65 [www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3810013701](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3810013701)

66 [secondharvest.ca/getmedia/7ff09057-be4c-4cf4-b1e3-2d88a924ffdc/The-Avoidable-Crisis-of-Food-Waste-Technical-Report.pdf](https://secondharvest.ca/getmedia/7ff09057-be4c-4cf4-b1e3-2d88a924ffdc/The-Avoidable-Crisis-of-Food-Waste-Technical-Report.pdf), [canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/food-loss-waste/taking-stock.html](https://canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/food-loss-waste/taking-stock.html)

67 [laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/SOR-2022-138.pdf](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/SOR-2022-138.pdf)

68 [ccme.ca/en/current-activities/waste](https://ccme.ca/en/current-activities/waste)



approach to Responsible Business Conduct, which includes preventative measures, legislation in select areas, and access to non-judicial dispute resolution mechanisms.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Given the cross-cutting nature of production and consumption patterns, actions under SDG 12 may also reinforce other SDGs.<sup>69</sup> In 2021, the Council of Canadian Academies Expert Panel on the Circular Economy published the [Turning Point](#), the first comprehensive report on the status of the circular economy in Canada. The report noted that without

a more circular economy, Canada risks being unable to meet growing demand or effectively support the clean energy transition. It identified opportunities for employment, economic growth, pandemic recovery and resiliency economy-wide, and for circularity in plastics, food, textiles, electronics, natural resources and construction.

To advance a circular economy, [Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#) (2022) commits to working with partners across the country to explore the opportunities that greater circularity could offer in a Canadian context.<sup>70</sup>

### SPOTLIGHT: Provincial Initiatives

The Government of Quebec has made important contributions to SDG 12 through initiatives such as:

- Fonds Écoleader, created in 2018, targets various Quebec businesses to help them implement a wide range of eco-friendly business practices and clean technology.
- Compétivert, created in 2021, seeks to make Quebec greener and more productive and innovative by encouraging businesses to implement eco-friendly practices and clean technology to support their competitiveness while reducing their environmental footprint.

The province also substantially modernized its deposit-refund and selective collection systems in 2022. This modernization will make it possible to recover more containers, packaging and printed matter locally according to circular economy principles by increasing their value. The producers targeted by this modernization will be held accountable for the products they sell and will be given the means to optimize the system within the value chain. It is expected that as of 2030, all the modernized deposit-refund and selective collection systems will prevent over 104,000 tonnes of materials from being landfilled each year and about 97,100 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, a greenhouse gas, from being emitted.

69 The CCA report cites Velenturf and Purnell (2021) who estimate that the circular economy contributes to 16 of 17 SDGs (SDG 10: Reduced Inequality is the sole exclusion). Note: For more information consult p. 128: [cca-reports.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Turning-Point\\_digital.pdf](https://cca-reports.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Turning-Point_digital.pdf)

70 *Ibid*, p. 65



## SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

### CANADIAN AMBITION

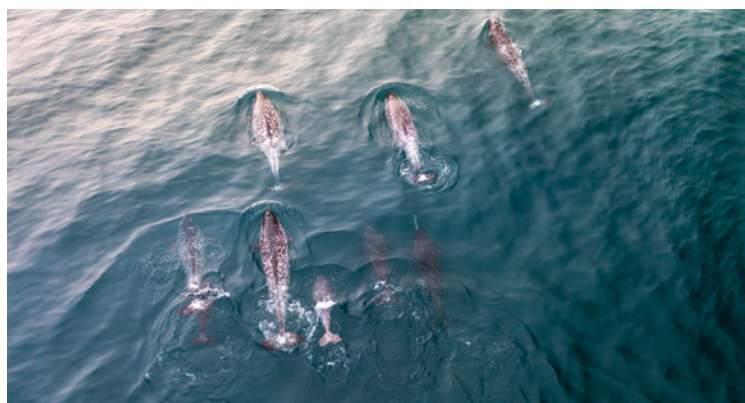
- Canada protects and conserves marine areas and sustainably manages ocean fish stocks

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

- Canada continues to make progress on marine conservation, working toward the target of conserving 25% of Canada's marine and coastal areas by 2025, and 30% by 2030. This builds on Canada's success in exceeding its commitment to conserve 10% of its marine and coastal areas by 2020.<sup>71</sup>
- As of the end of 2022, 14.7% of Canada's coastal and marine areas were recognized as protected and conserved through a network of marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including 9.1% in protected areas (as shown in Figure 18).<sup>72</sup>
- Canada contributes to responsible, science-based fisheries management under the [Sustainable Fisheries Framework](#), which ensures precautionary and ecosystem-based approaches are used to keep fish stocks healthy, protect biodiversity and fisheries habitats, and make sure that fisheries remain productive in order to meet current and future needs. As of 2020, 98% (177 of 180) of key fish stocks were harvested at or below a removal reference (i.e. maximum acceptable removal rate) or another approved level (compared to 96% in 2018).<sup>73</sup>

### KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

SDG 14 aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. With the world's longest coastline, SDG 14 is highly relevant to Canada. Since 2016, [Canada's Ocean Protection Plan](#) (OPP) has enhanced Canada's already robust marine safety and environmental protection system, in support of oceans stewardship and sustainability. It was renewed and expanded in 2022, with an additional commitment of \$2 billion, for a total investment of \$3.5 billion. The OPP brings together Indigenous people, industry, communities, academia, and government to further enhance marine incident prevention, emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and ecosystem protection. Canadian coastal ecosystems now benefit from stronger protection measures. The OPP provides funding to restore coastal aquatic habitats and remove abandoned vessels. Through the OPP, Canada is also advancing research to support evidence-based decision-making to further protect Canada's coastal and marine areas, including work to better understand the cumulative effects of marine shipping on the marine environment.



<sup>71</sup> [www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/achievement-realizations/index-eng.html](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/achievement-realizations/index-eng.html)

<sup>72</sup> [canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/conserved-areas.html#wb-auto-8](http://canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/conserved-areas.html#wb-auto-8)

<sup>73</sup> [canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/harvest-levels-key-fish-stocks.html](http://canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/harvest-levels-key-fish-stocks.html)

With the renewal of the [Whales Initiative](#) (2023), first launched in 2018, Canada reaffirmed its commitments to protect and support the recovery of North Atlantic right whales, Southern Resident Killer whales, and St. Lawrence Estuary beluga. Canada continues to advance solutions to mitigate threats from underwater noise and other disturbances, entanglements in fishing gear, collision, prey availability and contaminants. The Whales Initiative will support the growth and development of marine industries, including fisheries, shipping, and ecotourism, while ensuring the adverse impacts of these industries on Canada's at-risk marine mammal populations are mitigated.

The [Ghost Gear Program](#) continues to support Canada's commitment to reduce marine litter and plastic waste. Through the Ghost Gear Fund, Canada has worked with industry and other partners to remove fishing debris from the oceans; dispose of end-of-life gear and fishing related plastic waste; and, test improved fishing technologies. Between 2020 and 2023, the [Ghost Gear Fund](#) has helped remove more than 17,655 units of fishing gear, totalling 1,684 tonnes. Canada also plays an active role in international efforts to address plastic pollution, including through the development of an ambitious international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.

Work has been undertaken to further accelerate efforts to restore and rebuild Canada's major fish stocks, including new fish stocks provisions in Canada's modernized [Fisheries Act](#). These provisions place binding obligations on Canada to sustainably manage fish stocks, and to implement timely and rigorous plans to rebuild them if they become depleted. Canada has also partnered with stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes at regional fisheries management organizations, including strengthening international instruments for illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and to conserve vulnerable species with measures grounded in science.

Canada continues to protect Canadian waters by working with key partners and stakeholders to enforce the [Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations \(2015\)](#), with a focus on preventing prohibited species from entering Canada. In 2022, the Overland Watercraft Transportation Protection Pilot was launched to improve biosecurity at international borders. As part of this project, inspections and decontaminations were conducted in order to verify watercrafts were free of Zebra Mussels and other aquatic invasive species before entering Canada.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada is delivering on its five-year (2018–23) commitment to support global action for healthy oceans, seas and coastal communities through a \$100 million Marine Litter Mitigation Fund. To date, Canada's oceans programming has prevented plastic waste from entering the oceans by addressing plastic waste on shorelines, investing in innovative solutions to better manage plastic waste, and supporting women's empowerment and leadership.

Canada is investing over \$11 million from 2019 to 2026, to support the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance. This initiative improves the state of coastal resilience through nature-based solutions for vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls in Small Island Developing States and coastal developing countries. At COP26, Canada announced a \$6 million contribution to the Global Fund for Coral Reefs to support international efforts in coral reef conservation and restoration. Canada has also provided a \$10 million contribution to the Kiwa multi-donor initiative (2020–26), which focuses mainly on oceans governance—helping Pacific Island populations, particularly the poorest that depend heavily on coastal and marine biodiversity, to strengthen their resilience using nature-based solutions.

Beginning in 2023–24, an initiative was announced under [Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy](#), which aims for sustainable and healthy oceans through improved international ocean governance, works to strengthen and enforce the rules-based order in the region, and supports Indo-Pacific states' blue economy potential.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Although Canada has made progress in protecting the health and resilience of its oceans, some challenges remain. These include reversing the decline in the health of ocean and coastal habitats and regenerating and restoring the health and sustainability of living marine resources. International cooperation, governance and coordination, through legal and institutional frameworks, will all be critical to achieving these goals.

Canada is currently developing a forward-looking [Blue Economy Strategy](#), to accelerate the transformation of Canada's marine sectors from a traditional ocean economy to a sustainable 'blue economy', in which technology, innovation and ecosystem restoration drive renewed prosperity and opportunity, particularly for Canada's coastal and Indigenous communities. Canada is also working to establish 10 new national marine conservation areas, in collaboration with Indigenous communities on co-management agreements for these new areas.



## **SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

### **CANADIAN AMBITIONS**

- Canada ensures all species have healthy and viable populations
- Canada conserves and restores ecosystems and habitat
- Canada sustainably manages forests, lakes and rivers

### **GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS**

- Significant progress has been made to conserve terrestrial areas, increasing by 113% in the last 20 years and by 32% in the last 5 years. As of the end of 2022, 13.6% of Canada's terrestrial areas and inland water was recognized as conserved through a network of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including 12.7% in protected areas (as shown in Figure 18). Conserved areas safeguard biodiversity for present and future generations by reducing stresses from human activities. They also provide opportunities for people to connect with nature.<sup>74</sup> Canada's forests, wetlands, prairies and tundra provide habitat that all organisms, including humans, need to thrive.
- Slightly less than half of Canada's total forest land area is certified under sustainable forest management standards. This represents 35% of the world's certified forest area.<sup>75</sup> The proportion of forest management certifications has remained more or less stable in the last five years. The most recent data indicated 74% of Crown (publicly-owned) forest land managed in Canada is certified to third-party standards of sustainable forest management.<sup>76</sup>
- About 80 000 species are known to exist in Canada.<sup>77</sup> The [Wild Species 2020](#) report considers 50 534 species in 46 species groups which, at the time of reporting, represented more than half of Canada's species. Of the 24,483 native species with a NatureServe numerical rank; 19,600 species (80%) were ranked as secure or apparently secure and 4,883 species (20%) were at some risk of extirpation (ranked as vulnerable, imperiled or critically imperiled). The most common threat that puts species at risk is the loss of habitat. Humans have altered habitat on land, in freshwater and in the oceans. Other human-mediated changes, for example, pollution, climate change and invasive species have also had widespread impacts.<sup>78</sup>
- As of May 2022, of the 144 species at risk for which trends could be determined, 43% showed progress toward their population and distribution objectives, 13% showed mixed evidence, meaning that some information suggests improving trends, but also some evidence of decline and 44% showed no clear progress toward their population and distribution objectives.<sup>79</sup>

74 Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program: [Canada's conserved area—terrestrial](#)

75 [natural-resources.canada.ca/our-natural-resources/forests/state-canadas-forests-report/16496](https://natural-resources.canada.ca/our-natural-resources/forests/state-canadas-forests-report/16496)

76 [cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications/download-pdf/40846](https://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications/download-pdf/40846)

77 Excluding bacteria and viruses

78 Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program: [General status of wild species](#)

79 Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators Program: [Species at risk population trends](#)



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Canada's forests, wetlands, prairies and tundra provide habitat that all organisms, including humans, need to thrive. Conserving these natural spaces helps promote biodiversity and maintain the ecosystem services that we rely on for our well-being. Recent historic investments include more than \$5 billion over 10 years in [Natural Climate Solutions](#) as well as \$2.3 billion over 5 years to support [Canada's Nature Legacy](#). These investments have put Canada on the path toward advancing SDG 15 by enabling progress related to:

- conserving 25% of our lands, working toward 30% by 2030 including by establishing 10 new national parks and 10 new national marine conservation areas in the next 5 years;
- protecting wildlife and recovering species at risk;
- developing and implementing nature agreements with provinces and territories;
- supporting Indigenous-led area-based conservation through the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas;
- enhancing Canadians' access to nature;
- creating jobs in nature conservation and management; and,
- planting 2 billion trees and taking action to conserve, restore, and better manage wetlands, grasslands, forests and agricultural lands.

To protect and recover species at risk, the government is implementing the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada in partnership with most provinces and territories, Indigenous Peoples, and other partners. Since 2018, federal, provincial and territorial governments have

collectively established 11 federal-provincial-territorial priority places covering nearly 30 million hectares in habitats and ecosystems with high concentrations of species at risk and other biodiversity. Actions implemented in priority places will support the protection and recovery of hundreds of species at risk and other biodiversity.

Canada is supporting efforts to expand our network of protected and conserved areas. For example, through the Canada Nature Fund, the Mikisew Cree First Nation is working with the province, industry, and land owners to expand the existing Kitaskino Nuwenēné Wildland Provincial Park in Alberta. This collaboration expands the park by 1,438 square kilometres and significantly adds to the largest connected area of protected boreal forest in the world.

Canada also has a strong commitment to sustainable forest management. Forests play a central role—culturally, spiritually and economically—in the lives of many Indigenous communities across Canada. According to the 2016 Census of Population, 12,000 Indigenous people work in the forest sector, representing about 6% of the sector's workforce.



## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Canada supports the [UN Convention to Combat Desertification](#) (UNCCD) in its efforts to combat land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality. Canada is helping affected countries through the [Global Environment Facility](#) (\$475 million), the [Land Degradation Neutrality Fund](#) (\$53.1 million), and institutional support to UNCCD to accelerate the integration of gender into the Convention's activities (\$6 million).

Canada also announced in 2021 that it will allocate at least 20% of its five-year \$5.3 billion climate finance commitment to projects that leverage nature-based climate solutions and contribute to biodiversity co-benefits in developing countries. In particular, it will help low and middle-income countries already affected by climate change to transition to sustainable, low-carbon, climate-resilient, nature-positive and inclusive development.

In 2022, Canada hosted the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity where Parties adopted the Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework. This historic agreement commits to conserving 30% of the world's terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas by 2030, and to restoring 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030, among other targets. The Framework recognizes the rights and role of Indigenous Peoples in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, for which Canada strongly advocated. The Framework also establishes a financial commitment to mobilize at

least US\$200 billion annually from all sources to support developing countries to implement this agreement. Canada made financial commitments at COP15, including \$350 million in new funding to support developing countries in advancing biodiversity efforts and the implementation of the Framework. Canada also announced \$255 million in new projects and investments drawing on previously committed Canadian funding aimed at helping developing countries to fight climate change and protect nature. Since 2018, Canada has provided \$435.57 million to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF-8) to help developing countries halt and reverse biodiversity loss and prevent land degradation, which contributed to fostering climate resilience for 3,225,226 hectares of land and protecting 116.6 million hectares of terrestrial area.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The health of our forests, oceans, animals, and all biodiversity underpins the very strength and stability of our societies. COVID-19 reminded Canadians about the value of nature and green spaces for their health and well-being. Canada is working to ensure all species have healthy and viable populations by conserving and restoring ecosystems and habitats. Many of the new areas needed to reach the conserve terrestrial areas target are on provincial, territorial, and Indigenous lands. Decisions related to this target are complex to plan, negotiate, and coordinate. The processes for establishing protected and conserved areas are time-consuming and depend on a variety of factors, including partner and stakeholder support.

## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

Biosphere reserves in Canada are leaders in creating vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities. They safeguard natural, cultural and documentary heritage for current and future generations. These reserves are recognized by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme. Biosphere reserves in Canada are designated areas where communities are actively working to conserve biodiversity and implement the SDGs.

In 2021, the [Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound](#) was designed as Canada's 19th biosphere reserve. The 19 biosphere sites are located across Canada and span an area of 235,000 km<sup>2</sup> within the traditional territories of about 50 Indigenous communities. All biosphere reserves work in close collaboration with Indigenous communities to ensure appropriate care for the land and building respectful relationships. Through its relationship with UNESCO and membership in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, Canadian sites contribute to advancing the SDGs. As part of the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association, these regions meet the objectives of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme to:

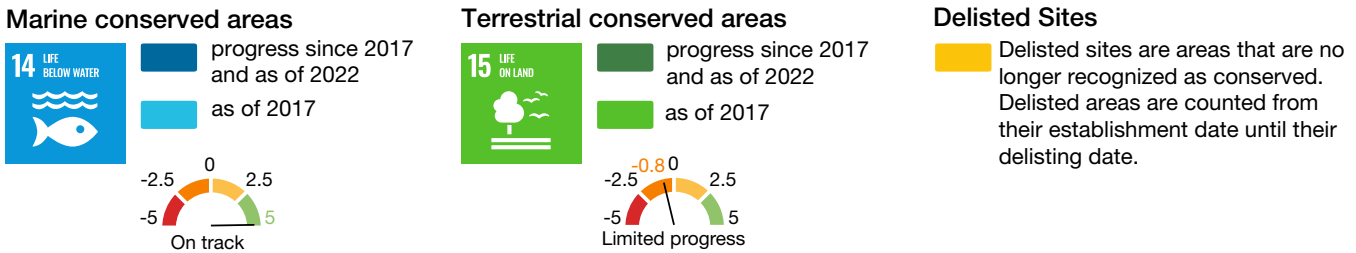
- conserve biodiversity and foster sustainable use of natural resources (SDG 15);
- mitigate climate and environmental changes and their impact (SDG 13);
- facilitate sustainable development research and education (SDG 4); and,
- build thriving societies, economies, and human settlements (SDG 11).

In 2022, the Canadian and United Kingdom National Commissions for UNESCO published '[Sites for Sustainable Development: realizing the potential of UNESCO designated sites to advance the 2030 Agenda](#)', a report exploring the value of UNESCO's grouping of its World Heritage Sites, global geoparks and biosphere reserves as sites for sustainable development.

Work is also underway to enhance conservation areas in existing biospheres. The [Frontenac Arch Biosphere Network](#) is engaging with local conservation authorities, land trusts, First Nations, municipalities, townships, and counties to recognize and enhance conservation in areas additional to the current core protected zones. It is also identifying cultural values and conservation priorities of multiple stakeholders and the region's Indigenous hosts. They are creating a map of all effectively conserved areas, and providing valuable information about where more efforts are needed to properly conserve the region's species at risk. Having more complete, geospatial information about the conservation network will improve understanding of existing conservation values and measures in this region and help to inform better land management decisions. Raising awareness and sharing knowledge is another goal of the project.

Figure 18

# SPOTLIGHT: Canada is increasing conservation of its terrestrial and marine areas



## SDG 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies

### CANADIAN AMBITIONS

- Canadians are safe and secure, in person and online
- Canadians have equal access to justice
- Canadians are supported by effective, accountable, and transparent institutions

### GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S PROGRESS

Since 2018, the world has experienced global challenges that have demonstrated existing inequalities and exclusions. The COVID-19 pandemic has represented not only a public health emergency, but also raised significant human rights and economic challenges. Large segments of the Canadian population, mainly from equity-seeking groups that have historically experienced discrimination, suffered disproportionately.

Data collected before and during the pandemic reveal that:

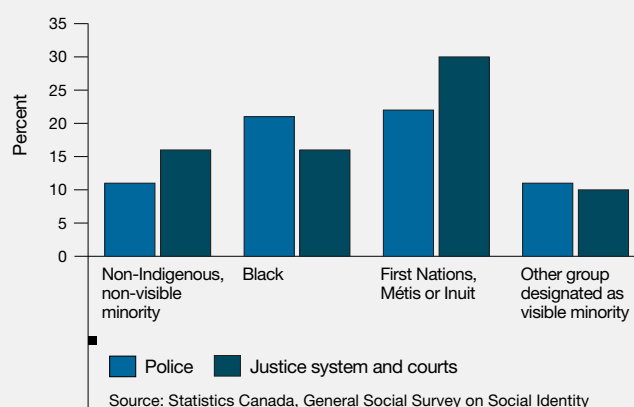
- Police-reported hate crimes due to race or ethnicity increased from 793 in 2018 to 1723 in 2021.<sup>80</sup>
- The trend in cyber-crime continued to rise throughout the pandemic, as Canadians increasingly turned to the Internet to stay connected with others, to access public services, and to facilitate work, school, shopping and health care.<sup>81</sup>

### SPOTLIGHT: Confidence among certain institutions, such as the police and the justice system and courts, varies across different population groups

In 2020, 1 in 5 Indigenous and Black people had little to no confidence in the police, which was a rate two times higher than the non-Indigenous and non-visible minority population. Confidence in the justice system and courts was lowest for First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, with 30% reporting no confidence in the institution, almost double the rate of non-Indigenous people.

Moreover, while the percentage of Canadians with confidence in the criminal justice system increased between 2021 and 2022, Indigenous people reported significantly lower confidence than non-Indigenous people.<sup>82</sup>

**Figure 19**  
Domestic Indicator 16.7.1 — Proportion of the population not confident in selected institutions, by population group or Indigenous identity, Canada, 2020



<sup>80</sup> [www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510006601](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510006601)

<sup>81</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 35-10-0001-01 Police-reported cybercrime, by cyber-related violation, Canada \(selected police services\)](#)

<sup>82</sup> [justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/NJS-SNJ.html#njs2022](http://justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/NJS-SNJ.html#njs2022)



## KEY NATIONAL PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Canada is making efforts to advance SDG 16 and its objective of peaceful, just and inclusive societies—a necessary foundation to achieving all SDGs. In 2019, Canada established the [Access to Justice Secretariat](#) to serve as an advocate and hub for the wide range of initiatives that seek to achieve SDG 16 and pursue a people-centred approach to justice.

A primary focus of Canada's efforts in achieving SDG 16 is to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and build a more inclusive society free from racism and discrimination. The [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) provides a framework for the transformational work required to implement the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) at the federal level in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous partners. The Government of Canada has also made it a priority to establish justice strategies for [Indigenous people \(2022\)](#) and [Black people \(2023\)](#) to combat systemic discrimination and the over-representation of individuals from these communities in Canada's criminal justice system and to ensure that all have access to fair and just treatment.

Throughout a period of unprecedented travel restrictions and border closures, Canada maintained an immigration system that supported its economic recovery and growth, reunited families, and upheld the country's humanitarian tradition. The '[Guardian Angels](#)' measure provided a pathway to permanent residency for certain refugee claimants who worked in the health-care sector during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

In 2021–22, [Canada's Peace and Stabilization Operations Program](#) disbursed \$135.8 million toward efforts to promote peace and stability in fragile and conflict-affected states, including country-specific initiatives in Afghanistan, Cameroon, Colombia, Burkina Faso, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, South Sudan, and Ukraine. Canada is supporting the implementation of the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers. Canada also focuses on the protection

of children and youth through efforts to end sexual exploitation along with early and forced marriage.

Canada's efforts are underpinned by an inclusive and gender-responsive approach, reflecting the understanding that more inclusive societies are better able to avert violent conflict. For example, through the [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations](#), Canada has collaborated with partners globally to provide funding and support to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations.

The [Closing the Justice Gap initiative](#) of the Government of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) aims to generate evidence on what works in the implementation of people-centred, community-based justice approaches that strengthen democracy and protect human rights. The initiative is supporting [12 projects in 15 countries](#) led by grassroots justice organizations.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Recognizing the critical need for data, including disaggregated data, to support informed and evidence-based decision-making, Canada is undertaking a range of data collection and research initiatives. The [2021 Canadian Legal Problems Survey and related series of Qualitative Studies](#) provide a rich source of information to enhance the understanding of Canadians' legal needs. Additionally, the [Justice Data Modernization Initiative](#) aims to improve the collection and use of disaggregated data to address the over-representation of Indigenous, Black and racialized people in the criminal justice system. Together with First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners, the Government of Canada is piloting a Transformational Approach to Indigenous Data on advancing sustainable Indigenous data capacity to support Indigenous self-determination. Furthermore, the inclusion of commitments to Justice and Democracy and Civic Space in Canada's [2022–24 National Action Plan on Open Government](#) reflects the importance of building strong, open and inclusive institutions and offers a further opportunity to advance SDG 16 going forward.

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## SPOTLIGHT: Stakeholder Actions

The Canadian Forum on Civil Justice is a non-profit organization that has been dedicated to advancing civil justice reform through research and advocacy since 1998. It strives to make the civil justice system more accessible, effective and sustainable by leading and participating in projects that place the citizen at the centre of our civil justice system. As part of their work to help achieve SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), the organization partnered with research institutes in sub-Saharan Africa for multi-year and multi-country research into the costs and benefits of community-based justice models and their potential to offer access to meaningful, people-centred justice at scale. A [collection of publications](#) from this research initiative, including policy briefs, infographics and other analyses, is publicly accessible. The research aims to better understand the contexts in which community-based justice models provide safer, more trustworthy, and potentially more equitable avenues for dispute resolution for women, relative to other formal dispute resolution mechanisms.

Women's accessibility to community justice models, where domestic responsibilities and social norms create barriers to seeking or achieving justice, were also examined. Data gathered on gender dynamics and the empowerment of women in seeking and achieving access to justice is presented in qualitative and quantitative formats, based on interviews and surveys with justice seekers identifying as women.

The Mary Ward Centre is engaged in an awareness-raising campaign to prevent human trafficking and labour exploitation in Latin America and Toronto. It provides online, radio, and print resources targeting youth and newcomers to Canada. A series of radio programs disseminating information about human trafficking and the strategies used to deceive victims has reached over 500 people through online and radio broadcasts. A second series of radio programs will be released throughout 2023 with the participation of radio stations in Latin America.



# THE WAY FORWARD

Canada is making significant progress in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), both domestically and abroad. Canada has a strong foundation for the work ahead, embedded in [Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#). Whole-of-society engagement is becoming clear as all levels of governments, civil society actors, Indigenous Peoples, academia, not-for-profit and community organizations, youth and the private sectors have taken actions to advance the SDGs. There is increasing awareness of the 2030 Agenda, localizing of the SDGs, and collaboration on innovative approaches to make progress.

The Government of Canada is creating and fostering an enabling environment that supports everyone to learn about the SDGs and work to implement the 2030 Agenda. Progress is being tracked through domestic indicators, targets and ambitions to achieve the SDGs. In addition, the Government of Canada has, over the last two years, released and put into practice its [Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda](#). The Plan has strengthened collaboration between federal departments and agencies to drive progress on the SDGs. It has also improved the federal government's ability to track impacts across all aspects of sustainable development, including initiatives to reduce poverty, make life more affordable, strengthen public health care, invest in clean economy, support reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, advance gender equality and take action on climate change.

The following objectives will guide Canada's efforts going forward:

## **OBJECTIVE 1:** **Foster leadership, governance and policy coherence**

The Government of Canada is following through on its commitment to show leadership toward the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. It has established a governance model and institutional mechanisms that foster action across the government and by specific federal departments and agencies, other levels of governments and whole-of-society stakeholders and partners. The Government of Canada will continue to engage with all levels of governments, communities and local organizations to share best practices and experiences, promote opportunities for collaboration and recognize the efforts of stakeholders and partners to localize the SDGs.

## **OBJECTIVE 2:** **Raise awareness, engagement and partnerships**

The Government of Canada will continue to conduct outreach and maintain an ongoing whole-of-society dialogue on the 2030 Agenda. The government will support the work of partners and stakeholders to undertake innovative initiatives to advance the SDGs.

Enhanced collaboration between federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments will contribute to greater results. All levels of governments have an important role to play in advancing the 17 SDGs in Canada, given their distinct responsibilities in areas such as improving health outcomes, reducing poverty, addressing food insecurity,

enhancing access to education, and fostering a sustainable and healthy environment. The Government of Canada will continue to convene a whole-of-Canada approach, build momentum, raise awareness and share good practices and lessons learned to enable all partners to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

The [Canada.ca/2030-agenda](https://Canada.ca/2030-agenda) webpage is continuously being updated with reports, resources, information on best practices and lessons learned related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It will also highlight initiatives from organizations who are taking action on the SDGs across the country. The [SDG Data Hub](#) will be refreshed as new data becomes available to facilitate evidence-based dialogue across Canadian society.

### **OBJECTIVE 3:** **Ensure accountability, transparency, measurement and reporting**

Achieving the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs must be measurable and transparent. Canada is putting fundamental elements in place to achieve this objective, including through annual public reporting, the Canadian Indicator Framework (CIF), and the new SDG Measure of Progress. Canada will continue to encourage sub-national reporting to highlight new and existing actions locally that are making progress on the SDGs.

Statistics Canada currently co-chairs the United Nations (UN) Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators. This is enabling Canada to facilitate international implementation of

the Global Indicator Framework and ensure that the statistics are robust and coherent. In the coming years, Canada will lead the comprehensive review of the Global Indicator Framework and will conduct its own review of the CIF. These actions, along with drawing on more data sources to reduce the data gaps in reporting on the SDGs, will provide more information for better assessments of progress in Canada and globally. This will be the basis for ongoing, transparent reporting to Canadians through Canada's future Annual Reports on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Canada's next Annual Report will be released in 2024.

### **OBJECTIVE 4:** **Advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda**

Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda will continue to advance reconciliation and renewal of the relationship with Indigenous Peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. Canada will continue efforts toward implementing the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's](#) Calls to Action, the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls'](#) Calls for Justice and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

Canada's approach to implementing the SDGs will be guided by these commitments and will continue to respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Canada will continue to work in partnership with Indigenous partners to ensure that their voices and views are embedded in Canada's work to advance the SDGs.

## **OBJECTIVE 5: Invest in the SDGs**

The Government of Canada has made significant investments to support, facilitate and encourage action toward the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs. Sustained efforts and resources are required to further accelerate progress toward the achievement of the SDGs.

Canada has also adjusted its international assistance programming to address the COVID-19 pandemic, more protracted conflicts, and climate change. Canada will continue to leverage new partnerships to help developing countries respond to these challenges and build a more sustainable future in line with the SDGs.

While Canada has made good progress to date, continued action is required to meet its ambitions. Each SDG chapter of this review has highlighted opportunities for action and improvements toward advancing the 17 SDGs. These efforts will guide Canada as it makes progress under the five core objectives for engagement and action to advance [Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#). Building on the work undertaken to date, Canada will continue to work with partners and stakeholders to address the challenges that are unique to each SDG, accelerate progress, and leave no one behind by 2030.



## Canada's 2023 Voluntary National Review

A CONTINUED JOURNEY FOR  
IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA  
AND THE SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

