

CURRENT STATE

Profiling exists and it is widespread. It causes harm and it will take a concerted effort to address it. The content in this section represent a snapshot and is not a comprehensive view of the state of profiling in Canada.

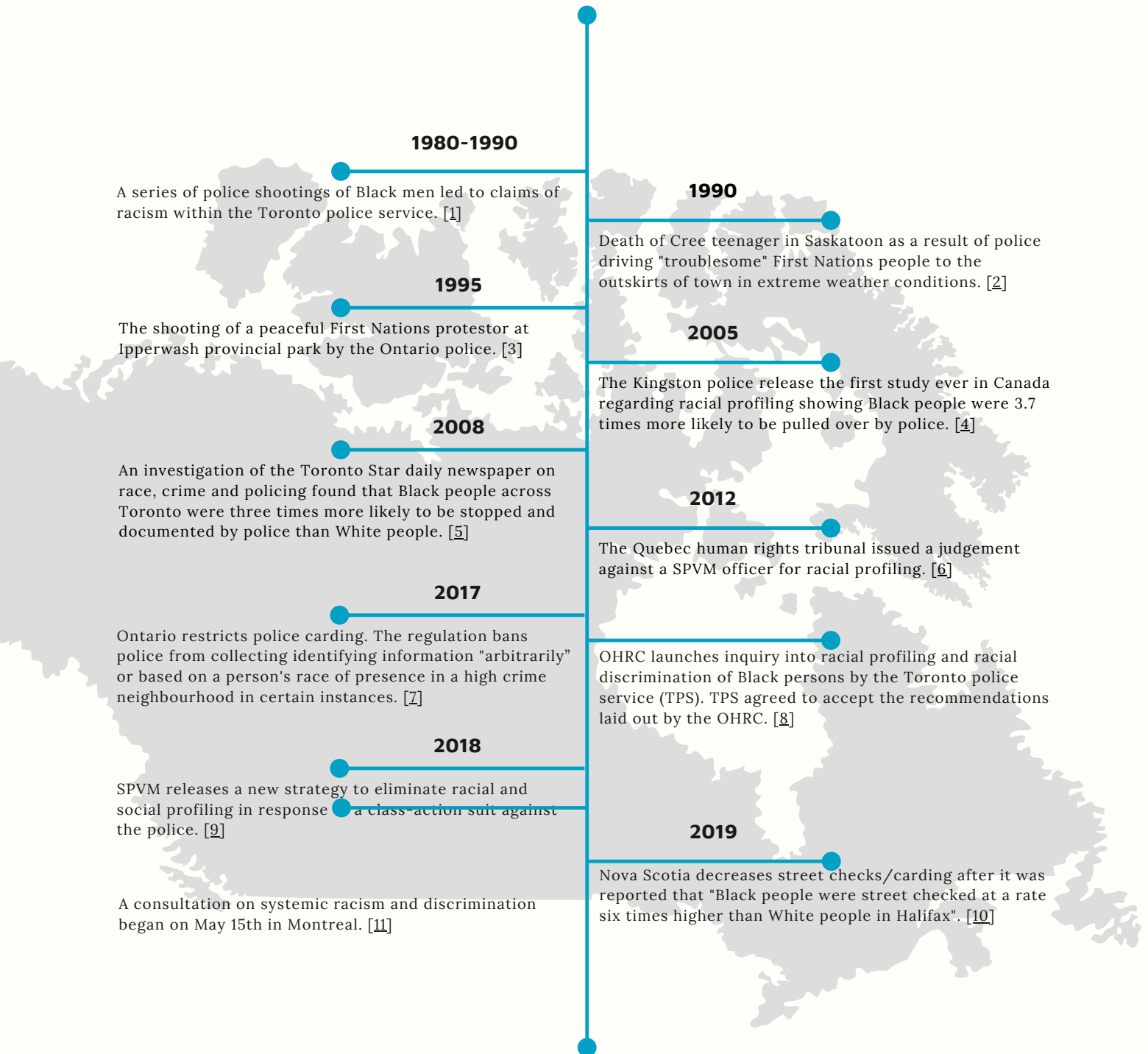
"WHEN TALKING ABOUT RACIAL PROFILING, WE IMMEDIATELY MAKE A CONNECTION TO THE POLICE FORCE. BUT IT ALSO TAKES ON DIFFERENT FORMS; SOME CITIZENS SEE YOUTH HANGING OUT IN CERTAIN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME THEY ARE DISTURBING THE PEACE. THAT'S A FORM OF PROFILING. THERE ARE SECURITY GUARDS WHO ALSO DO IT IN STORES; THEY FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION ON ONE PERSON MORE. THAT IS ALSO PROFILING." [1]

- Will Prosper
Ex-RCMP officer, community
activist, Hoodstock organiser
and documentary filmmaker

IN THIS SECTION

- 6 PROFILE: CANADA
- 7 PROFILE: VANCOUVER, B.C.
- 8 PROFILE: INUIT TERRITORY
- 9 PROFILE: WINNIPEG, MAN.
- 10 PROFILE: TORONTO, ONT.
- 11 PROFILE: OTTAWA, ONT.
- 12 PROFILE: MONTREAL, QC
- 13 PROFILE: HALIFAX, N.S.
- 14 PROFILE: INDIGENOUS WOMEN
- 15 SPOTLIGHT: VAL-D'OR, QC

PROFILE: CANADA



PROFILE: VANCOUVER, B.C.

In June 2018, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs presented police data from Vancouver police stops between 2008 and 2017, calling the statistics proof of systemic police discrimination and racial profiling. They asked the province's police complaints commissioner to investigate. [1]

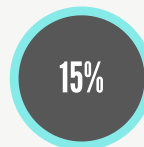
"THE STATISTICS ON RACIAL DISPLAY IN STREET CARDING DEMONSTRATE THE LIVED REALITY OF INSTITUTIONAL RACISM THAT OUR PEOPLE FACE DESPITE THE PUBLIC RHETORIC AND CELEBRATIONS AROUND RECONCILIATION." [1]

- Chief Bob Chamberlin
Vice-President of the Union of
B.C. Indian Chiefs

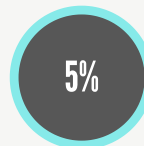
In September 2018, Vancouver police accepted 6 recommendations including the formalization of the existing street-check standards into police policy, improved documentation, annual release of data, more training, adding an Indigenous Liaison Protocol Officer, and furthering community relationships. [2]

WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS A HUGE EMOTIONAL COMPONENT TO THIS AND REGARDLESS OF WHAT DATA (OR) ANALYSIS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT COMES FORWARD WITH. WE RECOGNIZE THAT WHEN YOU ARE CHECKED BY THE POLICE THAT IS AN EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE." [2]

- Adam Palmer
Vancouver Police Chief



FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE WERE STOPPED 15% OF THE TIME WHEN THEY REPRESENT JUST 2% OF THE POPULATION. [4]



BLACK PEOPLE WERE STOPPED 5% OF THE TIME, WHEN THEY REPRESENT LESS THAN 1% OF THE POPULATION. [4]

Finally, in January 2020, Vancouver police adopted a new 'street checks' policy to comply with new provincial standards. Officers cannot make random stops, or stop someone on the sole basis of an identity factor, and officers need a "justifiable reason" to demand or request identifying information. Also an officer must take steps to ensure a person is aware of their rights during a street check and have a specific public safety purpose to ask for identifying information and tell the person of that reason. [3]

PROFILE: INUIT TERRITORY

Inuit women in Canada's North face 'systemic racialized policing'.

In January 2020, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and Elizabeth Comack, of the University of Manitoba, co-authored *Towards Peace Harmony & Wellbeing: Policing in Indigenous Communities* (2020), which examined how police respond to violence against women in Canada's traditional Inuit territory, known as Inuit Nunangat. The authors state that police officers responding to cases of domestic violence in these regions often do not believe the indigenous women making the abuse reports. Sometimes, according to the report, the women reporting the violence, rather than their abusers, are the ones removed from their homes. 15 recommendations were made in the report.



13X

WOMEN IN NUNAVUT ARE THE VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME AT A RATE MORE THAN 13X HIGHER THAN WOMEN IN CANADA AS A WHOLE. [1]

12X

WOMEN IN NUNAVUT ARE 12X MORE LIKELY TO BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED THAN IN OTHER PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES. [1]

"RACIALIZED POLICING PERSISTS IN INUIT WOMEN'S ENCOUNTERS WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM AND IT GOES WELL BEYOND A FEW INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS HOLDING STEREOTYPES ABOUT INUIT."

- Rebecca Kudloo
President of Pauktuutit Inuit
Women of Canada [2]

PROFILE: WINNIPEG, MAN.

In late 2019 there were various media reports of indigenous people being profiled in retail stores by paid duty Winnipeg police officers who had been hired for loss prevention services by the stores. These were dismissed by the police as cases of mistaken identity.[1] [2] [3] However, an arrest in January 2020 launched an investigation by Nova Scotia’s independent police watchdog agency into an alleged case of racial profiling after a 23-year old was arrested in a local store.[4]

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission states that complaints of racial profiling are commonplace in Winnipeg, especially in retail and in law enforcement.



OF PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION IN CANADA DO SO IN A STORE OR A RESTAURANT SETTING. [5]

"THIS KIND OF DISCRIMINATION HAS BEEN A STEADY SOURCE OF COMPLAINTS FOR THE COMMISSION FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS... ANYTIME YOU'RE MAKING THOSE KINDS OF JUDGMENTS BASED ON WHO YOU THINK A PERSON IS, RATHER THAN ON WHO THEY'VE PROVEN THEMSELVES TO BE, YOU OPEN YOURSELF UP TO RISK, WHETHER THAT'S A HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINT OR SOME KIND OF OTHER LEGAL ACTION."

- Karen Sharma
Executive Director of the
Manitoba Human Rights
Commission [6]



PROFILE: TORONTO, ONT.

In 2017, the Ontario Human Rights Commission launched a public interest inquiry into racial profiling and discrimination within the Toronto Police Service. The hope was to shift the long-standing problem of racial profiling from anecdotal evidence – individual stories too easily explained away as cases of “a few bad apples” – to quantitative data that will “pinpoint where racial disparities exist” on a systemic level, said Ontario Human Rights Commission's Renu Mandhane. [1]



20X

FROM 2013 TO 2017 BLACK PEOPLE WERE NEARLY 20X MORE LIKELY THAN WHITE PEOPLE TO BE INVOLVED IN A FATAL SHOOTING BY THE TORONTO POLICE. [2]

In September 2019, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) committed to the principles laid out in the Ontario Human Rights Commission's new policy on eliminating racial profiling in law enforcement. This policy was the first of its kind in Canada and more than 20 community and advocacy groups added their support or endorsement. [3]

PROFILE: OTTAWA, ONT.

As a result of a human rights settlement with the police service, Ottawa police were required to collect data on the perceived race of drivers that officers pulled over from 2013 to 2015. However the force opted to continue the project through 2016. [1]

Data from the continued collection of race data from all traffic stops continued to show disproportionate numbers of Middle Eastern and black drivers being stopped by police. There was however a modest decrease in these disproportionate rates.

In 2016, Abdirahman Abdi - a Somali-Canadian man described by his family as having mental health issues was arrested in Ottawa for alleged assault, but unfortunately he died during this fatal confrontation with the police. When questioned about the impact of racial profiling on this incident, Ottawa police union president, Matt Skof, stated the following:

"TO SUGGEST THAT RACE WAS AN ISSUE IN THIS, IT'S INAPPROPRIATE. THE OFFICERS WERE CALLED TO THE SCENE. THE OFFICERS HAD TO ATTEND. RACE, IN THIS CASE, IS A FACT, JUST LIKE YOUR AGE, YOUR GENDER, YOUR HEIGHT. IT DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH OUR ... DECISION-MAKING. OUR DECISION-MAKING IS BASED ON OUR TRAINING, AND OUR TRAINING HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH RACE..."

THAT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT WE'RE SEEING THE BLEEDING OF THAT VERY DIFFICULT RHETORIC INTO CANADA NOW. AND I'M VERY LIVE TO IT, I CAN OBVIOUSLY BE SENSITIVE TO IT, I'M AWARE THAT IT'S OCCURRING, BUT IT'S TWO SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS AND NOT ONE THAT'S APPLICABLE HERE."



- Matt Skof
Ottawa police union
president [2]

The case garnered widespread attention with calls for investigations from community organisations such as the Canadian Somali Mothers' Association, the Canadian Council of Muslim Women and the Toronto chapter for Black Lives Matter. [3] [4]

In 2017 Ontario's Special Investigations Unit laid down charges of manslaughter, aggravated assault and assault with a weapon against one of the police officers involved in the arrest of Abdi. [5]

PROFILE: MONTREAL, QC

In 2018, the City of Montreal mandated a study of police interceptions (“street checks” or “information stops” that didn’t result in charges or tickets) the SPVM carried out between 2014 and 2017. At the same time, Montreal police unveiled a new strategy to eliminate racial and social profiling as a class-action suit against police was announced and fresh allegations of profiling surfaced. [1]

The profiling plan unveiled at city hall proposes a range of actions including updated training, restoring public confidence and ensuring transparency. The plan also called for the hiring of three independent researchers to collect and analyze data on profiling. [1]

In October 2019, the independent research report showed that the number of criminal incidents have stayed relatively stable over four years (2014-2017) whereas the total number of police checks and stops have significantly increased. [2]

11X

The likelihood of an Indigenous woman being checked by officers was found to be 11X higher than a white woman. [3]

2X

During the four-year period, the findings show, Arab people were 2X more likely to be subject to street checks by police than white people were. [3]

4X

During the four-year period, the findings show, black and Indigenous people in Montreal were 4X more likely to be subject to street checks by police than white people were. [3]

6X

Indigenous Peoples also appear to be increasingly targeted: while they were 2X more likely to be stopped in 2014, the report shows, they became 6X more likely in 2017. [3]

“WE DON'T HAVE ANY RACIST POLICE OFFICERS... WE HAVE POLICE OFFICERS WHO ARE CITIZENS AND WHO, INEVITABLY, HAVE BIASES LIKE ALL CITIZENS CAN HAVE. THAT'S THE PART WE NEED TO TRY TO UNDERSTAND, AND IT'S A COMPLEX ISSUE... AS POLICE CHIEF, WHAT I WANT IS TO HAVE A SAFE CITY, SO WE NEED TO FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN RESPECTING PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND POLICE OFFICERS BEING ABLE TO DO THEIR JOBS.” [2]

- Sylvain Caron
Montreal police chief

PROFILE: HALIFAX, N.S.

In 2017, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission announced it would collaborate with community and police to study the issue of street checks. Their work raised serious concerns regarding ongoing systemic discrimination faced by people of African descent, including racial profiling in police street checks. Prof. Wortley of the University of Toronto reviewed all available data (including 12 years of data from Halifax Regional Police and the RCMP), consulted stakeholders, and provided a report with recommendations in March 2019.

In April 2019, street checks were halted and then finally in October 2019, street checks were banned by the Nova Scotia government after a retired judge issued a formal opinion that the practice is illegal. [1]



6X

BLACK PEOPLE ARE 6X MORE LIKELY TO BE STOPPED BY POLICE AND ASKED FOR ID THAN WHITE PEOPLE; BLACK MEN ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO UNDERGO STREET CHECKS, FOLLOWED BY ARAB MEN. [1]

1/3

ABOUT 1/3 OF BLACK MEN IN HALIFAX WERE CHARGED WITH A CRIME BETWEEN 2006 & 2007 VERSUS 6.8% OF WHITE MEN. [1]

In February 2020, two police officers were placed on administrative duty in Bedford, Halifax. This followed alleged police brutality and racial profiling of a black teen, a video of which was posted by the victim's mother on social media. As a result, the President of the Halifax Regional Police Association noted that morale is at an all-time low; he felt that the Chief of Police prioritized responses to social media accounts over thorough investigation of facts. He believed that such a response would limit proactive policing. [2]

"THE RESEARCH CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THAT POLICE STREET CHECK PRACTICES HAVE HAD A DISPROPORTIONATE AND NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN COMMUNITY. STREET CHECKS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE CRIMINALIZATION OF BLACK YOUTH, ERODED TRUST IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND UNDERMINED THE PERCEIVED LEGITIMACY OF THE ENTIRE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM." [1]

- Scot Wortley
Professor at the University of Toronto

"I DO THINK RACE WAS A FACTOR HERE, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? WE DON'T LIKE USING THE RACE CARD. IT MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN RACE, BUT BECAUSE OF WHAT WE'VE DEALT WITH AS A FAMILY DEALING WITH RACISM IN BEDFORD, WE CAN ONLY ASSUME IT'S BEEN RACE." [3]

- Troylena Dixon
Mother of the Bedford teen

PROFILE: INDIGENOUS WOMEN

INDIGENOUS WOMEN ARE A GROUP IN OUR SOCIETY THAT ARE CURRENTLY PARTICULARLY TARGETED BY POLICE STOPS



THEY ARE 11 MORE TIMES LIKELY TO BE STOPPED AND CHECKED THAN WOMEN FROM THE WHITE POPULATION ARE.

THE DISPARITY INDEX FOR THE LIKELIHOOD OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN BEING SUBJECTED TO POLICE CHECKS.

THEY WERE TWICE MORE LIKELY THAN THE WHITE POPULATION IN 2014. [1]

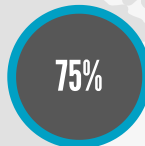


2014

WHEREAS IN 2017 THEY WERE ALMOST SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE STOPPED AND CHECKED. [1]



2017



OVER HALF OF RACIALIZED & INDIGENOUS SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAID THEY HAD EXPERIENCED RACIAL PROFILING COMPARED TO 11% OF WHITE SURVEY RESPONDENTS. ALMOST 3/4 OF BLACK SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAID THEY HAD BEEN RACIALLY PROFILED. [2]



In speaking to community police and indigenous women in Val-d'Or QC the themes of community distrust and people's apprehension towards the police force is founded. In conversations with Julie Bouvier (l'Équipe mixte en itinérance – policiers et intervenants communautaires (EMIPIC), Sureté du Québec) it became apparent that, due to past trauma, there is definitely a feeling of prejudice in regards to the police and their attitudes. Bouvier commented that the community police strives towards understanding the people in their community, listening to their concerns and getting to know them on a personal level, which is the way towards better understanding of one another. [3]

SPOTLIGHT: VAL-D'OR, QC

In September of 2019, a team of researchers and documentary filmmakers from Project SOMEONE were invited to visit members of the PPCMA (Poste de police mixte autochtone - Indigenous mixed community police station) in Val-d'Or, Quebec. Our team met local stakeholders in Val-d'Or including specialists in social services, mental health, community policing and indigenous community leaders to better understand how efforts to reduce racial and social profiling can be practically grounded in strategies that promote resilience, collaboration, empathy and perspective-taking.

The members of the PPCMA possess practical experience in building inclusive communities and reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. The PPCMA in Val-d'Or is truly a shining example of how police services can strive to become exemplary community-centric organizations through their efforts to combat racism and discrimination.

Our conversations with the members of the PPCMA and indigenous community stakeholders revealed three distinct strategies that promote the primary prevention of discrimination in the context of Val-d'Or. First, a multi-stakeholder approach including facets of public safety, social services, health and education must help contextualize any prevention strategies to ensure relevance for the local community. Second, community policing services must be grounded in humanist philosophies which focus on ensuring the health, well-being and safety of the most marginalized community members as opposed to only the reduction of criminal activities. Third, there is an urgent need to ensure that marginalized communities voices continue to be represented and magnified as we continue to provide space for them to recount their personal experiences of building resilience.