



Anti-racism Measures

September 2021





The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) is a family of 13 Component unions. Taken together, we are one of the largest unions in Canada. Most of our 425,000 members work to deliver public services of every kind to the citizens of their home provinces. We also have a large and growing number of members who work for private businesses.

The office of the National Union of Public and General Employees is on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

We recognize the crimes that have been committed and the harm that has been done and dedicate ourselves as a union to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and striving for justice.

Bert Blundon, President

Jason MacLean, Secretary-Treasurer



Anti-racism Measures

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

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

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

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

Liberal

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

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

Conservative

The Conservative platform has a section called "A Detailed Plan to Secure the Future of Canada's Indigenous Peoples," but it does not have a section for anti-racism or diversity and inclusion. Their platform does not include the words racism or anti-racism. In their

section on immigration, they claim to be the party that “ended racial discrimination in Canadian immigration.”

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

NDP

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

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

Green

The Green Party platform makes several promises to combat racism in public institutions, online, and through criminal justice reform. A major promise centres around racism in policing. The Green Party promises to limit the RCMP and its funding to its core role, invest in community and social services, design a transparent and accountable police oversight system, and create a national database to record police use-of-force and other incidents. In a related promise, the Green Party states it will bolster laws and policies aimed at decolonizing, decriminalizing, and decarcerating to help address the mass incarceration of Black and Indigenous peoples, as well as other racialized peoples.

The platform also has several mentions of addressing environmental racism. They support the swift passage of the proposed National Strategy Respecting Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice Act, creating a diverse Climate Council, and providing universal access to inclusive and accessible green public spaces.

Conclusion

Much of the racism in Canada is systematic. It impacts BIPOC in all stages of life, from the quality of education they receive, to whether they can afford to go to post-secondary school, to the types of jobs they’re hired to do, and to where they can afford to live. We

must ensure, that going forward, the government looks at all programs and policies with an equity lens to ensure that anti-racism efforts are always kept as a priority issue.

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

nupge

COMPONENTS



B.C. GENERAL EMPLOYEES' UNION



CANADIAN UNION OF BREWERY AND GENERAL WORKERS



HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA



HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN



MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS



MANITOBA GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES' UNION



NEW BRUNSWICK UNION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYEES



NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR ASSOC. OF PUBLIC & PRIVATE EMPLOYEES



NOVA SCOTIA GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES UNION



ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION / SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉS DE LA FONCTION PUBLIQUE DE L'ONTARIO



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND UNION OF PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES



SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of the Public Services International.