

2024-2025 Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report: Main Report



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Introduction: Reclaiming Power and Place

Since the release of the National Inquiry's Final Report [Reclaiming Power and Place](#) in 2019, and the [Weaving Miskotahâ Report](#) in July 2021, Indigenous families, survivors, communities, Nations, and organizations have consistently emphasized that ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex plus gender-diverse people requires urgent, sustained, and systemic change. The 231 Calls for Justice and the Calls for Miskotahâ lay out clear and comprehensive directions for action. These calls are central to advancing reconciliation, rooted in human rights and informed by the truths shared by families, survivors, and Indigenous communities. The calls serve as a foundation for systemic change and a guiding framework for governments and institutions across all jurisdictions.

The [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#) (the federal pathway), released on June 3, 2021, is the federal government's contribution to the broader [MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan](#) (the National Action Plan). It outlines the Government of Canada's commitments to implement the Calls for Justice and Calls for Miskotahâ, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and through coordinated action by 21 federal departments and agencies. The federal pathway focuses on Culture, Health and Wellness, Human Safety and Security, Justice, and Capacity Building and Coordination. These themes reflect both the structural roots of violence and the transformational pathways toward dignity, safety, and self-determination.

An overview of the fourth Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report

The fourth Annual Progress Report (the report) offers an account of progress made between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. Across all of its parts, the report highlights what investments, policies, programs and services the federal government has made to progress towards ensuring immediate improvements and longer-term transformative change to enhance safety, support families and survivors, and address the systemic conditions that have perpetuated harm over time.

Main report

This year, the main narrative of the report identifies some of the federal progress being made across the following key areas:

- enhancing safety
- community-led survivor-centered healing and wellness supports
- addressing human trafficking
- transforming justice through Indigenous-led approaches
- Indigenous-led child welfare and protection
- culture and language revitalization
- housing and infrastructure

- economic security, employment and education
- addressing anti-Indigenous racism in public institutions

This main narrative section of the report includes the following content, by key area:

- an overview of highlights of federal initiatives, investments and action taken in 2024–25
- a description of the anticipated immediate impacts that these initiatives could have on the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people
- a description of how the work is intended to contribute towards transformational systemic change

Finally, the report ends with an update on federal progress made towards increased transparency and accountability. The following 3 components have been reported on in previous years, and speak to federal government action on:

- Call for Justice 1.7 and the development of a national Indigenous and human rights ombudsperson
- Call for Justice 1.10 and the development of an independent oversight body to monitor implementation of the National Action Plan
- the annual National Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial Meeting on MMIWG2S+ (this national meeting was referred to as the Roundtable in previous years)

Calls for Justice and federal efforts in 2024–25

The main components of the report (executive summary, main narrative, and highlight reports) showcase some of the federal initiatives, however, in response to commitments made to the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples, a more fulsome reporting of federal efforts actioned in 2024–25 that respond to (for example, more fulsome coverage), or respond in part to (for example, only addresses a portion) the individual Calls for Justice is underway, and will be published in the near future.

Highlights reports

To illustrate how federal progress aligns with the interests of families and survivors, 2SLGBTQI+ Indigenous, Urban Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis as presented in their [unique contributions to the National Action Plan](#), this report includes a series of highlight reports. These highlight reports:

- allow for a presentation of federal progress with Indigenous partners' interests in mind
- reflect the nuances found within the National Action Plan
- highlight how the federal government has worked to respond to varying community priorities, local contexts, and population-specific systemic challenges

Based on feedback from Indigenous partners, 2 additional highlight reports have been included as part of this year's report:

- a highlight report specific to families and survivors
- a report highlighting federal action on the National Action Plan's [National Data Strategy](#)

The Government of Canada is accountable for commitments it has made through the Federal Pathway which recognized that transformational change, including cultural humility and an ongoing commitment to reconciliation that respects Indigenous self-determination and leadership, are part of the solution. This report is offered in that spirit: as a tool for transparency, a record of actions taken towards fulfilling the Calls for Justice, and an acknowledgment that more must be done to uphold the safety, dignity, and rights of families, survivors, and Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people from coast to coast to coast.

Enhancing safety

Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have identified the urgent need for increased safety and improved access to emergency supports. In 2024–25, in response to these priorities, and in alignment with the Calls for Justice and Calls for Miskotahâ, the federal government supported a range of initiatives that have made progress across 4 key areas:

- coordinated approaches to missing loved ones
- culturally safe and community-led shelter supports
- Indigenous-led safety and wellness
- safe and reliable transportation for community well-being

Initiatives highlighted here not only offer protection, increase safety, and provide support during moments of crisis, but reflect a federal government commitment to Indigenous- and community-led, culturally grounded systems of care.

Federal government efforts in these areas align with several Calls for Miskotahâ. Federal investments in coordinated responses to missing loved ones and efforts to strengthen relationships with Indigenous organizations respond to elements of Calls for Miskotahâ 9 and 10. These calls emphasize the need for Métis representation in decision-making and improved relationships with law enforcement to enhance safety outcomes. Similarly, investments in and delivery of emergency shelters and culturally safe, community-led safety and wellness initiatives partially respond to Calls for Miskotahâ 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 23, and 25. These calls emphasize the urgent need for distinctions-based services, trauma-informed and strengths-based supports, and culturally grounded infrastructure such as Métis Healing and Wellness Centres, crisis services, and System Navigators. Together, they highlight the importance of accessible, equitable, and culturally rooted programs that sustain community safety and healing across urban, rural, and remote areas. Progress on coordinated safety systems and safe transportation partially aligns with Calls for Miskotahâ 45, and 55. They underscore that safety cannot be achieved without victim support services that are culturally relevant, distinctions-based, and inclusive of Métis experiences and rights.

Coordinated approaches to missing loved ones

Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people remain disproportionately represented among missing persons cases in Canada. Families and communities have consistently called for coordinated, culturally grounded systems to prevent disappearances and ensure timely, respectful responses when they occur. This section highlights federal efforts to improve crisis response and strengthen coordination across communities and public safety institutions.

Highlights for 2024–25

Budget 2024 allocated \$1.3 million over 3 years to support engagement, partnership-building, and co-development of the [Red Dress Alert Pilot](#). In October 2024, the Indigenous-led organization Giganawenimaanaanig (name translates to "we all take care of them") undertook leadership in its co-development and implementation.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the Red Dress Alert Pilot began working towards ensuring the timely issuance of public alerts when Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people go missing. Developed in response to calls from families, survivors and Indigenous partners, it is relevant to Call for Justice 9.5vii, which urges governments to establish a nationwide emergency number within the larger context of Call for Justice 9.5 which seeks standardization of protocols for policies and practices ensuring thorough investigations when Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people go missing.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Developed in partnership with Indigenous organizations, the pilot emerged in a context where gaps in culturally grounded safety systems have historically contributed to a lack of protection, urgency and visibility for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people at risk. This Indigenous-led pilot seeks to start to close these gaps.

Culturally safe and community-led shelter supports

Access to safe, stable, and culturally appropriate shelter is essential for individuals seeking protection from violence or housing instability. In 2024–25, the federal government made significant investments in Indigenous-led shelter services and emergency infrastructure as part of its direct response to the MMIWG2S+ crisis.

Highlights for 2024–25

Launched in 2021 under the [National Housing Strategy](#), \$420 million was invested over 5 years through the [Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative](#) (ISTHI) supporting the construction of an estimated 38 new shelters and 50 transitional homes for women, children and 2SLGBTQI+ people who are seeking safety. Investments in distinctions-based facilities included:

- \$6.64 million to the Edmonton 2 Spirit transitional facilities (24 units)
- \$3.64 million to Ne'ata'q Place (6 units)
- \$7.2 million to Deh Gah Got'ie First Nation's Providence Shelter (20 units, 60 beds)
- \$3.48 million to the Métis Nation Saskatchewan's 48-bed Coming Home project

Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada's [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy](#) has invested approximately \$5 billion over 9 years (2019-2028) to address homelessness across the country. Of this, the Indigenous Homelessness and Distinctions-Based Approaches streams received approximately \$890 million and \$286.9 million respectively; for 2024-2025 specifically, there is \$110 million for the Indigenous Homelessness stream and \$62.1 million for the Distinctions-based Approaches stream. These investments support the:

- delivery of Indigenous specific programming in 30 urban communities and 7 regions across Canada for off-reserve, urban and rural supports
- delivery of Indigenous specific funding to First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and modern treaty partners for the implementation of Reaching Home
- implementation of a Coordinated Access System in 60 communities that helps support local organizations and service providers to respond to the needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC's) [Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy](#) launched a 7-year \$4 billion investment to establish the [National Indigenous Housing Centre](#) and support First Nation, Inuit, Métis and Modern Treaty and Self-Governing Agreement Holders with the ability to address their immediate priorities including access to culturally relevant shelters, safe spaces, and transitional housing.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal programs made progress advancing the Calls for Justice 3.4, 4.7, 16.19, 16.29, 17.20, 18.25 which call on governments to ensure that emergency shelters and transitional housing are safe, accessible, and culturally appropriate for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. These efforts supported individuals and families experiencing violence, homelessness, or housing insecurity, with a focus on immediate safety, stability, and culturally grounded care.

Through the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative, new shelter spaces were established that prioritized both physical safety and culturally responsive environments. Shelters were designed to provide critical services such as crisis counselling, access to healing supports, and emergency accommodations for women, children, and 2SLGBTQI+ people — particularly where mainstream services remain inadequate or culturally unsafe.

Similarly, transitional housing supports delivered through the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative and CMHC's Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy could be used for transitional housing and/or the coordination of culturally appropriate wraparound services including mental wellness supports and Elder involvement.

Finally, Reaching Home supported Indigenous service providers in delivering shelter, outreach, and culturally informed interventions with flexible investments designed to support vulnerable populations, including 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Through these initiatives and others, in 2024–25, the federal government contributed to a continuum of care that aims to advance the vision of the Calls for Justice: housing as a right, safety as a priority, and healing as a culturally grounded and community-driven process.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Beyond addressing urgent and immediate needs, these initiatives aimed to contribute towards a broader structural shift in how shelter, housing, and safety are conceptualized and delivered in partnership with Indigenous Peoples across Canada. The 2024–25 federal investments in these programs have continued to target systemic factors contributing to the vulnerability of MMIWG2S+ people, including requests for additional investments, housing instability, and the need for culturally relevant infrastructure. Investments through the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative and the National Housing Strategy have supported the incorporation of Indigenous values and governance in the design, location, and operation of shelter and transitional housing spaces. The Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy and Reaching Home further advance systemic change by supporting co-developed approaches on homelessness interventions, housing and shelter development with Indigenous partners. These approaches contribute towards upholding the right of Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and families to access supports that reflect their cultures, community priorities, and definitions of well-being.

Indigenous-led safety and wellness initiatives

Indigenous communities continue to lead efforts to prevent violence and promote healing through culturally grounded, community-driven initiatives. These efforts reflect the strength and expertise of Indigenous organizations in addressing the root causes of violence—such as intergenerational trauma, systemic racism, housing insecurity, and lack of access to culturally appropriate services. In 2024–25, the federal government supported a range of initiatives that fund prevention programming, trauma-informed mental wellness services, and local safety planning—all grounded in Indigenous knowledge systems and priorities.

Highlights for 2024–25

Indigenous Service Canada's (ISC's) [Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative](#) invested \$30,044,262 in 8 newly funded projects and 44 continuing projects, serving the unique needs of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Urban, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Investments included:

- \$1 million to the Treaty 8 Urban Child and Family Services Office to support prevention and early intervention-based programming, including holistic, nation-based service delivery
- \$1 million to the Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan to create networks of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people to build capacity and share knowledge in safe and culturally relevant ways
- \$901,923 to the Métis Nation of Alberta Association to create safe spaces for Métis women, youth, and 2SLGBTQI+ people to connect and discuss cultural safety
- \$172,467 to the Edmonton 2-Spirit Society to support their Anti-Discrimination Framework, which will create culturally grounded, community driven solutions to address systemic discrimination and bias-motivated violence faced by Indigenous 2-Spirit and LGBTQI+ communities across Alberta

Public Safety Canada's [Northern and Indigenous Crime Prevention Fund](#) allocated \$5,604,193 across 12 continuing projects that aim to reduce vulnerability to crime and promote community safety approaches in Indigenous communities, both on- and off-reserve, and in the North:

- \$3,429,160 to the Mistawasis Nêhiyawak Community Crime Prevention Program over 5 years, for community readiness and community mobilization initiatives utilizing commonly used crime prevention strategies, including but not limited to Social Developmental Crime Prevention Design and Situational/Environmental Crime Prevention Design supported through western, traditional and cultural systems to promote a traditional concept of balance
- \$543,240 to the "Melkiknay" (I Am Strong) project to mitigate the impact of identified risk factors among at-risk Indigenous youth (12-30 years of age) in the Lennox Island First Nation community
- \$4,651,500 to the Moosomin Community Safety Plan for the Moosomin First Nation over 5 years, to implement a project aiming to revitalize traditional crime prevention methods and integrate them with contemporary techniques at the community level to enhance community safety and address socio-economic challenges

ISC's [Family Violence Prevention Program](#) (FVVP) has received \$304.1 million of funding and \$96.6 million ongoing through the Comprehensive Violence Prevention Strategy's \$724.1 million investment, and supported a broad range of Indigenous-led distinctions-based and community specific prevention initiatives across Canada, including culturally grounded educational campaigns, land-based healing, workshops, and supports.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the federal government supported a wide range of Indigenous-led, culturally grounded, community-based violence prevention initiatives. These efforts respond directly to Calls for Justice which call for distinctions-based, Indigenous-led prevention programming and the development of community-driven safety strategies.

Responding to Calls for Justice 5.4 and 17.15, the Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative provided funding for Indigenous communities to implement community safety and wellbeing interventions that serve their needs. By resourcing locally developed approaches to safety, this initiative supported Indigenous approaches to protecting community, while strengthening local capacity to address risk factors through holistic and prevention-focused strategies.

Responding to Calls for Justice 1.8, 7.3, 17.20, and 17.23, the Family Violence Prevention Program dispersed violence prevention funding to a wide array of First Nation, Inuit, Métis, 2SLGBTQI+ and urban communities, as well as Indigenous organizations across Canada. This included funding community-driven family violence prevention projects, and delivering culturally-appropriate supports and violence prevention activities through organizations including the National Indigenous Circle Against Family Violence, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Infinity Women's Secretariat, 2 Spirited People of Manitoba, Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Circling Buffalo and the Three Eagle Wellness Society. Some examples of projects include:

- the Indigenous Women Rising, gathering which provided workshops on a host of issues related to wellness, traditional culture, intimate partner violence, and cyber stalking
- the Healthy Relationships and Kinship project, which organized youth retreats with land based teachings, and hosted in-school sessions on healthy relationships led by Elders
- Aturrumaniq, a community-focused initiative that supports Inuit families impacted by family violence and trauma, and provides peer support, mental health support, and culturally sensitive services for healing, education, and violence prevention

Responding to Calls for Justice 3.4 and 5.5iv, Public Safety Canada's Northern and Indigenous Crime Prevention Fund supported capacity building, the dissemination of knowledge and the development of community safety tools and resources, while also supporting the implementation of culturally-sensitive community-led crime prevention initiatives. Together, these initiatives aimed to prevent violence through supporting community-based strategies defined and led by Indigenous Peoples. These funds aim to support safer communities, advance healing, and promote Indigenous crime prevention and community safety best practices.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Federal government investments in initiatives like the Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative and the Northern and Indigenous Crime Prevention Fund are investments that support Indigenous governments and organizations to lead safety strategies that reflect Indigenous laws, knowledge systems, and community-defined priorities. These initiatives aim to move towards restorative and protective programming that is rooted in culture, belonging, and collective responsibility. Similarly, one of the Family Violence Prevention Program's aims is to strengthen long-term capacity by funding prevention programming across First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, and federal investments into community-led projects aim to build community confidence in locally grounded care systems. The presence of trauma-informed, culturally rooted community-led programming supports advancing the understanding of safety outlined in the Calls for Justice — not simply as the absence of harm, but as the presence of belonging, voice, and community strength.

Safe and reliable transportation for community wellbeing

Lack of safe, accessible transportation heightens risks for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people — particularly in rural, remote, and northern regions. Unsafe travel routes, lack of public transit, and long distances between communities and services have been identified as serious contributors to vulnerability and violence. In response to these realities and related Calls for Justice, the federal government has invested in addressing transportation-related safety barriers through targeted community infrastructure projects.

Highlights for 2024–25

Transport Canada's Remote Passenger Rail Program invested \$96.1 million into projects to sustain and improve Indigenous-owned rail services for remote communities. Investments covered operating expenditures, infrastructure upgrades, new assets, and safety improvements for:

- Keewatin Railway Company, primarily serving Mathias Colomb Cree Nation Pukatawagan (Manitoba)
- Tshiuetin Rail Transportation, serving several Inuit communities

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal investments advanced Calls for Justice 4.8 and 17.9, which call for reliable, safe transportation options to reduce exposure to violence and exploitation during travel between and within communities. Investments in key initiatives resulted in continued improvements in transportation safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people in

remote, rural, and northern communities. Through the Remote Passenger Rail Program, access to safe, reliable, viable and sustainable passenger rail services helped mitigate safety risks, meet transportation needs, and improve economic opportunities for people living in remote communities. Investments in these essential transportation links between communities and services reduces the reliance on unsafe modes of travel such as hitchhiking or walking long distances.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

The Remote Passenger Rail Program contributes to systemic change. Continued capital investment in Indigenous-operated railways contributes to strengthening long-term transportation networks while supporting Indigenous control and decision-making in service delivery.

At the February 20, 2025 meeting between leaders of the National Indigenous Organizations and federal, provincial and territorial ministers of transportation, Transport Canada committed to establishing an Transport Canada working group that would work in collaboration with National Indigenous Organizations, to explore opportunities and advance initiatives to address the Calls for Justice related to transportation.

Survivor-centered healing and wellness supports

Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have emphasized the need for accessible, culturally grounded supports that reflect their own definitions of care, wellness, and safety. In response to these priorities and in alignment with the Calls for Justice, the federal government has supported a range of initiatives that focus on both immediate response and long-term healing. In 2024–25, federal investments supported Indigenous-led crisis intervention, survivor supports, and trauma-informed care rooted in cultural knowledge and community leadership.

In 2024–25, federal support for Métis-led crisis response and healing initiatives partially aligned with Call for Miskotahâ 36, while advancing Calls for Miskotahâ 39 and 40. These Calls for Miskotahâ emphasize the need for trauma-informed care, culturally grounded healing environments, and equitable access to services across all Métis regions. By investing in distinctions-based programming that centers Métis definitions of wellness, safety, and care, government efforts are contributing to the emergence of sustainable, community-led systems that support long-term healing for survivors, families, and communities.

This section highlights progress across 2 priority areas:

- community-led responses to urgent needs
- culturally grounded healing and wellness initiatives

Each section provides updates on work carried out during the fiscal year, while also reflecting the broader shift toward relational, locally defined, and sustainable systems of safety and support.

Responses to urgent needs

Indigenous partners have identified the importance of having immediate, culturally safe supports available in moments when individuals or families are navigating urgent challenges. This section outlines federal initiatives in 2024–25 that expanded Indigenous-serving and/or Indigenous-led crisis intervention services, mobile mental wellness teams, and locally designed response mechanisms that are grounded in community knowledge and care.

Highlights for 2024–25

The Public Health Agency of Canada continued to support the operation of the [9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline](#), offering 24/7 bilingual (French and English) and culturally appropriate crisis support. In many parts of the country, First Nations, Métis and Inuit who call 9-8-8 are able to access Indigenous-specific support through the [Hope for Wellness Help Line \(1-855-242-3310\)](#), which is funded through ISC. From April 2024 to February 2025, 9-8-8 received 407,057 calls and texts.

The Hope for Wellness Helpline which is funded by ISC, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with language support available upon request for Cree, Ojibway (Anishinaabemowin), and Inuktitut.

Justice Canada continued to support the [Family Information Liaison Units \(FILUs\)](#) service for all families of missing and murdered Indigenous people, with a focus on support for families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Throughout 2024–25, FILUs have continued to work directly with families in a culturally-grounded and trauma-informed manner to gather the information family members are seeking from government agencies about the loss of their loved ones, including assistance in addressing outstanding questions. The FILU initiative continued to:

- provide access to information for families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQI+ people
- provide access to culturally grounded and family-centered services and supports to assist victims and families with the grief and loss of their loved one
- increase awareness about the needs and concerns of families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQI+ people and support interagency collaboration to address those concerns

Beginning with Budget 2023, \$37.3 million over 5 years and \$7.5 million annually on an ongoing basis have been allocated to FILU service, and have been invested to ensure that FILU services for families of missing and murdered Indigenous People continue to be available for as long as they are needed. Investments have also enabled FILUs to expand their operations to address gaps in service delivery and remain responsive to the needs of Indigenous People and their families.

Justice Canada's Community Support and Healing for Families (CSHF) continued to provide funding through multi-year agreements with Indigenous community agencies, organizations and Indigenous governments to design and deliver community supports and healing services for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. These community-led initiatives are of critical importance in helping families through grief and trauma within a family-centered framework.

In 2024–25 through the CSHF initiative:

- \$22.4 million was invested across 32 projects, including distinctions-based investments to programs providing unique services to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis families
- investments supported increased access to culturally grounded, responsive supports for families through a wide range of activities such as family-centered workshops, family gatherings, ceremonies, family support networks, and access to cultural advisors and Elders

Justice Canada launched the [Supporting Indigenous Victims of Crime initiative](#) which advances a wide range of Indigenous-led and Indigenous-designed projects and activities to increase support and assistance for Indigenous people who are victims and survivors of crime, including Indigenous women, youth, Elders, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQI+ persons. Informed by an advisory group, a call for proposals was launched and resulted in a wide range of multi-year funded projects that focus on increasing access to justice for Indigenous victims and survivors of crime through Indigenous-led victim supports and services, as well as the creation of new partnerships to reduce the harm Indigenous victims and survivors experience when in contact with the criminal justice system.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the federal government contributed to responsive, culturally safe responses systems that reflect Indigenous communities' priorities for care in moments of acute need.

Responding to Call for Justice 7.3, the 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, delivered 24/7 bilingual and culturally appropriate suicide crisis support across the country. In many parts of the country, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who call 9-8-8 are able to access Indigenous-specific support through the [Hope for Wellness Helpline](#), which is funded through Indigenous Services Canada. In 2024–25, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), which oversees 9-8-8 operations, established a 9-8-8 Indigenous Reference Group to ensure that 9-8-8 is meeting the needs of Indigenous communities.

Justice Canada's FILUs service advanced part of Call for Justice 1.6 and Call for Justice 5.6, by assisting families with culturally-grounded and family-centered teams who are dedicated to assisting them in accessing information across a wide range of sectors and jurisdictions, as well as all available services and supports. The FILU initiative advanced Call for Justice 16.29 by providing Inuit families with community supports and all available information they are seeking from various justice agencies and other sectors related to their loved ones who are missing or murdered, and Call for Justice 17.28, by creating opportunities for Métis-informed and Métis-led support for Métis families with loved ones who are missing or murdered.

Justice Canada's CSHF advanced Call for Justice 3.3 and funded the design and delivery of community-based culturally responsive supports specifically for families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQI+ people, and advanced Call for Justice 5.6 by increasing availability and access to Indigenous-led, community-based supports to assist them in their grief and healing journeys. By providing opportunities for Inuit-led supports for Inuit families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQI+ people across Canada, the initiative advanced Call for Justice 16.29, and advanced Call for Justice 17.28 by increasing availability and access to Métis specific supports to assist families with the grief of their loss and their healing journey.

Together, and building on the work of other levels of government (including provincial and territorial governments that have the responsibility for the administration of justice) these initiatives contributed to responsive, culturally safe crisis systems that reflect Indigenous communities' priorities for care in moments of acute need. They helped to ensure that Indigenous women, children, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and families had access to trusted and timely supports during moments of vulnerability — supports that are grounded in the strengths and leadership of Indigenous Peoples themselves.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

In 2024–25, federal initiatives continued to support Indigenous-led, culturally grounded systems of care that aim to address structural harms contributing to trauma and loss. FILUs and CSHF projects strive to place Indigenous families at the centre of design and decision-making. Long-term funding commitments to FILUs and the development of distinctions-based healing supports reflect movement toward systemic transformation, towards sustained, community-defined services rooted in cultural continuity. Responding to Call for Justice 7.3, the 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline provides suicide prevention support for all Canadians, including Indigenous Peoples. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) funds the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), which oversees the operation of 9-8-8. CAMH and PHAC recognize the need to ensure that 9-8-8 meets the needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, and continues to work with Indigenous partners to improve cultural competency of the helpline and explore opportunities for the involvement of local and regional Indigenous

crisis lines. Justice Canada's Supporting Indigenous Victims of Crime initiative also advanced long-term systemic change by embedding Indigenous legal and wellness principles into victim services. Investments in victim services reform also support broader changes in justice system practices, reinforcing the need for services that are inclusive, responsive, and grounded in the experiences of Indigenous survivors. Together, these initiatives aim to strengthen the structures of care for families and survivors of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Culturally grounded healing initiatives

Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have called for sustained, culturally grounded healing supports that reflect their own definitions of wellness and recovery. In 2024–25, federal initiatives supported culturally safe wellness programs, and trauma-informed services that are centered on Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural continuity, and community-led approaches.

Highlights for 2024–25

Indigenous Services Canada's [Indigenous Health Equity Fund](#) is providing \$2 billion over 10 years to address the unique challenges that Indigenous Peoples face when it comes to fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health services. This funding includes 2 components:

- Distinctions-Based Funding: \$190 million to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, providing a long-term, predictable base of funding support for their health priorities
- Targeted Initiatives Funding: \$10 million a year directed to select Indigenous communities and organizations in support of short-term, innovative, activity-driven projects on cross-cutting Indigenous health priorities

Indigenous Services Canada and the Government of Nunavut's Aqqusariaq - Nunavut Recovery Centre received funding towards its development and implementation. Progress towards the full implementation of this initiative is critical to providing a range of treatment and healing interventions to address both substance use and trauma, and will be founded and developed based on Inuit cultural practices and values. Aqqusariaq will lead to comprehensive addictions treatment that integrates both cultural and clinical healing practices that allow Nunavummiut to receive treatment closer to home.

- In 2024–25, Indigenous Services Canada provided co-funding for the construction of the building and ongoing operational costs, while the Government of Nunavut took the lead on the initiative.

Indigenous Services Canada's Mental Wellness Program funded access to trauma-informed mental health, emotional, and cultural support for those impacted by the national crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people (as well as Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors of Indian Residential Schools and Federal Indian Day Schools). In 2024–25, 2 activities within the Mental Wellness Program provided services directly focused on the needs of survivors, family members, and Indigenous People impacted by the MMIWG2S+ crisis. All other activities support various aspects of mental wellness that may be used by those impacted by the MMIWG2S+ crisis, including:

- a national network of an estimated 1,000 community-based health and cultural support workers through 233 funding agreements
- community-based mental wellness services
- substance use prevention and treatment, including a national network of residential substance use treatment centres
- mobile multidisciplinary Mental Wellness Teams providing services to communities
- wraparound services associated with Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) sites
- 24/7 crisis line services through the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Crisis Line, Hope for Wellness Helpline, and the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line
- life promotion and suicide prevention activities

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, efforts responded to Calls for Justice which call on all levels of government to support Indigenous-led, distinctions-based healing programs, promote long-term wellbeing, and reflect the strength and self-determination of survivors. By advancing culturally safe and relational models of care, federal partners invested in and contributed to pathways of restoration designed and/or delivered in partnership with Indigenous communities.

The Indigenous Health Equity Fund advanced Call for Justice 7.1 as it increased fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health services through funding for self-determined, Indigenous-led initiatives. The Aqqusariaq Nunavut Recovery Centre advanced Call for Justice 7.5 by working towards implementation of an in-territory centre that supports Inuit language, culture, and strong linkages to community-based on-the-land-programming for culturally safe healing, and Call for Justice 16.28, as it worked with the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated in the spirit of partnership and reconciliation, to address the need for a system-wide, Inuit-led approach to substance use and trauma treatment in Nunavut. Across its many services, supports and programming, Indigenous Services Canada's Mental Wellness Program advanced a range of Calls for Justice, including 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 7.2, 7.3, 16.13 and 17.4, as it invested and supported initiatives responsible for meeting the immediate mental wellness needs of communities by supporting Indigenous-led suicide prevention, life promotion and crisis response, including through crisis line intervention services, enhancing the delivery of culturally appropriate substance use treatment and prevention services in Indigenous communities, and supporting access to trauma-informed mental health and cultural support programs.

Collectively, these initiatives supported the delivery of trauma-informed services that are culturally sensitive and accessible to Indigenous survivors and their families. They invest in healing supports that are available in ways that uphold community-defined care models, and respond directly to the needs of those impacted by the MMIWG2S+ crisis.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Over time, community-driven, trauma-informed systems of care are expected to produce long-term benefits: improved survivor outcomes, strengthened community wellness, and reduced vulnerability to future harm. In this way, these initiatives represent an important component of the federal government's contribution to addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis - not only through the delivery of services, but through the restoration of Indigenous systems of care.

Addressing human trafficking

Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people continue to face disproportionate risks of being targeted by human trafficking in all its forms. Indigenous partners, families, and survivors have called for immediate, coordinated, and culturally grounded responses that recognize both the systemic nature of trafficking and its localized impacts. In alignment with the Calls for Justice that directly reference trafficking, including 3.4, 7.3, 7.9, 8.1, 12.14, the federal government has continued to support initiatives that prevent exploitation, assist to those affected by human trafficking, and build long-term safety infrastructure grounded in Indigenous leadership.

This section outlines progress made in 2024–25 highlighting federal efforts to support frontline responses, and those facing increased vulnerability through a variety of initiatives and programming. These measures reflect a growing commitment to distinctions-based, trauma-informed approaches that prioritize the safety, dignity, and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples.

Federal efforts to address human trafficking partially align with several Calls for Miskotahâ, calls 13, 14, 20, and 23. These calls emphasize in a variety of ways the need for community-led responses to vulnerability and exploitation, and reflect opportunities for the federal government to invest in Métis-led infrastructure, programming and services that prioritizes safety, coordination, and culturally grounded care.

Federal actions to address human trafficking also respond to parts of Calls for Miskotahâ 55, 60, and 61. These calls highlight the need for Métis-specific legal and victim support services, culturally informed justice alternatives, and respectful information-sharing practices by police and coroners. By funding trauma-informed, distinctions-based initiatives, and hosting cross jurisdictional dialogue on this issue, federal progress has begun to reflect a growing recognition that exploitation and trafficking must be addressed through community-led safety strategies, culturally relevant victim supports, and justice systems that uphold the distinct needs of Métis communities.

Funding efforts to address human trafficking and supporting populations experiencing increased risk

Indigenous partners have called for increased federal funding to address the full spectrum of human trafficking, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, and online coercion. In particular, survivors and communities have emphasized the need for targeted supports for those facing heightened vulnerability to human trafficking, including youth, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and those experiencing housing insecurity. This section highlights some of the investments that support Indigenous-led initiatives to prevent trafficking, respond to community-identified risks, and deliver culturally grounded, survivor-centered programming.

Highlights for 2024–25

In January 2025, the Government of Canada appointed Jennifer Richardson as [Chief Advisor to Combat Human Trafficking](#), for a term of 3 years. As Chief Advisor, Ms. Richardson will provide ongoing advice and recommendations to the Minister of Public Safety on the Government of Canada's efforts to combat human trafficking and bring awareness both

domestically and internationally. Her mandate includes working with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, and Indigenous partners to advance the Calls for Justice.

Indigenous Services Canada's [Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative](#) provided specific support to programs, services and interventions that address existing and emerging needs relating to the safety and well-being of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Investments to support individuals at risk of vulnerability to human trafficking included \$999,189 to the Métis Nation of Ontario for their Wellbeing of Métis and Urban Indigenous Individuals project to implement anti-human trafficking and victims services programs, including delivery of culturally relevant and holistic services. Services provided include justice programming, violence prevention information and education, safety planning, and culturally relevant referrals to women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ persons at-risk of violence, abuse, criminal justice involvement, human trafficking, and other harm.

Indigenous Services Canada continued to implement the First Nations Child and Family Services Program and [An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families](#), and flowed critical funding for culturally-appropriate and needs-based child and family services that prioritize early intervention, family preservation, and the well-being of children, youth, and families. Although the services and supports funded under the program are not limited to victims of human trafficking, it is possible that some who access the services are victims. Access to the services under the program could help reduce a child or youth's vulnerability to being exploited or trafficked.

Indigenous Services Canada's [Family Violence Prevention Program](#) funded emergency shelters and transitional housing to improve the safety and security of Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, as well as funding culturally-appropriate, community-driven violence:

- Empowerment Through Unity: Strengthening Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit Communities Against Violence, a transformative initiative aimed at addressing vulnerabilities among Indigenous women, children, youth and 2SLGBTQI+ people in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan through outreach, empowerment, specialized support, and culturally grounded wraparound care using land-based and trauma informed practices
- The Addressing Family Violence - Surviving and Thriving project, that provided critical outreach to Red River Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, empowering them to reduce their risk of vulnerability to violence
- Sharing Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Interventions to Prevent Family Violence project, that developed a resource manual, and designed and delivered programming on family and gender-based violence, and engaged specifically with the urban Indigenous population in the Montreal area to identify how to address violence
- The Roots of Peace project, that addressed violence against Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals while providing them with a safe environment to receive information on programs, services and cultural knowledge sessions

In 2024–25, Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) MMIWG2S+ and Resource Development Initiative continued to occupy a niche space focused on resource development within the broader MMIWG2S+ federal family. NRCan's engagement with Indigenous and industry partners included supporting the co-developed Indigenous Advisory and Monitoring Committee for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project and Existing Pipeline (IAMC-TMX) in establishing a new Circle on MMIWG2S+ and Resource Development, inviting Indigenous women and MMIWG2S+ advocates to the table to enable collaborative work. Through engagement with Indigenous partners, NRCan officials heard that more work must be done to better

understand the connection between human trafficking and resource development. To this end, NRCan joined Public Safety Canada's federal Anti-Trafficking Taskforce, and supported senior management discussions to collaborate on MMIWG2S+ and Resource Development and the Renewed National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking.

In January 2025, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada hosted and co-chaired, with provincial/territorial and Indigenous partners, the third annual National Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial Meeting on MMIWG2S+. The meeting brought together Indigenous leaders and federal, provincial, and territorial partners for interjurisdictional dialogue and collaboration on key priorities, including information sharing and discussions specific to human trafficking.

Immediate action and progress

This range of federal investments and efforts represents some of the federal progress made on the issue of human trafficking. This work has been undertaken with the intent of supporting the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people across the country. Indigenous Services Canada's Family Violence Prevention Program further provided safe shelter, frontline services, and community-driven violence prevention initiatives that offered urgent support and healing opportunities to those at risk. Complementing these efforts, Natural Resources Canada deepened cross-departmental/agency collaboration to better address the links between resource development and trafficking, while Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada prioritized human trafficking as a key issue at the national IFPT meeting on MMIWG2S+, seeking to strengthen coordination across jurisdictions and build relationships through dialogue on this significant issue. Together, these initiatives respond to the urgent calls of Indigenous families, survivors, and communities for immediate, culturally safe action to protect and support Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Federal investments and efforts in response to human trafficking are being made in work that is shifting towards distinctions-based, trauma-informed, and self-determined pathways that uphold the dignity, autonomy, and safety of Indigenous women, youth, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

For instance, as part of its ongoing investments in and work to implement *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families*, Indigenous Services Canada helped to advance Call for Justice 12.14 by continuing to flow funding to support Indigenous governing bodies to address the structural drivers and underlying root causes of the over-representation of Indigenous children and families in the child welfare system, through a service-delivery approach that recognizes the impacts of colonial systems, and lack of recognition for the cultural differences of Indigenous Peoples. With distinctions-based investments, the implementation of the Act contributes to reducing the vulnerabilities of Indigenous youth to becoming victims of human trafficking.

Additionally, Natural Resource Canada's MMIWG2S+ and Resource Development Initiative's Policy Team advanced its strategic policy planning and efforts on MMIWG2S+ and Resource Development. Leveraging existing funding, the Policy Team initiated significant research to develop a draft logic model based on the MMIWG2S+ Calls for Justice on Resource Development and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act's Action Plan Shared Priority Measure 12. This work included research on the implications of Calls for Justice 13.1 to 13.5 on government, industry, and Indigenous communities and organizations. NRCan's research is working towards:

- the mitigation of resource development and extraction project risks
- the strengthening of impact assessments and decision making
- improvements to project management and monitoring

It also supports changes that will ensure Indigenous communities are compensated and benefit from natural resource development, with specific consideration of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people throughout, including related to safety and security, exploitation and human trafficking. Ultimately, this research and analysis is working towards understanding the relationship between the factors that influence safety, security and equitable benefits in natural resource development, with a view to transformation systemic change undertaken with Indigenous communities and nations, federal, provincial, territorial governments, regulators and industry, and guided and supported by Indigenous women, including matriarchs, Elders, families and survivors.

Transforming justice through Indigenous-led approaches

Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have identified the need for deep and systemic reforms to Canada's justice system. These reforms must address the legacy of colonial harm, ongoing systemic racism, and the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in all parts of the legal and corrections systems. In alignment with the Calls for Justice, Indigenous partners continue to emphasize the importance of community-led, transparent, and culturally grounded approaches to justice and public safety. In 2024–25, the federal government continued to advance a series of initiatives that strengthen First Nations and Inuit police services, support Indigenous-led justice programs and services, enhance police accountability, and expand access to legal supports.

In 2024–25, federal progress in on policing, justice programs, accountability, and legal supports aligns with numerous Calls for Miskotahâ under Thread 6 - Justice and Policing, including calls 44, 45, 55-57, 60, and 61. These Calls for Miskotahâ collectively call for the transformation of justice and public safety systems to reflect Métis realities, uphold rights, and ensure culturally grounded supports. These calls highlight the need for reforms that are co-developed with the Métis Nation, inclusive of Métis experiences, and grounded in cultural safety, transparency, and community leadership. By investing in a range of justice and public safety reforms to better serve the needs of Métis communities, families and survivors, the federal government is beginning to address the structural inequities and colonial harms that have long impacted Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Indigenous-led community safety and policing

Indigenous partners have consistently identified the need for public safety systems that are rooted in Indigenous laws, languages, and local governance. This section outlines 2024–25 federal actions to strengthen Indigenous policing in First Nations and Inuit communities, including increased federal funding for First Nations and Inuit police services and the co-development of federal legislation which would recognize First Nations police services as essential services.

Highlights for 2024–25

Public Safety Canada (PS) continued support on the [co-development of federal legislation](#) with First Nations partners. This initiative responds to longstanding calls from First Nations for First Nations police service to be recognized and supported as essential services.

- Supported by PS, the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute Inc. (ILDI), completed its targeted engagement with First Nations on the elements that would inform the envisaged federal legislation. Based on the input gathered during this engagement process, PS revised the proposed elements. They were then shared with First Nations participants on September 27, 2024, posted publicly on Public Safety's website on November 1, 2024, and presented at numerous public fora throughout fall 2024. Additionally, Public Safety continued technical discussions with First Nations experts, police services, and police governance councils, as well as provinces and territories, to build consensus on the intended scope of the envisaged federal legislation.

In parallel, PS continued to deliver the [First Nations and Inuit Policing Program](#) (FNIPP) in 2024–25 with approximately \$334.6 million in cost-shared federal funding disbursed. Approximately 64% of this funding supported the operations of the 37 First Nations and Inuit police services across Canada and approximately 22% supported an enhanced RCMP policing presence in 242 First Nations and Inuit communities. PS also continued to deliver the First Nations and Inuit Policing Facilities Program (FNIPFP), which in 2024–25 disbursed \$14.4 million. Overall FNIPP and FNIPFP programming reached 424 First Nations and Inuit communities across Canada in 2024–25.

Immediate action and progress

Responding to Call for Justice 5.4, Public Safety Canada continued to work with partners to co-develop [federal legislation](#) with First Nations partners. These efforts continued to incorporate discussions around expanding access to culturally appropriate policing that is responsive to the specific safety needs and realities of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Also of note, the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program and FNIPP programming responded to Call for Justice 5.5. In particular, funding the stabilization of First Nations and Inuit police services and associated infrastructure investments helps to strengthen the capacity of these services to respond to the unique needs of the communities they serve.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

In 2024–25, federal efforts to support First Nations and Inuit-led community safety and policing aimed to contribute to long-term, systemic transformational change. Through FNIPP and FNIPFP, progress towards systemic change has been supported through sustained investments in community-based policing services and associated policing infrastructure. The co-development process for federal legislation that would recognize First Nations police services as essential services has also been impactful in working towards supporting the development of a legislative framework that reflects recommendations of First Nations organizations and governments.

Advancing accountability and addressing anti-Indigenous racism in law enforcement

Families and advocates have identified the urgent need to reform policing institutions in order to address anti-Indigenous racism, ensure accountability, and rebuild public trust. This section reviews 2024–25 federal efforts to strengthen oversight mechanisms, support Indigenous engagement in police reform, and improve transparency in law enforcement practices.

Highlights for 2024–25

RCMP National Headquarters is working with Indigenous communities and RCMP Divisions to create distinction-based, and uniquely specific community profiles. The RCMP Community Profiles initiative supported detachments in developing localized profiles of the Indigenous communities they serve. The profiles, which are being developed, will outline what the communities want the RCMP to know (for example, culture, beliefs, traditions, protocols, and customs) in order to better serve, and meet the needs of their communities. The profiles will also complement the detachment "orientation packages" that already exist in the RCMP. These profiles will serve as internal education tools to improve service delivery, strengthen cultural competency, and rebuild trust with Indigenous communities.

Additionally, inspired by the testimony of families during the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the RCMP also authored 2 separate guides for families:

- The Guide for Families of Missing Persons covers:
 - making a report
 - investigations
 - media
 - long-term missing persons
 - supports for families
 - a worksheet to assist in making a report
- The Guide for Families of Homicide Victims is unique in that it covers the entire criminal justice system, not just the police investigation. Thus, it covers:
 - investigations (including the medical examiner's responsibilities)
 - appeals
 - sentencing
 - young offenders
 - corrections
 - parole
 - supports for families
 - messages from faith communities
 - a glossary

These guides have been endorsed and reviewed by 2 Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) committees: Policing with Indigenous People, and Victims of Crime. The guides:

- address 3 specific concerns: lack of information from police, confusion about the criminal justice system, and jurisdiction
- are trauma-informed and provide information to family, friends and other interested parties
- are not specific to the RCMP and can be used by any police service or victim services in Canada, including self-administered First Nations police services

In 2024–25, the English and French versions of the guides were prepared for printing, and translation into multiple languages was made possible with special initiative funding from the RCMP Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU) and the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR). The RCMP finalized French and English versions of both guides and advanced efforts to release translations in multiple Indigenous and non-official languages. The first Indigenous language release will be in Inuktitut, followed by Cree, Michif, Ojibwe, Mi'kmaq, and other languages. Translations are aligned with Statistics Canada language data and reflect a commitment to equitable access.

The RCMP's [National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains](#) (NCMPUR) advanced national coordination on missing persons investigations, and has developed initiatives, training programs and best practices for law enforcement, medical examiners, and chief coroners with specialized investigative services in support of missing persons and unidentified remains investigations. In 2024–25, NCMPUR efforts included:

- continuing to manage Canada's Missing website, a public-facing national website that features profiles of missing persons and unidentified remains, and worked in this capacity to solicit tips to advance missing persons and unidentified remains investigations
- contributing to the annual MMIWG2S+ Campaign, a social media awareness campaign that highlighted cases of missing Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ peoples, aiming to effectively communicate the widespread prevalence of violence against MMIWG2S+ people by calling attention to specific unsolved cases
- developing 3 online training courses for Canadian Law Enforcement that included modules for considerations in Indigenous missing persons cases
- beginning to lead a national initiative to develop best practices on missing person return support discussions, to be offered to returned missing persons to determine the context of their going missing (before, during, and after). This Missing Person Return Support Discussion is in the pilot phase and participation is open to all law enforcement agencies within Canada. The goals of this initiative include:
 - improving response to missing person investigations
 - providing missing persons with appropriate resources and support
 - gathering better information on missing persons in general
 - gathering local and national intelligence about incidents related to going missing (for example, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, homicide)

Furthermore, NCMPUR's Community Outreach and Law Enforcement Outreach coordinators spent time completing reviews of missing persons and unidentified remains investigations with law enforcement agencies across the country, and meeting with community members. This included:

- conducting outreach visits to law enforcement agencies to promote NCMPUR's services, especially within Indigenous communities
- developing and implementing tailored support services and initiatives
- conducting reviews of historical missing persons and address operational gaps
- creating and delivering specialized training and presentations
- working in partnership with, as well as engaging with, Indigenous communities

The RCMP's National Office of Investigative Standards and Practices (NOISP) continued to provide expertise and oversight on major case investigations and is directly supporting the investigation of unsolved, and current, homicide investigations involving missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. NOISP currently funds Corporal-level positions in F Division (Saskatchewan) and K Division (Alberta) whose purpose is to advance MMIWG2S+ investigations and is dedicated to working to promote investigative quality across the organization, which has an impact on, and is of benefit to, all RCMP Divisions.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal initiatives were designed to support immediate improvements in law enforcement practices by focusing on anti-Indigenous racism, increasing cultural safety, and enhancing transparency within policing institutions. These actions responded directly to Calls for Justice 9.1 to 9.5, which call for the transformation of policing systems to ensure they are culturally competent, accountable, and responsive to the realities of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

The RCMP Community Profiles initiative complements training efforts by helping detachments build localized knowledge through direct engagement with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community leaders. These profiles are intended to inform how officers approach service delivery and relationship-building. Responding to Call for Justice 9.2 and 9.2ii, the Community Profiles initiative works to create a detailed and respectful understanding of local Indigenous communities for the RCMP, specifically as it relates to the local customs, cultures, traditions and beliefs. This knowledge and education builds a respectful and culturally responsive police service. Community profiles respond, in part, to Call for Justice 9.5i, which asks law enforcement agencies to establish a communication protocol with Indigenous communities, outlining when, how, and who they should be communicating with, and reaching out to, according to community events or circumstances. The profiles will also, provide the community with points of contact within the RCMP. Responding in part to Call for Justice 9.7, the Community Profiles initiative contributes to developing relationships between the RCMP and Indigenous community leaders to bridge the gap between law enforcement and community programming by providing culturally safe and sensitive assistance to individuals who require it. By providing policing in communities with locally-specific knowledge, the community profiles work helps ensure that police responses are contextually appropriate and respectful. Responding to 9.3ii, 9.5ii, 9.5iii and 9.5iv, the drafting, publication and targeted translation of the RCMP's trauma-informed Guides for Families of Homicide Victims and Missing Persons began to help bridge longstanding gaps in communication, accountability, and cultural safety between families and investigators.

Responding in part to Call for Justice 9.5v, the RCMP's National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains contributed to part of national efforts to ensure consistency in reporting mechanisms for reporting missing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. This work helps ensure that cases involving Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people are addressed efficiently and consistently, and in a manner that may prevent further harm. The RCMP's NOISP also responded to Call for Justice 9.5v by directly supporting the investigation of unsolved and current homicide investigations involving Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Collectively, these initiatives aim to have an immediate impact by improving the cultural competency of police services, strengthening communication with Indigenous communities, and enhancing support for families navigating the justice system in the aftermath of violence or disappearance.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

In 2024–25, these federal initiatives contributed to advancing longer term structural change within policing institutions. The RCMP Community Profiles Initiative supported this transformation by shifting how detachments engage with the communities they serve. By producing locally created profiles of Indigenous communities, the initiative begins to establish a foundation for culturally responsive policing practices that reflect Indigenous perspectives and priorities. Similarly, the RCMP's trauma-informed Guides for Families of Homicide

Victims and Missing Persons were designed to improve how families of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people are supported during investigations, thereby beginning to address gaps in communication and support that have, historically, compounded harm and grief.

The RCMP's National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains strived to create a nationally coordinated approach to missing persons investigations, laying the groundwork for sustained institutional change. Likewise, the National Office of Investigative Standards and Practices served as an internal accountability mechanism for RCMP investigational practices, promoting national consistency, integrity, and oversight in major crime investigations, including those involving Indigenous victims. Together, these national bodies worked towards meaningful progress in transforming policing systems and contribute to a safer justice environment.

Culturally grounded supports for Indigenous women in custody

Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people are significantly overrepresented in corrections systems and often face systemic barriers to culturally safe supports. This section details federal efforts in 2024–25 to improve conditions of incarceration, expand access to healing-informed programming, and support reintegration pathways that are community-driven and responsive to Indigenous identities and experiences.

Highlights for 2024–25

In 2024–25, Correctional Service Canada (CSC) began work to examine how best to implement the insights from a 4-year project with the University of Regina focused on developing a culturally informed risk assessment tool and process. The Security Classification Process for Indigenous Peoples research aimed to refine security classification tools for federally incarcerated Indigenous individuals by integrating culturally informed and gender-sensitive methods into decision-making. Recognizing the systemic barriers faced by Indigenous Peoples within the correctional system, the initiative sought to address the disproportionate placement of Indigenous women in maximum-security classifications, which can serve to limit access to the services, supports, and programs necessary for safe and timely reintegration. The project also generated valuable insights into Indigenous community engagement strategies, the legal context surrounding Indigenous risk assessment, and the effectiveness of existing security assessment tools in federal custody settings.

CSC continued to explore accommodation options to support Indigenous women offenders, and worked to establish facilities that recognize the needs of Indigenous women through the design and implementation of their programming, and to ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people have accommodation options for their reintegration. Section 81 of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA) allows CSC to enter into agreements with Indigenous governing bodies or organizations for the provision of correctional services to Indigenous offenders. These agreements can involve facilities like Healing Lodges, where Indigenous offenders are accommodated, receive culturally-responsive programs and services, and prepare for release. Priorities included:

- placement in Section 81 Healing Lodges continued to be a priority
- relationship building between CSC and the Section 81 Healing Lodges continued and remained positive

CSC also conducted a comprehensive resource review at Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge (OOHL) for Women, focusing on operational requirements, cultural programming, and reintegration supports. As part of this process, the Women Offender Sector engaged with OOHL's financial and operational staff to gain a thorough understanding of the lodge's operational realities. The review identified outstanding staffing needs and CSC remains committed to exploring innovative solutions to support OOHL in sustaining its high standards of service delivery.

The CSC's [Community Reintegration Fund](#) continued to support and emphasize the pivotal role that Indigenous communities play in reintegration planning. By providing financial support to Indigenous organizations, CSC's Community Reintegration Fund worked to support federally incarcerated Indigenous Peoples successful reintegration into either urban or home communities. In 2024–25, \$3.5 million supported this work, with funds expended to provide services to support reintegration of Indigenous offenders of all genders. Investments focused on:

- strengthening reintegration support for Indigenous women offenders as they transition from the institution to life in the community, including providing trauma, addiction, and life skills counselling, as well as gang disaffiliation efforts
- strengthening connections between remote Indigenous communities and CSC to aid in reintegration
- supporting capacity and project development through enhancing community engagement and increasing awareness of CSC programs within Indigenous communities
- supporting Indigenous organizations (or those serving Indigenous populations) including: Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, First Light St. John's Friendship Centre, Lavers House/Dimas Society, Les Services Parajudiciaires Autochtones du Québec, First Peoples Justice Centre of Montreal, Makivik Corporation, Kahnawake Mohawk Council, Kingston Native Centre and Language Nest, Iqaluit Community Tukisigiavik Society, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Native Clan Organization, Métis Nation Saskatchewan, James Smith Cree Nation, Acimowin Opaspiw Society, Bent Arrow Healing Society, File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, Kainai, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, St. Theresa Point, Yorkton Tribal Council, M2W2 Association, Squamish Nation, Tl'etinqox First Nation, and Circle of Eagles Lodge Society, Long-Term Inmates Now in the Community - Emma's Acres, BUILD Inc, and Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton (Women Specific)

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal initiatives contributed to immediate improvements in the experiences and conditions of incarceration and reintegration for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

In response to Call for Justice 14.4, CSC advanced its Research into the Security Classification of Indigenous Women by initiating work to implement insights from completed studies on culturally informed risk assessment for Indigenous Peoples. This effort includes ongoing collaboration with external, independent experts to develop evidence-based, culturally responsive approaches that strengthen the assessment and classification process for federally sentenced Indigenous individuals. Building on the foundation of the earlier research, CSC is working closely with Indigenous partners to review findings and identify further measures to enhance classification practices. Through a phased implementation approach, the project aims to improve correctional service delivery, ensure classification decisions reflect Indigenous realities and protective factors, and support a more culturally responsive correctional system for Indigenous Peoples.

Responding to Call for Justice 14.1, CSC focused on providing safe, secure, and culturally relevant housing and treatment that is imperative for the successful reintegration of Indigenous women, and implementing a range of reviews of different tools, programs and services to ensure that Indigenous women are well served. At the same time, CSC worked to respond to Call for Justice 14.8 by revising and implementing a suite of new programming for Indigenous women offenders, with the objective of providing Indigenous women offenders an immersive cultural environment through which primary risk factors for crime are addressed. Responding to Call for Justice 14.6, CSC continued to ensure culturally safe services and resources are available for incarcerated Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ through an assessment of the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge resource capacity. Additionally, through the Community Reintegration Fund, CSC funded Indigenous organizations supporting reintegration for Indigenous people transitioning from federal incarceration to life in the community. Finally, PS's Indigenous Community Corrections Initiative (ICCI) continued to prepare to respond to Call for Justice 14.6 by working closely with successful applicants to develop their implementation projects, with funding anticipated to begin in 2025–26. Once implemented, services will be provided on an as-needed basis for the duration of the ICCI-funded project as part of the participant reintegration process. ICCI-funded projects will also respond to underlying causes of offending by offering mental health, addictions, and trauma support services.

Collectively, these initiatives supported the creation of safer, more culturally responsive corrections and reintegration experiences for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals by expanding immediate access to culturally grounded care, reducing systemic barriers within the corrections system, and centering Indigenous leadership in reintegration planning.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

The Inquiry identified that overincarceration, and the need for culturally relevant supports, increase the risks and harms experienced by Indigenous women. In 2024–25, Correctional Service Canada and Public Safety Canada advanced several initiatives aimed at transforming federal corrections and reintegration approaches for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, in direct response to multiple Calls for Justice related to the safety, dignity, and rights of incarcerated Indigenous individuals. These initiatives aimed to make progress toward systemic change by addressing structural inequities within Canada's corrections system and strengthening Indigenous-led, culturally grounded pathways for healing, reintegration, and alternatives to incarceration, while working to eliminate systemic biases and reduce the overincarceration of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people within justice and correctional systems.

Legal supports

Access to legal services is a key condition for justice, safety, and self-determination. Indigenous partners have emphasized the need for culturally relevant legal supports across the criminal justice, family, and child welfare systems. This section outlines 2024–25 federal investments that expanded legal aid and navigation services designed to reduce barriers and uphold the rights of Indigenous individuals and families.

Highlights for 2024–25

Justice Canada's [Indigenous Courtwork Program](#) (ICW) continued to facilitate and enhance access to justice by assisting Indigenous people involved in the justice system to obtain, fair, just, equitable and culturally relevant treatment. In 2024–25:

- provisions of federal funding made to provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Service Delivery Agencies or their designates that support the mandate of the ICW program
- jurisdictions that received and cost-shared funding to support family courtwork services include Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, and Northwest Territories
- federal contributions were also made to provinces, territories and Indigenous Courtwork Service Delivery Agencies for projects that support the mandate of the ICW program

Of note, Budget 2024 renewed a commitment of \$3 million annually in funding to the Indigenous Courtwork Program for the expansion and delivery of the Indigenous Family Courtwork services.

Justice Canada's [Indigenous Justice Program](#) supported Indigenous-led civil and family mediation community-based programs that address community and family conflicts, to prevent their escalation. This has supported at-risk youth, as well as parents, and supported resolution of a range of disputes, including custody arrangements.

- From 2021–2022 to 2023–2024, \$6.8 million supported the successful completion of 47 projects.
- Budget 2024 renewed funding for civil and family mediation in the amount of \$8.7 million over 3 fiscal years 2024–25 to 2026–27 and \$2.9 million ongoing. The first year of the renewal supported 37 civil and family mediation projects.

Responsibility for criminal justice is shared between the federal government, under its authority for criminal law-making and criminal procedure, and the provincial and territorial governments, under their authority for the administration of justice. As such, both levels of government have a mutual interest in working together to ensure an effective, efficient, and fair system of justice, which includes criminal legal aid services that remain accessible to Canadians, so that public confidence in the justice system is maintained. In this context, in order to provide accessible legal aid service, Justice Canada's [Criminal Legal Aid Program](#) provided funding to strengthen its support for the delivery of criminal legal aid services in the provinces, supporting criminal and civil legal aid in the territories to economically disadvantaged persons at risk of incarceration, and to youth facing prosecution under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. Justice Canada increased the federal contribution to criminal legal aid services to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples, and other marginalized groups before the criminal courts, and further supported a justice system that remains fair and accessible to all Canadians.

Justice Canada continued providing ongoing support for the implementation of Gladue Principles in the mainstream justice system and Indigenous-led community responses in order to help reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the criminal justice system. More specifically, this funding includes the following 3 key components:

- Through the [Indigenous Justice Program](#) (IJP), \$25.4 million over 5 years and \$6.2 million ongoing to support community-based justice programs in providing post-sentence Gladue aftercare to assist individuals who have had a Gladue report in meeting the conditions of their sentence and implementing recommendations from their report

- Through the IJP, \$10 million over 5 years was dedicated to projects informed by Gladue principles that focused on educating justice professionals and changing structures, policies, practices and institutions in the criminal justice system
 - In 2024–25, IJP provided \$6,338,258 to support the work of 63 projects
- Through the [Indigenous Courtwork Program](#) (ICW) \$14 million over 5 years and \$3.5 million ongoing is provided to provinces and territories, for the production and delivery of Gladue reports
 - In 2024–25, \$3,672,163 supported cost-sharing agreements with nine provinces and territories and the development of Gladue report writing frameworks with Indigenous organizations including:
 - Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network
 - Southern Chiefs' Organization
 - Manitoba Inuit Association
 - Yorkton Tribal Administration

On March 10, 2025, the Government of Canada released its inaugural federal Indigenous Justice Strategy. This strategy establishes a shared vision and key priorities to guide ongoing collaboration among Indigenous Peoples, the federal government, and provincial and territorial partners. Its aim is to advance transformative reforms within the criminal justice system and support the revitalization of Indigenous laws and legal traditions.

Indigenous ways of knowing on justice and healing guide the strategy. It aims to consider the whole person, recognize the impact of trauma, and respect the diversity amongst Indigenous Peoples. Organized into 7 themes, it includes chapters co-developed with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners that specify unique, distinctions-based principles and priorities to further advance self-determination, community safety and the revitalization of Indigenous laws and legal orders.

Developed in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, including modern treaty and self-government partners, feedback from engagement with Indigenous women, youth, Elders, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQI+ persons, as well as urban and other Indigenous organizations and groups and justice system practitioners shaped the development of the strategy. Work also advanced in collaboration with the provinces and territories, whose continued engagement will be critical given their key role and jurisdiction in relation to the administration of justice.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal investments supported tangible improvements in access to legal supports for Indigenous individuals and families, advanced progress of Calls for Justice, invested in access to legal aid and to culturally appropriate programs and services.

Responding to Call for Justice 1.8, Justice Canada's Indigenous Family Courtwork Services has invested in projects to enhance and increase the availability of culturally appropriate justice-related services, while responding to Call for Justice 5.11 in a similar manner, by supporting projects to enhance those services, provide more Indigenous families and

individuals justice system navigation support, and increase connection to culturally appropriate justice-related services. Likewise, the Indigenous Justice Program - Civil and Family Mediation responded to Call for Justice 1.8 by funding and expanding support for Indigenous-led community justice programs, including prevention-related programming, while similarly responding to Call for Justice 5.11 by expanding support for Indigenous-led community justice programs that reflect the justice values, traditions and culture of Indigenous communities, aiming to ensure that they are safe, responsive, culturally relevant, and inclusive of restorative justice programming. Justice Canada's Criminal Legal Aid Program responded to Call for Justice 5.13 by increasing the federal contribution to criminal legal aid services to address the over-representation of vulnerable individuals, including Indigenous Peoples, before the criminal courts, and to further support a justice system that remains fair and accessible to all Canadians.

Both the Indigenous Justice Program and the Indigenous Courtwork Programs' work on the implementation of Gladue Principles responded to Call for Justice 5.11, 5.15, and 5.16 by addressing systemic racism and other forms of discrimination against Indigenous Peoples in the criminal justice system, through enhanced accessibility to meaningful and culturally appropriate programs and services, specific funding for Gladue report writing, and the delivery of community-based and Indigenous-specific Gladue aftercare programs and services.

Together, these investments targeted immediate improvements in access to legal supports and culturally grounded justice services for Indigenous individuals and families.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

In 2024–25, federal work on the co-development of the Indigenous Justice Strategy prioritized distinctions-based engagement and laying essential groundwork for systemic reform through the Indigenous Justice Strategy. Justice Canada's work on the Indigenous Justice Strategy responded to several Calls for Justice by engaging with Indigenous groups on its development, including supporting a focus on justice specific actions to address systemic discrimination and the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the justice system, whether as victims, accused or offenders. For Calls for Justice 5.1 and 5.12, this includes the justice system recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Public Inquiry into the Administration of Justice and Aboriginal People. For Call for Justice 5.10, this included discussions and support for the revitalization of Indigenous laws, legal systems and traditions. For Call for Justice 5.11, this included increasing accessibility to meaningful and culturally appropriate justice responses, healing and wellness. For Call for Justice 5.21, this included justice system recommendations such as those found in the Calls for Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), the Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, Indigenous People in the Federal Correctional System (June 2018), and the Commission of Inquiry into certain events at the Prison for Women in Kingston (1996, Arbour Report) in order to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous women and girls in the criminal justice system. It further responded to Call for Justice 5.3 by engaging with a diverse representation of Indigenous voices, including Indigenous justice experts, Elders, 2SLGBTQI+ people, women, youth, and focusing on justice specific actions to address systemic discrimination by introducing justice reforms around the issue of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence. Finally, the co-development of the Indigenous Justice Strategy also further advanced Call for Justice 9.1 and 9.2 by investing in partnerships, co-development and consultation with Indigenous women, youth, Elders, peoples with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and persons with lived experience in the justice system, to ensure that a diverse representation of voices are integrated in the development of the Indigenous Justice Strategy.

The work advanced through the Indigenous Justice System aims to mobilize systemic changes through the co-development with Indigenous partners to address systemic discrimination and the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian justice system.

Indigenous-led child welfare and protection

Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have emphasized that protecting the safety and wellbeing of children must be led by Indigenous Peoples. The overrepresentation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in child welfare systems has separated children from their families, cultures, and Nations for generations. In alignment with the Calls for Justice and Indigenous partners' priorities, the federal government has continued to advance work toward reducing these disparities and supporting the transfer of jurisdiction of child and family services to Indigenous governments and organizations.

Federal work also aligns with key Calls for Miskotahâ under Thread 4, including calls 29 through 35. These calls highlight the need for long-term reforms that recognize the harms of colonial child welfare systems and support the development of distinctions-based, Métis-led systems of child and family wellbeing. They stress the importance of prevention, kinship care, culturally informed supports, and legal recognition of Métis Nation jurisdiction. By supporting culturally appropriate services and recognizing Métis jurisdiction through the implementation of an *Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, federal efforts begin to address the intergenerational impacts of colonial child welfare systems and lay the groundwork for lasting systemic change rooted in Métis priorities.

This section highlights federal progress in 2024–25 on reducing the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in care and supporting the transition to Indigenous-led systems of child and family wellbeing.

Reducing overrepresentation of Indigenous children in child welfare and transferring of jurisdiction of child and family services to communities

Indigenous partners have consistently identified the urgent need to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in child welfare systems. Achieving this outcome requires more than improved services, it demands systemic change grounded in Indigenous jurisdiction, values, and legal traditions. In 2024–25, federal efforts responded to Calls for Justice 1.2v, 1.3, 2.2ii, 2.3, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8, 12.10, 12.11, 12.13 and 12.14, among other related distinctions based Calls for Justice, which together call for comprehensive reforms through investments in family wellbeing, support for youth, community-based prevention, culturally appropriate child welfare systems, and the recognition of Indigenous self-determination and inherent jurisdiction over child welfare.

Highlights for 2024–25

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) continued to work in collaboration with partners to support the implementation of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal orders and reform of the [First Nations Child and Family Services \(FNCFS\) program](#), and the ongoing delivery of the program.

While the final figures will be confirmed in the Government of Canada's 2024–25 Public Accounts, ISC estimates that it provided more than \$3.5 billion in 2024–25 to support the ongoing delivery of the FNCFS program, including the implementation of Canadian Human Rights Tribunal orders.

On July 11, 2024, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Chiefs of Ontario (COO), Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Canada reached a Final Agreement on the long-term reform of the FNCFS program. This agreement was rejected by the First Nations-in-Assembly in October 2024.

In February 2025, COO, NAN and Canada signed a landmark agreement to reform the FNCFS program in Ontario. In March 2025, COO and NAN filed a joint motion with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to seek its approval of the agreement and the end of its oversight over the program in Ontario. The Final Agreement represents historic and transformative change in the approach to the child and family services program and would empower First Nations to themselves determine how to best provide such services.

Ongoing engagement and relationship building will continue with First Nations partners and the provincial and the Yukon governments to transition the program to be needs based, impartial and inclusive, child-centered, community-directed, and focused on prevention and early intervention.

On January 1, 2020, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (the Act) came into force. The Act aims to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in child and family services systems; affirms the inherent right of self-government, which includes jurisdiction in relation to child and family services, and sets out principles and minimum standards applicable, on a national level, to the provision of child and family services in relation to Indigenous children. Under the framework of the Act, a pathway is available for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, groups and peoples to exercise jurisdiction and provide child and family services to their children in culturally appropriate ways that best meet their self-identified needs.

In 2024–25, the federal government continued to support the implementation of the Act by:

- providing capacity-building and engagement funding
- establishing coordination agreement discussion tables
- funding the implementation of Indigenous child and family services laws
- working with Indigenous, provincial, and territorial partners

While the final figures can only be confirmed once the Government of Canada's 2024–25 public accounts become available, ISC estimates that, since the Act came into force on January 1, 2020 and up until March 31, 2025, the department has provided over \$750 million to more than 14 Indigenous governing bodies to exercise their jurisdiction under the Act. In 2024–25, ISC estimates that more than \$90 million was provided to Indigenous groups for capacity building and participation in coordination agreement discussions.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) continued to invest in the Canadian Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS), collecting and sharing population-based data about families who have contact with the child welfare system, including children placed in out-of-home care.

In the upcoming 2024–25 report, CCWIS data has improved national coverage, including updated information from provinces, territories and ISC (custom tabulations) about children in out-of-home care. The report includes breakdowns by province/territory, year, sex/gender, age group, placement type, and legal status. In future reports, the CCWIS will aim to support some of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and begin publishing distinctions-based statistics about Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in out-of-home care.

PHAC continues to engage with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments and organizations, and collaborate with Indigenous partners to strengthen national child welfare data.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the federal government continued to invest in Indigenous-led approaches that prioritize keeping children with their families and within their communities.

The objective of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program is to support thriving First Nation children, youth, young adults, families and communities by funding eligible recipients to deliver prevention and protection services such as child protection, guardianship and support and child maintenance and care for First Nation children and families ordinarily resident on reserve or in the Yukon. To this end, the FNCFS program oversees, administers and provides contribution funding for the ongoing provision of:

- culturally appropriate prevention, including early intervention
- legislated protection services, including least disruptive measures, to respond to children at risk of harm or maltreatment, and support family preservation and well-being, including cultural and linguistic connections

As part of the reform of the FNCFS program, the program puts greater emphasis on prevention services and supports at the community level delivered by First Nations. As a result, prevention services and First Nations representative services are designed and delivered in a flexible, community-led, needs based manner aimed at supporting services that build resilience, and mitigating community, family, and child risk factors.

At the same time, federal government investments in the implementation of *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* supported coordination agreement discussions with partners, capacity-building and engagement, and the implementation of Indigenous child and family services laws and associated service delivery models grounded in Indigenous values and culture.

The work on the Canadian Child Welfare Information System helps to advance Call for Justice 12.4 and 16.6, by ensuring that data exists to monitor progress on the calls. Investments in the CCWIS has resulted in the development of critical partnerships that are necessary to securing and reporting on disaggregated data to support the goal of upholding the rights of children and youth over time.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families (the Act) specifically states that, in the context of child and family services, to the extent that it is consistent with the best interests of the child, an Indigenous child cannot be apprehended based solely on socio-economic conditions, including lack of adequate housing. The implementation of *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* represented a fundamental reconfiguration of jurisdictional relationships, by providing a pathway for Indigenous groups, communities and peoples to develop their own child and family service laws and deliver services under their own governing structures. In some circumstances, Indigenous laws enacted through the framework of the Act can receive force of federal law and prevail over most federal, provincial and territorial laws in the event of a conflict or inconsistency.

The Act introduces national principles — cultural continuity, substantive equality, and of the best interest of the child — that must be upheld by all service providers in the delivery of child and family services to Indigenous children and families. As part of the implementation of the Act, a unique, holistic, and community-driven process has been put in place for groups, communities, or peoples to move towards the development of laws and exercise of jurisdiction over child and family services. This process has included:

- distinctions-based governance engagement mechanisms for partners to discuss high-level policy issues relating to transition and effective implementation of the Act
- funding to support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, groups, and people and Indigenous governing bodies to develop capacity to implement their child and family service delivery plans
- establishing tripartite coordination agreement discussion tables
- committing to fiscal arrangements, that are sustainable, needs-based and consistent with the principle of substantive equality

The implementation of the Act contributes to ensuring that Indigenous children in care have access to their families and kinship systems, culture and language, and culturally relevant services. Per the national principles and minimum standards in the Act, all service providers are required to prioritize family unity and cultural continuity, including ensuring access to languages, cultures, practices, customs, traditions, ceremonies and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples.

As it relates to federal progress towards systemic change, continued federal support for and investments in the implementation of the Act reflect a continued commitment to self-determination. In the case of First Nations that previously received child and family services funded through Indigenous Services Canada's First Nation Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program but who are now receiving services through an Indigenous governing body exercising jurisdiction under the Act, the Act also demonstrates Canada's commitment to the transfer of responsibilities to First Nations communities. By investing in Indigenous-led solutions and affirming the right of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples to exercise jurisdiction in relation to child and family services, the federal government is supporting the restoration of systems of care rooted in Indigenous laws, values, and relationships. Continued progress will require sustained, distinctions-based support, and a long-term commitment to reconciliation.

The Child and Family Services Program as a whole (which encompasses the First Nations Child and Family Services program and the implementation of *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, youth and families*) presents a continuum of the transfer of responsibilities to First Nations communities. In this model, some initiatives within the FNCFS

program represent a partial transfer of responsibilities starting with greater flexibility in the design and delivery under prevention and community supports. Prevention funding under the FNCFS program promotes First Nation self-determination in deciding which prevention services are necessary for safety and well-being based on the unique needs, circumstances and lived realities of their children, youth, young adults, and families in their communities, and, who the most appropriate service provider(s) are to meet these unique needs. Self-determined prevention services are key to supporting holistic and positive outcomes, and are the cornerstone of the long-term reform of the FNCFS program. This approach ensures that FNCFS services are community-based, evidence-informed, culturally appropriate and leverage the First Nation's own caring approaches, in their best interests, and, are working to address the structural drivers and root causes that place children, youth, and families at risk of child and family services intervention and are largely outside of their caregivers' control (such as poverty, poor housing, multi-generational trauma and intimate partner violence). The next step in the progression for transfer of child and family services activities occurs when a First Nation determines it will exercise jurisdiction for their Nations' child and family services under the Act. While progress is ongoing, these actions signify an important movement toward dismantling colonial structures in child welfare and advancing reconciliation through tangible, community-led change.

Finally, the Public Health Agency of Canada continued to engage First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments and organizations on the Canadian Child Welfare Information System to support culturally-appropriate data interpretation, improve precision of reporting on key indicators at the national, provincial, and territorial level, contribute to the evidence base for health related policy and programming initiatives, and support the responses to federal initiatives such as responding the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice. Addressing gaps in disaggregated distinctions-based data, as well as Indigenous-led and Indigenous-governed data, have been identified as a requirement for understanding the broad and nuanced systemic reality has perpetuated the MMIWG2S+ crisis. In 2024, PHAC's work supported the first report on rates of out-of-home care among children in Canada was released. This was a crucial first step towards advancing future reporting based on the unique experiences of First Nations, Inuit, or Métis children and youth over time. With this step, incremental progress has been made towards overcoming gaps in data that, in turn, will support upholding the rights of children and youth over time.

Culture and language revitalization

Survivors, families, and Indigenous partners have consistently affirmed that the revitalization of and access to Indigenous cultures and languages is inseparable from healing, safety, and justice. Cultural continuity strengthens identity, supports intergenerational wellness, and provides essential foundations for community-led recovery from violence and systemic marginalization. In response to these priorities and the Calls for Justice, the federal government has invested in a range of Indigenous-led initiatives, all of which support access to cultural knowledge, language revitalization, and culturally safe public services.

In 2024–25, federal investments to support Indigenous cultural knowledge, language revitalization, and culturally safe services align with several Calls for Miskotahâ under Thread 3, including calls 17, 18, 19, 21, and 26. These calls emphasize the importance of cultural continuity as a foundation for healing, safety, and justice for Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Investments that increase access to traditional teachings and language, and the delivery of culturally safe services developed by Métis communities reflect an understanding that reclaiming culture is integral to ending systemic violence and respecting Métis self-determination.

Access to cultures and language — Education initiatives

Indigenous communities have identified cultural expression, ceremony, and land-based knowledge as integral to wellbeing and healing. Partners have also highlighted the importance of language as an expression of identity and worldview, and as a connector to history and culture.

This section highlights how the federal government has supported education initiatives that provide cultural programming, including funding for community-led language programs, curriculum development, and intergenerational language transmission.

Highlights for 2024–25

The [Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Transformation Initiative](#) (IELCC) continued to work to ensure all Indigenous children experience high-quality, culturally appropriate early learning and child care, and supported ongoing collaborative work with Indigenous partners to reflect the unique cultures, aspirations and needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation children and families across Canada. In 2024–25, the Government of Canada invested \$733 million in Indigenous-led childcare programs and services and an additional \$80 million for urgent repairs and renovations. An additional \$16 million supported 37 projects, including:

- \$11.6 million to 26 First Nations projects, including \$0.6 million to the B.C. Indigenous Early Learning Resource and Education Program operated by Qualicum First Nation, which created 331 Indigenous themed culture kits containing Indigenous materials and resources for use in early years programs, distributed kits to 42 Child Care Resource and Referral sites across British Columbia (BC), conducted 16 workshops and training opportunities for educators, community partners and IELCC staff at 16 locations throughout BC, and developed tools training that support IELCC staff who work with children with special needs

- \$0.65 million to the Improving Early Learning and Child Care Quality for Indigenous Children with Disabilities in Nunavut operated by the Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society, which conducted a needs assessment to identify gaps for children with disabilities, engaged families with children with disabilities in the development of an inclusive child care system, culturally relevant curricula and training on inclusive programs, and establishment of a quality assurance and evaluation process that ensures that programs meet the unique needs of children with disabilities
- \$1.6 million to 3 Métis projects, including \$0.56 million to the Enriching Métis Early Learners & Creating Metis-Specific Early Learning Tools operated by Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, which worked to develop high quality, culturally relevant and accessible tools and resources for Métis early learners and IELCC staff across the Métis Homeland
- \$1.4 million to 6 Urban Indigenous projects, including \$0.67 million to the Developing a Wholistic Urban Indigenous ELCC Framework & Service System Transformation operated by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, that developed a Friendship Centre governance model to define what high-quality Indigenous early learning and child care means to First Nations, Inuit and Métis
- \$0.6 million to the 2-Spirit Children and Caregiver Knowledge Sharing Project operated by the 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations, that provided a 2-Spirit specific resource guide and Indigenous-focused, 2-Spirit-specific Child and Caregiver training based on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis teachings, providing culturally appropriate care and early learning child care programming for both the 2-Spirit Children and Caregiver

The [Aboriginal Head Start](#) programs, led by Indigenous Services Canada the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), continued to support the delivery of community-based programming for children aged 0-6 and their families across key areas (including culture and language, health promotion, nutrition, social support, and others) that integrates Indigenous traditions, languages and practices, and in doing so, strengthened cultural pride and community connection. In 2024–25, these programs:

- invested over \$100 million towards providing culturally grounded early learning opportunities developed in collaboration and consultation with Indigenous partners
- engaged with Indigenous partners on the co-design of culturally relevant programming to ensure that services meet community-specific needs
- strengthened the PHAC partnership with the National Aboriginal Head Start Association of Canada and regional AHSUNC governance bodies to support the long-term goal of transitioning to Indigenous led management of the program
- supported First Nations design and delivery of the Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve program in their communities

Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) [Elementary and Secondary Education Program](#) continued to provide funding to support First Nations control of First Nations education and the delivery of kindergarten to grade 12 educational services for all eligible students ordinarily resident on reserve. In 2024–25:

- \$275.7 million announced in Budget 2024 was invested to improve elementary and secondary education on reserve, and ensure funding formulas meet the needs of growing communities
- \$103 million announced in Budget 2021 was invested to increase access to on-reserve before- and after-school programming
- over 93% of students attending First Nations administered schools received instruction in at least 1 subject in a First Nations language
- over 8,260 students having access to full-time kindergarten

Since 2022–23, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) has expanded support for First Nations adult learners on reserve to prepare for, complete, or upgrade their secondary education. This initiative ensures that First Nations learners in regions where adult secondary education was already supported continue to receive funding through the ISC Elementary and Secondary Education program.

Additionally, ISC has introduced the [First Nations Adult Education in Yukon and Northwest Territories Program](#) to support local program development and delivery, and to provide enhanced student supports to improve access to education in the North. Budget 2021 announced \$350 million over 5 years to ensure all First Nations across the country have access to supports for adult education regardless of provincial levels of support. In 2024–25:

- a total allocation of \$60.1 million was distributed in support of Adult Education programming
- engagement with partners was ongoing to update guidelines, frequently asked questions/ questions and answers, and data collection instruments, as appropriate; and, to continue to promote the activities eligible under the investment and seek out success stories and best practices at the community level

Indigenous Services Canada's [First Nations and Inuit Cultural Education Centres Program](#) continued to support First Nations and Inuit communities in expressing, preserving, developing, revitalizing and promoting their cultural heritage, through the establishment and operation of First Nations and Inuit cultural education centres on and off reserve. In 2024–25, investments included \$9.4 million in support of eligible recipients such as First Nations or Inuit organizations with a cultural education centre on or off reserve and First Nation cultural education centres.

The [Inuit Cultural Education Centres Grant Program](#) provides grants to Inuit individuals and community-based Inuit cultural education centres to develop and promote Inuit cultural heritage. In 2024–25, investments included \$45,000 in support of eligible recipients such as Inuit individuals ordinarily resident in Nunatsiavut, Labrador, Nunavik, Quebec, Nunavut or Inuvialuit Settlement Region in Northwest Territories, and community-based Inuit cultural education centres.

CIRNAC's renewed its support for the [Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning](#) with an additional \$5.2 million over 2 years, starting in 2024. This investment supported Dechinta to provide programming that combined land-based post-secondary education with Indigenous governance, law, language, and wellness teachings. While Dechinta is not an Indigenous-run post-secondary education institute, it used the funding from CIRNAC to introduce Indigenous individuals to post-secondary education through land-based university level courses, in their own communities, culture and language. Investments also provided students with wraparound support, including mental health, academic, logistical, communications and administrative supports.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal initiatives supported immediate improvements to ensure access to Indigenous knowledges, cultures and languages by investing in education and learning opportunities for First Nations, Métis, Inuit, as well as urban and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

The Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Transformation Initiative responded to Call for Justice 2.3. It supported families and children with a coordinated system of flexible Indigenous early learning and child care policies, programs and services that are led by Indigenous Peoples, and rooted in Indigenous knowledges, cultures and languages. The initiative enables Indigenous-led holistic curriculum development, integrates Indigenous languages into child care settings, and invests in safe, community-based, culturally appropriate child care spaces that strengthen intergenerational connections and reflect communities' identities, needs, and values. Where the Early Learning and Child Care Transformation Initiative responded to Calls for Justice 16.4, 16.21, 16.25, 17.26, and funded comprehensive culturally-sensitive Inuit and Métis-led early learning and child care programs and services with the intention of responding to the unique needs and priorities of families and children in their communities, the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities Program invested in Inuit-led culturally relevant programming that integrates and promotes health and healing within educational systems. Likewise, in response to Calls for Justice 16.4, and 16.25, the First Nations and Inuit Cultural Education Centres Program, and the Inuit Cultural Education Centres Grant Program both supported Inuit communities through the operation of cultural education centers that reflect Inuit culture, language and heritage.

Responding to Call for Justice 2.3, the Elementary and Secondary Education Program implemented a new co-developed policy and funding approach that includes additional support for language and cultural programming for students attending First Nations-administered schools. Additionally, the approach provided funding that is based on what students receive in provincial schools, plus adaptations and additional national common investments, such as before- and after-school programming. Further, First Nations Adult Education programming can include funding for improved access to language and culture, in support of life-long learning.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Program also responds to Call for Justice 4.4 by providing resources and supports that help create equitable educational opportunities for First Nations students in their communities including First Nations women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, and before- and after-school programming by providing support for parents and primary caregivers in balancing work and family, and reducing barriers by providing more opportunities for young parents to attend school or enter and remain in the workforce.

Responding to Calls for Justice 2.3, 4.4, 7.4, 16.21, and 16.25, the Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning's work provides access to land-based teachings that meet the unique needs of Inuit and Inuvialuit communities, introducing Indigenous individuals to post-secondary education through land-based university level courses, in their own communities, culture and language, and supporting their ongoing success through wraparound supports.

Together, these efforts illustrate the federal government's commitment to responding to the Calls for Justice that aim to restore wellness, dignity and connection to identity among Indigenous Peoples by providing access to education that is grounded in distinctions-based cultural programming and language offerings.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Systemic change in this area also plays a preventative role in contributing to addressing the root causes of the MMIWG2S+ crisis. Historic and ongoing disruptions to Indigenous languages, knowledge systems, and family structures have contributed to disconnection, marginalization, and elevated risks of violence, particularly for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Expanding access to culture through education helps mitigate these risks by reinforcing identity, belonging, and relational accountability within communities.

Initiatives that are Indigenous-led and promote cultural revitalization serve not only to strengthen community wellness but also to support conditions that reduce vulnerability and improve safety outcomes.

With this in mind, highlighting the work of the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Transformation Initiative provides an opportunity to examine the structural system changes that are yielding improved distinctions-based programming. The Transformation Initiative represents a pivotal shift in federal policy, shifting implementation from 'federally-led' to one that is 'Indigenous-led' and federally enabled, which may in turn lead to the eventual transfer of authority to Indigenous entities at a pace of their choosing. The Transformation Initiative coordinates activities across Employment and Social Development Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, and the Public Health Agency of Canada, and serves as the federal focal point to support this shift and transfer of jurisdiction of authorities over time. Likewise, while the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities Program (AHSUNC) is federally administered by the Public Health Agency of Canada, there are ongoing efforts to support the transfer of jurisdiction of services to Indigenous-led organizations. This approach aligns with Canada's commitment to reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination by ensuring communities have greater control over program design, delivery, and decision-making. In this way, transferring jurisdiction of the administration of AHSUNC is being advanced through strengthened partnerships with Indigenous organizations, capacity-building initiatives, and funding arrangements that prioritize Indigenous governance. In this way, these initiatives mark a transformational systemic change that supports culturally grounded Indigenous-led resolution of a range of health and social disparities faced by Indigenous populations over time.

Access to cultures and language— Arts and heritage initiatives

This section highlights 2024–25 federal support across a range of Indigenous arts and heritage initiatives, including funding Indigenous culture and language preservation and revitalization.

Highlights for 2024–25 — Access through arts and heritage initiatives

The [We Are Here: Sharing Stories](#) initiative continued to increase access to Library and Archives Canada's archival and published holdings pertaining to Indigenous culture, heritage and history through digitization, with the goal of increasing awareness of the rich and diverse histories of Canada's Indigenous Peoples.

- By December 2024, the initiative completed digitization of a total of over 780,900 images of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis holdings at Library and Archives Canada.
- A subset of these images have been uploaded online or shared directly with Indigenous projects including 53 different collections and work orders.
- In 2024–25, engagement with a range of partners including the Metis Archival Project, Native Brotherhood, Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the Indigenous Advisory Circle often resulted in the transfer digitized content directly to these organizations for them to use in their own projects.

The Indigenous Screen Office is an independent, not-for-profit, Indigenous-led funding organization serving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis creators of audiovisual content in Canada. The Indigenous Screen Office delivers Canadian Heritage's [Indigenous Screen Office Program](#), which supports Indigenous audiovisual projects in any format, such as film, television,

podcasts, and video games. Budget 2024 allocated \$65 million in new funding over 5 years, starting in 2024–25, and \$13 million in ongoing annual funding. In 2023–24, \$11.3 million supported 236 projects - including:

- \$7.98 million to 174 First Nations projects, which included projects such as the White Lies Interactive Music Video by Gaayangaay Productions LTD in British Columbia, and Angela's Shadow by Chakastetin Production in British Columbia
- \$678,000 to 13 Inuit projects, which included projects, such as At the Cabin Season Two by Igluralaaq 2 Inc, in Nunavut, a preschool series that showcases Inuit language, arts, cultures and values, and Uqqaruk, by Naniq Media Inc, in Nunavut, an animated and live-action children's series that showcases the Inuinnaqtun language and is hosted by Inuit musicians and cultural performers
- \$2.65 million to 48 Métis projects, which included projects like Blood Lines, by Assini Productions Inc., and Night Market, in Manitoba, a production about love that touches on taboo, blood and Indigenous history, that gives a platform both to Indigenous and 2SLGBTQI+ communities, vendors, businesses, cast and crew — elevating them both in front of and behind the camera.
- among these First Nations, Inuit, and Métis projects, 58 projects also served urban Indigenous populations while 21 projects served Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ populations

In addition to audiovisual content creation, Canadian Heritage is also supporting Indigenous participation in arts training. The department reported that part of the \$5 million increase to the [Canada Arts Training Fund](#) is being used to increase funding to existing Indigenous recipients, including engagement with Indigenous communities to develop and support new Indigenous arts training programs. In 2024–25, \$785,000 was invested into 9 new and recurring projects, including:

- \$250,000 to the Wabanaki Arts Training Program operated by Mawi'Art: Wabanaki Artist Collective, the only Indigenous-led, pan Atlantic arts organization operating across Wabanaki territory, and offering training in Wabanaki customary art practices
- \$200,000 to the Intercultural Indigenous Dance Program operated by the Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada's Atlantic Ballet Indigenous initiative. The dance program is an Indigenous-led program that celebrates Indigenous voices and creative practice and is open to emerging Indigenous artists from Wolastoq and Mi'kmaq Nations in grades 11 and 12

Through [Listen, Hear our Voices](#), Library and Archives Canada provides funds to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments and organizations in digitizing documentary heritage related to Indigenous languages and cultures and building the skills, knowledge and resources to do this work in their communities. In 2024–25, \$1.18 million was invested in 26 projects, including:

- investments in First Nations specific projects, including \$78,385 in the These Stories Have Walked a Long Way II by the First Nations University of Canada, a historic archival recordings project that incorporates rich Plains Cree vocabulary and cultural content; and \$54,255 in Dwadwenaga:da:t (We Raise Up Our Words) Digitization Project - Michael Foster Collection by the Woodland Cultural Centre, a project that provides a cohesive narrative for community members and individuals interested in the Gayogohó:nq? (Cayuga) language

- investments in Inuit specific projects, including \$82,200 in the Iqqamavavut: "We Remember Them" Archival Project, by the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation, and \$50,000 in the Digitizing Photographs from Inuvialuit Oral History Projects by Inuvialuit Cultural Centre Pitquhiit-Pitqusiit
- investments in Métis-specific projects, including \$40,157 in the Gathering Together Archive by the Kinistino Métis Local 43, that worked to digitize the research collections of Art Pilling

Finally, Canadian Heritage's [Indigenous Language Program](#) continued to support the efforts of Indigenous Peoples to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen Indigenous languages and to strengthen their languages.

- Budget 2024 allocated \$225 million for 5 years and \$45 million in annual ongoing funding. With this new funding, the Government of Canada will have invested over \$1 billion from 2019–20 to 2028–29 to support the efforts of Indigenous communities and organizations in revitalizing their Indigenous languages.
- In 2024–25, building on the multi-year agreements established in 2023–24, the program continued working with the 4 First Nations regionally designated organizations in British Columbia, Ontario, Québec and Nova Scotia, the 4 Inuit land-claim organizations and 5 regional Métis organizations in the implementation of these 5-year agreements to support their respective regional language strategies. In addition, in 2024–25, the program also concluded a new multi-year agreement with the Cree Nation Government in Québec for their language revitalization initiatives. The program also provides funding for First Nations communities and organizations in the other regions for projects chosen by a First Nations Review Committee, in addition to supporting multi-distinction and urban Indigenous organizations for language revitalization projects serving urban Indigenous populations.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal initiatives supported immediate access to Indigenous knowledges, cultures and language revitalization by investing in arts and cultural heritage programs for First Nations, Métis, Inuit, as well as urban and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Federal support for the We Are Here: Sharing Stories helped ensure Library and Archives Canada's holdings pertaining to Indigenous culture, heritage and history became more accessible through digitization. The goal of creating increased access to archival and published holdings is to improve awareness of the rich and diverse histories of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, not just for the benefit of the general public, but with specific resources allotted to ensure Indigenous communities and individuals had access to the records that reflect them. Through parallel and intersecting work that responded to Calls for Justice 2.2ii, 2.4, 2.5, 16.28, and 17.25, Listen, Hear our Voices funding supported the preservation, protection, and sharing of Indigenous languages and cultural heritage. This initiative invested to strengthen cultural knowledge transfer across First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, and prioritizes the digitization of materials related to Indigenous languages and cultures in order to ensure long term preservation and accessibility for future generations.

Responding to Calls for Justice 2.7 and 6.1, the Indigenous Screen Office supports Indigenous creators, improves the representation of Indigenous Peoples in media, and invests in the sharing of authentic Indigenous stories in the audiovisual sector, including those of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. With investments of \$11.3 million in the 2023–24 fiscal year, federal government funding has supported the vision and creative development of 236 projects, amplified the stories these projects present, and supported the creativity

and authentic storytelling of their Indigenous creators. In response to Call for Justice 2.2ii, the increased funding to the Canada Arts Training Program included specific funds allocated to support Indigenous training programs, which played a significant role in the revitalization of Indigenous cultures and languages, as well as supporting immediate and systemic changes. While they offer the immediate benefits of formal training in professional arts practices, they also provide connection, and in some cases, reconnection, between Indigenous students and their traditional cultural practices, stories, and languages.

Finally, in response to Calls for Justice 2.2ii, 2.3, 2.4, the Indigenous Language Program funded multi-year strategies and projects for the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Indigenous languages to support greater autonomy and better responsiveness to unique needs through the new jointly developed distinctions-based funding model and funds digitization of interviews with Knowledge Keepers and language speakers. In response to Calls for Justice 16.2 and 16.25, the Indigenous Language Program also:

- advanced work and supported pilot projects to ensure access of federal services in Inuktitut in Nunavut
- signed 4 separate agreements for each of the found Inuit land-claim organizations so that unique multi-year language strategies are supported in each of the 4 Inuit regions
- contributed funds to a Tripartite Agreement with the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to increase the number of educators who can speak Inuktitut in the Government of Nunavut education system

As the National Inquiry makes clear, culture and language act as protective factors against violence, as they improve access to key services, ensure the cohesion and continuity of Indigenous communities, and protect the Indigenous ways of life that have protected Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people for centuries. Through these investments and actions, the federal government followed through on advancing the Calls for Justice that require it to support the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Indigenous cultures and languages as a critical investment in culture and as a critical preventative measure in the context of the MMIWG2S+ crisis.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Together, these initiatives invested in expanding immediate access to Indigenous cultures through local, distinctions-based programming that reflects the unique histories, governance systems, and identities of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples from coast to coast to coast.

These investments supported opportunities for Indigenous families, survivors and communities to reconnect with cultural roots, and to facilitate access to culture and language where obstacles may have previously hindered participation. For instance, the federal government's investments into the Canada Arts Training Fund supports the development of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis artists and future cultural leaders and provides funding to overcome the variety of barriers Indigenous Peoples face when entering arts training to reduce barriers to participation for all participants, the Indigenous training programs offered by Canada Arts Training Fund recipients are often delivered by Indigenous organizations. Other investments amplify Indigenous stories and improve visibility among marginalized groups. For instance, Canadian Heritage's support for the Indigenous Screen Office aimed to strengthen Indigenous cultural expression, promoted identity affirmation, cultural storytelling, and gender-inclusive representation. In addition, Canadian Heritage's Indigenous Language Program replaced short-term calls for proposals with long-term, distinctions-based funding models that embed Indigenous control over language revitalization. These

programs contributed to the restoration and protection of Indigenous cultures and languages, to improving visibility and recognition of Indigenous experiences, including those of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, and to helping disrupt harmful stereotypes that have historically contributed to marginalization.

Overall, these efforts towards Indigenous cultural and linguistic revitalization are designed to be sustainable, distinctions-based, and community-led. Not only do they aim to support cultural resurgence, by investing to address the historic erasure of vibrant Indigenous stories, cultures and languages with substantive investments, but also to support safety – by strengthening the social conditions that uphold and celebrate the dignity, agency, identity and cultures of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Housing and infrastructure

Access to safe, adequate, and culturally appropriate housing and infrastructure is a foundational determinant of safety and wellbeing. Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have consistently identified the urgent need to close long-standing gaps in housing access, infrastructure funding, and basic services, including transportation and connectivity. In alignment with a range of Calls for Justice, the federal government invested in a range of distinctions-based initiatives aimed at improving housing stability, building and maintaining critical infrastructure, and supporting access to essential services.

In 2024–25, federal investments in housing, infrastructure, transportation, and connectivity advanced some of the Calls for Miskotahâ, including responding to calls 20, 25, and 28. These calls highlight the urgent need for safe crisis housing, equitable access to services across the Motherland, and culturally grounded facilities. By addressing longstanding gaps in access to safe shelter and related infrastructure for service delivery across urban, rural, and remote areas, federal action has begun to respond to Métis-identified priorities, investing in the physical foundation for lasting healing and systemic change.

This section highlights federal action over the fiscal year across 4 priority subthemes, and provides an overview of progress made to address immediate needs while contributing to long-term, community-led solutions that reflect Indigenous definitions of safety, sustainability, and self-determination.

Improving access to housing and reducing homelessness

Safe, stable housing is essential to preventing harm and reducing vulnerability to violence, displacement, and systemic exclusion. This section highlights federal investments made in 2024–25 to support Indigenous-led housing development, expand culturally appropriate shelter and transitional housing options, and reduce chronic homelessness through distinctions-based strategies.

Highlights for 2024–25

Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada leads the [National Housing Strategy](#) (NHS) while Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation administers several programs within the NHS. The NHS is an over 10-year, \$115 billion plan to give more people in Canada a place to call home. This strategy continues to be informed by engagement and consultations with partners and stakeholders, and as of March 31, 2025, the entirety of the NHS has committed \$65.84 billion to a range of complementary programs and initiatives that address diverse needs across the entire housing continuum, and through these programs and initiatives responded to Calls for Justice 4.1, 4.6, 4.7, 12.4, 16.1, 16.19, 17.20, 18.24, 18.25.

As of March 31st, 2025, the National Housing Strategy has invested:

- \$353.51 million has been conditionally or financially committed through the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative towards the construction of 37 new shelters and 36 new transitional homes for Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people escaping gender-based violence
- \$138.1 million through the Affordable Housing Fund (formerly called the National Housing Co-Investment Fund) has been set aside for exclusive funding to Indigenous and Northern Housing. As of March 31, 2025, funding that has been committed includes:
 - \$24.96 million has been conditionally or financially committed toward the repair of 572 units of urban Indigenous housing stock
 - \$13.1 million for 2 emergency shelters in the territories
 - \$100 million and an additional \$30.65 million in funding has been conditionally or financially committed to support the development of 377 new units in the Northwest Territories and Yukon
- \$200 million through the Canada Community Housing Initiative delivered by provinces and territories under the NHS Bilateral Agreements, to support 7,000 units in the existing urban Indigenous community housing stock so the units continue to be made available to low-income households. Provinces and territories have maintained 4,723 and ensured 3,434 urban Indigenous housing units are in good condition [Footnote1](#)
- \$300 million through funding for the territories, as part of the \$606.6 million federal-territorial joint investment, to be delivered by the territories, under the NHS Bilateral Agreements
- \$896 million through Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy
- \$1.2 billion in funding over 9 years (2019–20 to 2027–28) through the Indigenous Homelessness stream and through Distinctions-based Approaches of Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy

Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada's [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy](#) continued to build and maintain relationships with Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, to advance discussions and collaboration on culturally-appropriate solutions to key policy and priority issues on homelessness. In 2024–25, Reaching Home addressed Indigenous homelessness with investments across 2 Indigenous-specific funding streams:

- \$52.4 million to the Distinctions-based Approaches Stream, which is currently working in collaboration across all distinctions (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), including providing direct funding to Self-Governing First Nations
- \$110 million to the Indigenous Homelessness Stream, which is currently funding 30 urban and/or rural communities, and 7 regional areas.

The Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy (URN Strategy) is intended to complement the existing distinctions-based housing strategies and to narrow the gap in core housing need between Indigenous and non-Indigenous households in urban, rural, and northern areas. Notably, the URN Strategy committed to:

- establishing of a new National Indigenous Housing Centre
- distributing \$4 billion over 7 years starting in 2024–25 through the National Indigenous Housing Centre and through agreements with distinctions-based groups for Indigenous Peoples residing in urban, rural and northern areas

To that end, in 2024–25, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation undertook the following activities in support of the U.R.N. Strategy:

- launched a request for proposal process to establish the new National Centre
- established funding agreements with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis partners and Modern Treaty and Self-Governing First Nations
- established 14 funding agreements that support Indigenous-led engagement by partners seeking the views of their members, citizens, and beneficiaries on priorities and plans for their respective 7-year housing funding streams

CIRNAC also undertook a variety of activities in support of the URN Strategy. These activities primarily focused on the establishment of funding agreements with distinctions-based partners, establishing action/housing plans and flowing funds to recipients.

CIRNAC's Métis Housing Investment provided distinctions-based funding to Métis Nation governments to address core housing needs, support maintenance and repair of existing housing stock to help improve energy efficiency and extend its lifespan, and construct new higher quality housing designed by Indigenous partners adapted to local environmental circumstances.

- In 2024–25, \$61.2 million in funding was provided to the Métis Nation British Columbia, Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, Manitoba Métis Federation, Métis Nation of Ontario, and Metis Settlements General Council. This funding was used to construct/purchase 290 units and renovate 1924 units, provide downpayment assistance for 2118 units, and provide rent subsidies for 1405 units.

At the same time, CIRNAC's Inuit Housing Investment provides housing funds for Inuit Treaty Organizations whereby Inuit determined how best to address Inuit housing priorities and needs. For 2024–25, based on annual averages, Inuit Treaty Organizations were projected to construct 60 units and repair 40 units.

In 2024–25, the Modern Treaty and Self-Governing First Nations Housing Investment invested \$119.17 million across Modern Treaty and Self-Governing First Nations in addressing housing gaps in their communities in accordance with community priorities.

The Affordable Housing in the North's offered support to territorial governments during fiscal year 2022–23 and 2023–24 by supplementing funding provided through the National Housing Strategy to address essential housing and infrastructure needs in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. This support was administered through flexible, grant-based funding managed by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). This initiative is designed to complement other federal programs to enhance housing availability and quality, with an emphasis on affordability and sustainability in northern communities. Territorial partners indicated that the funds that were fully committed as of 2024 were an important resource, particularly with respect to expanding, improving and preserving existing social housing stock and by extension addressing the housing needs of the most vulnerable northerners.

In the Northwest Territories (NWT), Housing NWT reported CIRNAC investment was a much needed and appreciated infusion of funds that directly supported Housing NWT's mandate to increase the number affordable housing units in the territory, and address much-needed repairs to aging housing infrastructure. Key investments included the:

- the construction of new public housing units for residents with disabilities in rural and remote communities
- the implementation of major modernization and repair projects to sustain and preserve existing public housing stock
- the installation of medium-scale biomass district heating systems at 2 seniors' public housing complexes (33 units) as part of alternative energy initiatives
- increased investments through the Community Housing Support Initiative to advance community-based housing projects, support the development of Community Housing Plans, and provide unit maintenance funding to third-party affordable housing providers
- additional investments to strengthen training initiatives for Local Housing Organizations in areas such as maintenance and financial services

In Nunavut, grant funding was used by the Nunavut Housing Corporation towards expanding and improving their social housing program and stock, and included:

- the construction of new public housing units in 7 remote communities
- the purchase and installation of several modular housing units across various communities
- the implementation of major mold remediation projects to preserve existing housing stock
- upgrades and improvements to existing public and staff housing in all regions

In the Yukon, grant funding provided to the Yukon Government supported the development of a mixed-use housing and health centre initiative in Old Crow, the most remote community in the territory, and the successful completion of a 10-unit mixed housing facility and health centre on Vuntut Gwitchin Settlement Lands.

The Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada (HICC)'s Action Research on Chronic Homelessness (ARCH) initiative supported 8 action research projects across the country, in:

- Whitehorse, Yukon
- Medicine Hat, Alberta
- Edmonton, Alberta
- Brandon, Manitoba
- Sudbury, Ontario
- Hamilton, Ontario
- London, Ontario;
- Fredericton, New Brunswick

The objective of these projects is to contribute to the prevention and reduction of chronic homelessness. Some examples of relevant projects in supporting Indigenous communities and enhancing access to Indigenous-led, culturally-informed solutions to addressing chronic homelessness are highlighted below.

- ARCH Brandon, led by the Brandon Renewal Neighbourhood Corporation, created and is piloting a number of solutions based on the needs and lived experiences of local community members, including the development of a local Indigenous-led women's safe house with a focus on preventing harm and/or death of Indigenous women experiencing homelessness or at risk of imminent harm.
- ARCH Sudbury, led by the City of Sudbury with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, is developing solutions to improve systems alignment with the child welfare system and outcomes for Indigenous youth, including a network of key organizations that interact with youth transitioning out of child welfare and a shared database to facilitate coordination across agencies.
- ARCH Hamilton, led by the Coalition of Hamilton Indigenous Leadership and the City of Hamilton, is developing the Indigenous Cultural Capacity and Accountability Framework for the homelessness sector in Hamilton, focusing on data and service provision approaches with Indigenous communities.
- ARCH London, led by Atlohsa Family Healing Services and the City of London, examined local Indigenous approaches to Coordinated Access in London, including systems-change solutions to improve housing and wellness outcomes for Indigenous Peoples experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- ARCH Medicine Hat, led by Medicine Hat Community Housing Society, Miywasin Friendship Centre, and other partners, piloted a supportive housing site for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness with complex needs, incorporating Indigenous perspectives and cultural supports and building strong connections with the healthcare sector.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the federal government continued to advance its commitments under the Calls for Justice by supporting Indigenous-led approaches to housing and homelessness, recognizing safe, stable, and culturally appropriate housing as essential to the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Responding to Calls for Justice 4.1, 4.6, 4.7, and other distinctions-specific calls, the National Housing Strategy, the Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy and Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy all continued to work, invest and support direct improvements in basic needs, housing access, quality, and coordination for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities through distinctions-based strategies and Indigenous-led delivery models. Whether investing to improve housing conditions in Inuit communities, or improving access to safe, stable housing for Métis women and 2SLGBTQI+ people, these initiatives worked together to support immediate protection for those at risk of harm as result of homelessness or unsafe housing instability. The same Calls for Justice were advanced through the Inuit Housing Investment, Métis Housing Investment, Self-Governing and Modern Treaty First Nations Housing Investment, and made distinctions-based funding investments into housing programs and housing prioritization decisions based on their populations unique needs. The investments intended to support safe housing, services and infrastructure that meet the unique social and economic needs of the populations they serve.

Responding to Calls for Action 4.1, 4.7, 12.4, 18.25, the Action Research on Chronic Homelessness Initiative funded the development and implementation of best practices, tools, and services that can contribute to prevention and reduction of Indigenous homelessness, including by enhancing accessibility to culturally appropriate supports and services. It supported the testing of services that seek to prevent and reduce Indigenous homelessness, including testing ways to improve coordination between the child welfare system and supports to

better address the needs of Indigenous youth. Several projects feature interviews with 2SLGBTQI+ people with lived experience of homelessness, which may result in changes to the projects to incorporate specific needs of this community.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Simultaneously, the National Housing Strategy, the Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy reflect that housing is a foundational condition of safety, healing, and Indigenous self-determination. Through distinctions-based partnerships and Indigenous-led solutions, the Inuit Housing Investment, Métis Housing Investment, Self-Governing and Modern Treaty First Nations Housing Investment, are contributing to reshaping the housing landscape in ways that aim to address systemic exclusion and create lasting change for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Supporting Indigenous leadership on housing priorities and decisions, the Action Research on Chronic Homelessness Initiative supports countering structural exclusion and contributes to providing long-term housing stability for those most impacted by intergenerational displacement.

Closing the infrastructure gap

The gaps in basic community infrastructure continues to impact safety, health, and quality of life in many Indigenous communities. This section outlines 2024–25 investments in water and wastewater systems, housing repair and construction, and community facilities — efforts that reflect the federal government's commitment to addressing the long-standing infrastructure gap in collaboration with Indigenous partners.

Highlights for 2024–25

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund provided distinctions-based investments to support essential infrastructure needs for First Nations on reserve, Inuit, Métis, Modern Treaty and Self-Governing communities, northern Indigenous communities, and urban and rural Indigenous service delivery organizations. Investments supported shovel-ready infrastructure for Indigenous communities on and off-reserve, and contributed to the Government's commitment to close the infrastructure gap by 2030. Funding also supports institution building to continue the transfer process of infrastructure services to Indigenous organizations.

ISC's [Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund - Urban Component](#) contributed to infrastructure improvements for urban Indigenous populations, among others, including:

- the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre (CAAVD)'s major infrastructure project involving the construction of a new 5-storey pavilion and the complete renovation of its main building, including its childcare centre
 - this project will expand access to culturally relevant and safe services, increase community spaces and living environments, establish an Indigenous health clinic, create jobs, strengthen income generation and organizational capacity, and promote the overall quality of life for First Peoples in Val-d'Or
- the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre (MNFC)'s new, net-zero carbon facility designed to support the delivery of over 40 core programs to 7,000 urban Indigenous clients in the Halifax municipality

- the new building will feature a large cultural room, an exterior ceremonial circle, archive storage, classrooms, a maker space, an interpretive center, offices, administrative spaces, and an underground garage, with all areas fully accessible to meet the evolving needs of the growing urban Indigenous population
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies' retrofitting project that will upgrade the electrical and elevator systems at Saskatoon Campus which has posed a growing safety concern
- Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg's development of a safe, inclusive gathering place offering culturally responsive services for Indigenous children, youth, adults, seniors, and Elders, with enhanced accessibility through the addition of barrier-free washrooms, ramps, and elevators, improved safety by upgrading ventilation and heating/cooling systems, to expand Niwasa's service capacity by an additional 2,725 individuals annually

Indigenous Services Canada's Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program and Health Facilities Program continued to provide flexible funding for housing repairs, roadwork, and water and wastewater infrastructure. In 2024–25, funding advanced self-determined planning and local capital project delivery in First Nations communities, including:

- concluding a framework agreement with Weso'tmk Samqwan Incorporated, which will serve as a roadmap for transferring water and wastewater management services
- supporting Ebb and Flow First Nation, in Manitoba, to construct a welcoming, modern 3,561-square-metre facility where students have all the tools they need to learn
- partnering with Liard First Nations and the Government of Yukon to support an Elders Housing Complex in Watson Lake, Yukon, offering a safe and comfortable space for Elders to live autonomously
- supporting the completion of 2 new water treatment plants in Bonaparte First Nation, in British Columbia, which now provide clean drinking water to remote areas of their community

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's [Local Food Infrastructure Fund](#) funded Indigenous-led community food infrastructure, including commercial kitchens, processing hubs, and distribution networks. Launched in 2019, the fund was initially a 5-year, \$70 million initiative. Budget 2024 announced a renewal of the fund, which is mobilizing an additional \$42.7 million to support production-focused projects. As a result of the 2024–25 funding call for proposals, 87 small-scale projects received \$5.6 million in food security funding to address food infrastructure inequities in communities across Canada, including Indigenous communities. 2024–25 examples of Indigenous projects include:

- \$80,832 allocated to Ginoogaming First Nation to purchase a walk behind tractor with tilling attachment, garden fencing, gardening tools and supplies, watering systems, chicken coop, canning equipment, fishing boats and fishing gear, composters, kitchen utensils, storage equipment, refrigerator, and a freezer
- \$76,997 allocated to the Buffalo Point First Nation for the purchase of a greenhouse and supplies to grow local produce to distribute to vulnerable community members

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the federal government continued to invest in Indigenous-led infrastructure and food security initiatives to address urgent and immediate needs identified by families, survivors, and communities related to housing and infrastructure. Responding to Calls for Justice 4.6, 4.7, and 13.5, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and ISC have invested in Indigenous-led, community-led construction of new houses, maintenance of existing housing units, support for shelters, transitional housing and second-stage housing,

and invested in social infrastructure projects. The Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund - Urban Component made investments in partners working to support the needs of Indigenous women and girls through new constructions, acquisitions, renovation and retrofit projects; through in capital projects, including and not limited to essential health and safety, accessibility, and energy efficiency; social services infrastructure projects that will mitigate pressures felt in communities hosting development projects and resource extraction. Responding to Calls for Justice 4.1, 4.7, and 12.4, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Local Food Infrastructure Fund supported projects that strengthen community food security and increase the availability and accessibility of local, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food through food production-focused activities for Indigenous communities; projects that strengthen community food security in Indigenous communities.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

These investments contribute to transformational systemic change by supporting Indigenous self-determination in the design and delivery of housing, infrastructure, and food security projects. By centering Indigenous leadership and prioritizing community-identified needs, these initiatives work to close long-standing infrastructure gaps, strengthen local governance and capacity, and advance the development of sustainable, culturally appropriate community assets. Over time, these systemic shifts can help address the root causes of housing insecurity, displacement, and food insecurity that have disproportionately affected Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Improving digital connectivity for Indigenous Peoples

Digital connectivity is critical for education, safety, economic development, and access to emergency and health services. This section highlights 2024–25 progress in expanding broadband infrastructure and improving access to reliable, affordable internet services in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

Highlights for 2024–25

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's [Universal Broadband Fund](#) (UBF) is a \$3.225 billion initiative that continued to support the expansion of high-speed internet access across Canada, including to rural and remote Indigenous communities. During the 2024–25 fiscal year, the Universal Broadband Fund put forth calls for proposals that would bring high-speed Internet access to underserved households in the provinces of Manitoba (July 2024), Saskatchewan (July 2024) and Alberta (October 2024). In 2024–25, UBF investments of \$245 million were announced in support of 45 projects. Examples of UBF projects include:

- \$49.98 million to Matawa First Nations Management's broadband project, to improve access to high-speed internet for 570 households in the First Nation communities of Aroland, Long Lake #58 and Ginoogamin, Ontario, using fibre technology
- \$35 million to Keewaytinook Okimakanak's broadband project, to improve high-speed internet to 182 households located in 2 communities in the region of the First Nations of Fort Severn and Peawanuck, Ontario, using fibre technology
- \$4.67 million to First Nations Cable's broadband project, that improved access to high-speed internet to 2,609 households located in the region of Six Nations of the Grand River, Ontario, using fibre technology

Immediate action and progress

The Government of Canada's investments in broadband infrastructure are expanding access to reliable, high-speed Internet in rural and remote areas where connectivity gaps have historically contributed to heightened vulnerability for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Responding to Call for Justice 5.5i, the initiative is one of the key programs advancing Canada's Connectivity Strategy Targets and working towards providing high-speed Internet access to 98% of Canadian households by 2026, and 100% by 2030. The investments being done under the UBF include a mobile connectivity stream that fills gaps in cellular connectivity in several rural areas, including along the Highway of Tears. By supporting mobile connectivity improvements along high-risk corridors such as the Highway of Tears, individuals, including Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, who need to access emergency services, to communicate while traveling, and to maintain contact with family and support networks, are supported and their risks of violence and isolation are mitigated. These improvements in communication infrastructure directly respond to longstanding safety concerns raised by Indigenous families, survivors, and communities. The UBF responds to Call for Justice 16.5 by addressing critical infrastructure gaps in Nunavut and other Inuit communities. It ensures that Inuit people can access essential government services, education, telehealth, and economic opportunities. The program recognizes that connectivity is vital for upholding Inuit rights, as outlined in the National Inquiry's recommendations. By enabling digital access, social and economic disparities that have historically marginalized Inuit communities are challenged. Families, survivors, and Indigenous communities benefit the capacities to gain access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and culturally relevant services provided by improved digital connectivity.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Working towards closing longstanding digital divides in rural, remote, and northern Indigenous communities, the Universal Broadband Fund advances systemic change by embedding equitable access to critical communication infrastructure as a foundational public service. The Universal Broadband Fund supports the systemic shift, recognizing reliable, high-speed internet connectivity as essential to public safety, health, education, and community well-being.

Post-secondary education, employment and entrepreneurship

Indigenous partners, families, and survivors have identified economic security, culturally relevant education, and access to meaningful employment as foundational to safety and long-term wellbeing. Persistent barriers-including underfunded education systems, systemic employment discrimination, wage gaps, and gaps in income supports-continue to create conditions of vulnerability that intersect with experiences of violence and exclusion. In response to these priorities and the Calls for Justice, the federal government has supported distinctions-based initiatives that aimed to increase access to education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities rooted in Indigenous priorities.

In 2024–25, federal efforts to enhance economic security, educational access, and youth-focused programming aligned in part with Calls for Miskotahâ 25 and 28. These calls emphasize the urgent need to ensure equitable access to services across urban, rural, and remote areas, and to invest in culturally relevant housing, education, and safety supports for Métis youth. By supporting distinctions-based initiatives that address these systemic barriers, the federal government has taken steps toward reducing vulnerability and advancing long-term safety and self-determination for Métis communities.

Post-secondary education supports

Indigenous families, survivors and organizations have emphasized the importance of education opportunities that are safe and responsive to the needs of those recovering from violence or systemic marginalization. This section highlights federal initiatives in 2024–25 that funded post-secondary education opportunities.

Highlights for 2024–25

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) provides funding and supports through distinctions-based Post-Secondary Education Strategies for First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation and works collaboratively with Indigenous partners to ensure that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation learners have access to the same high-quality post-secondary education services and opportunities as non-Indigenous Canadians.

The First Nations Post-Secondary Education Strategy aims to enable First Nations students to achieve levels of post-secondary education comparable to non-Indigenous students in Canada by supporting First Nations in providing eligible students with funding to access education opportunities at the post-secondary level, and by supporting First Nations established post-secondary education institutions and First Nations-directed community-based programming. The First Nations Post-Secondary Education Strategy provided funding and support to 5 components:

- the [Post-Secondary Student Support Program](#), which provides non-repayable financial support for First Nations students to advance towards a post-secondary education credential, as prioritized and directed by First Nations

- the [University and College Entrance Preparation Program](#), which provides non-repayable financial support for registered First Nations students who are enrolled in university and college entrance preparation programs to enable them to attain the academic level required for entrance into degree and diploma credit programs, as prioritized and directed by First Nations
- the [Post-Secondary Partnerships Program](#), which provides funding to support First Nations to define their own partnerships with institutions, to increase the availability of post-secondary education programs tailored to First Nation's cultural and educational needs
- Engagement for Regional Post-Secondary Education Models, which support First Nations-led engagement on the development of comprehensive First Nations regional post-secondary education models that deliver supports to students
 - this funding sunset after the 2022–23 fiscal year, and First Nations completed their engagement efforts between 2019–20 and 2024–25
- the [First Nations Adult Secondary Education \(FNASE\)](#) program, which supports initiatives to improve First Nations adult learners' access to secondary preparation, completion, and upgrading

Budget 2019 announced an investment of \$320 million over 5 years, beginning in fiscal year 2019–2020 for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program.

The [Inuit Post-Secondary Education \(PSE\) Strategy](#) was launched in 2019 as a distinctions-based initiative developed in collaboration with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and Inuit land-claim organizations. Its objective is to close the post-secondary attainment gap between Inuit and non-Indigenous Canadians through distinctions-based and regionally delivered strategic support. The Inuit PSE Strategy reflects the Government of Canada's commitment to a renewed relationship with Inuit, one that is framed by principles of reconciliation, including recognitions of rights, respect, cooperation, partnership, and self-determination. Budget 2019 announced an investment of \$125.5 million over 10 years, beginning in fiscal year 2019–2020, and \$21.8 million ongoing, for the Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy.

The strategy:

- allocated funds to Inuit recipients, who then provide funding for academic and living expenses to Inuit students pursuing post-secondary education
- provided additional non-academic programs and service supports for post-secondary students, community engagement for community-level and national

The [Métis Nation Post-Secondary Education Strategy](#) was designed through engagement with the signatories of the Canada-Métis Nation Accord and implemented in 2019–20. This strategy aims to close the post-secondary education attainment gap between Métis Nation and non-Indigenous students and supports Métis Nation learners in achieving greater success through distinctions-based and regionally delivered strategic support. Budget 2019 announced an investment of \$362 million over 10 years, beginning in fiscal year 2019–20, and \$40 million ongoing, for the Métis Nation Post-Secondary Education Strategy. The strategy funds Métis Nation recipients, who then provided funding for academic and living expenses to Métis Nation students pursuing post-secondary education.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, the distinctions-based Post-Secondary Education Strategies provided direct, flexible, and culturally relevant supports to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation students, enabling more eligible learners to access and succeed in post-secondary education. By funding academic and living expenses, and supported community-based and culturally tailored programming, these strategies aim to remove immediate barriers to education and strengthened Indigenous control over education systems. Indigenous Services Canada's Distinctions-based Post-Secondary Education Strategies for First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation responded to:

- part of Call for Justice 4.2 as it recognizes Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the pursuit of economic social development
- Call for Justice 4.4 as it provides educational opportunities in Indigenous communities
- Call for Justice 12.11 by providing post-secondary education to Indigenous youth

Progress towards transformational systemic change

Indigenous Services Canada advanced some systemic change in education by implementing Distinctions-based Post-Secondary Education Strategies that uphold Indigenous self-determination, expand access to education within communities, and supported the academic success of Indigenous youth in direct response to multiple Calls for Justice.

Supporting Indigenous employment and entrepreneurship

Supporting Indigenous entrepreneurship has been identified as a key strategy for building local economies and creating pathways to financial independence and innovation. This section reviews 2024–25 federal support for Indigenous entrepreneurs, businesses, and community-based economic initiatives, with a focus on distinctions-based, gender-responsive, and culturally grounded approaches.

Highlights for 2024–25

Indigenous Services Canada's [First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy](#) (FNIYES) is a component of Employment and Social Development Canada's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS). In 2024–25, FNIYES continued to supports initiatives providing eligible First Nations and Inuit youth, aged 15 to 30, with work experience and opportunities for skills development, and with information to help them gain employment and develop careers. FNIYES is a proposal-based program that provides funding under 2 streams: the First Nations and Inuit Skills Link Program and the First Nations and Inuit Youth Summer Work Experience Program. Relatedly, the Income Assistance First Nations Youth Employment Strategy Pilot (IAFNYES) also continued to support First Nations communities and Indigenous organizations to provide paid mentored work placements and on-the-job training to First Nations youth — including Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people — between the ages of 18 and 30 in receipt of Indigenous Services Canada's Income Assistance benefits. The main objective of the Income Assistance FNIYES Pilot was to help First Nations youth acquire and enhance their skills and gain employment, reducing long term dependency on Income Assistance. Funding for IAFNYES was provided through FES 2022, in the amount of \$100.2 million over 3 years.

The [Indigenous Skills and Employment Training \(ISET\) Program](#) is a co-developed program that invests in Indigenous designed and led supports for First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Urban/Non-affiliated Indigenous people to achieve their career goals. Flexible 10-year agreements invest \$408.2 million annually to a broad network of Indigenous partners from coast to coast to coast, who have the latitude to plan and implement the solutions that work best for their clients. A broad range of eligible activities and expenditures supports wrap around supports including child care, living expense subsidies, safe transportation and many others. Co-development of program implementation, performance measurement and evaluation continue through distinctions-based technical working groups and bilateral relationships with partners.

As of December 30, 2024, the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program had provided training and other supports to over 247,000 Indigenous people, including over 123,000 women, with over 97,700 Indigenous people finding employment or returning to school for further training, including over 43,800 women finding employment and over 19,000 women returning to school for further training.

Supported by Indigenous Services Canada, and designed and administered by the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association, the [Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship \(IWE\) Program](#) provides distinctions-based supports to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women to build, launch, and expand businesses. In 2024–25, the program continued to administer funding and services through 32 Indigenous Financial Institutions across Canada, and provided Indigenous women with access to dedicated Business Support Officers, routine workshops and training, and micro-loans to help kick start and grow their businesses. The program works to reduce barriers Indigenous women face when starting or growing their businesses, and ensure that they have access to the training, resources, and capital needed to prosper and thrive.

Immediate action and progress

In 2024–25, federal initiatives supported immediate improvements in access to job opportunities, business development resources, and entrepreneurial training. These efforts responded to Calls for Justice 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 16.21, and 17.19, and worked to remove economic barriers, support community-driven development through entrepreneurship, and ensure Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people have access to culturally safe economic opportunities.

The First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy and the Income Assistance First Nations Youth Employment Strategy Pilot both worked to advance Call for Justice 4.4 by supporting employers to hire and retain youth aged 15-30, who are First Nations living on reserve or Inuit living outside of their land-claim areas, to gain skills and knowledge relevant to gaining meaningful employment. The First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy specifically advanced Call for Justice 16.21 by providing funding to support Inuit youth in work placements that allow them to acquire the skills, learning experiences and opportunities they need to find and maintain employment or return to school. As a co-developed program, the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program responded to:

- part of Call for Justice 4.2 by supporting Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in pursuit of economic social development
- Call for Justice 4.5 by providing supports and resources for skills and employment training for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people
- Call for Justice 17.19 as it supports the strengthening of Métis participation in the labour market through skills development and employment supports, and can help to address poverty

Finally, the Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship (IWE) Program continued to advance Call for Justice 4.2 by offering gender-specific, culturally appropriate tools and resources to support Indigenous women with a path to entrepreneurship, while working to eliminate the systemic and unique barriers they face and upholding Indigenous women's socio-economic rights.

Progress towards transformational systemic change

These initiatives contribute to advancing transformational systemic change by addressing some of the root causes of economic marginalization faced by Indigenous Peoples—particularly women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people—through distinctions-based, Indigenous-led, and equity-oriented approaches. Together, they support long-term shifts in employment, skills development, and self-determined economic participation.

Addressing anti-Indigenous racism in public institutions

Indigenous families, survivors, and communities have identified systemic racism in public institutions as a barrier to safety, justice, and wellbeing. Experiences of discrimination in healthcare, policing, education, and government systems continue to erode trust and create real harm for Indigenous Peoples. In response to these priorities and the Calls for Justice, the federal government has undertaken work to confront anti-Indigenous racism and embed systemic change across institutions. In 2024–25, progress included investments in distinctions-based anti-racism training, culturally safe service environments, and other reforms developed in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.

Federal initiatives to address anti-Indigenous racism across public institutions align with Call for Miskotahâ 26, which calls for cultural safety training to be distinctions-based, trauma-informed, and developed by Métis organizations. These efforts — particularly when co-developed with Métis partners — represent early progress toward institutional transformation, trust-building, and service environments that uphold the dignity and safety of Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Continued progress towards fulfilling this Call requires the mandatory cultural safety training for all public service providers interacting with Métis individuals, particularly in health, education, policing, and social services.

This section outlines initiatives that reflect early steps toward institutional transformation and accountability.

Addressing anti-Indigenous racism through comprehensive federal strategies

Indigenous Peoples have called for federal institutions to uphold their dignity, cultural identities, and right to exist free of discrimination. This section highlights some of the federal action that has been undertaken to anti-Indigenous racism at the systemic level.

Highlights for 2024–25

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is the lead on engagements for Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy and Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate, and will lead preliminary actions to co-develop an Anti-Indigenous Racism Approach for implementation of the Strategy as part of Canada's commitments under the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan. Co-developing this comprehensive approach to anti-Indigenous racism is a necessary pre-requisite for the changes that are required to address systemic anti-Indigenous racism and hate in federal health and related social programming.

In support of the [Anti-Racism Strategy](#), Canadian Heritage invested \$110.4 million aimed at driving action in employment, justice and law enforcement, housing, healthcare and immigration systems. It encompasses over 70 federal initiatives designed to ensure federal policies, programs and services reflect the needs of Canadians, while also working in partnership with communities by investing over \$70 million in local initiatives across the country. Progress included:

- continued implementation of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy (CARS) memorandum of understanding with Statistics Canada and Justice

- the launch of the Strategy in June 2024
- the selection process for Ministerial Advisory Council in October 2024
- the launch of call for proposals in October 2024, with new CARS objectives for funding in fiscal year 2025–26

The Government of Canada is investing \$273.6 million over 6 years, and \$29.3 million ongoing, under [Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate](#) to tackle hatred from multiple angles:

- increasing support to victims and survivors of incidents of hate
- helping communities prevent, address and protect people from hate
- enhancing research and data collection
- providing greater resources for law enforcement
- raising public awareness

Progress includes:

- the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding for hate crimes research with Statistics Canada in September 2024
- the launch of the Action Plan in September 2024
- the launch of a solicited call for proposals with new Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate objectives in October 2024

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is the lead on engagements for Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy and Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate, and will lead preliminary actions to co-develop an Anti-Indigenous Racism Approach for implementation of the Strategy as part of Canada's commitments under the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan. Co-developing this comprehensive approach to anti-Indigenous racism is a necessary pre-requisite for the changes that are required to address systemic anti-Indigenous racism and hate in federal health and related social programming.

Immediate action and progress

The Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–28 and Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate responds to part of Call for Justice 1.9 as they are public initiatives that seek to address racism and hate, which in the case of the MMIWG2S+ crisis is a significant root cause in the violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Similarly, as part of its work to combat anti-Indigenous racism in support of Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–28, ESDC responded to Call for Justice 1.9 by taking preliminary action towards co-developing an Anti-Indigenous Racism Approach, taking steps to develop an approach that challenges the acceptance and normalization of the violence of anti-Indigenous racism. In response to Call for Justice 2.6, the implementation of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–28 and Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate both work to educate Canadians and counter systemic racism and hate in federal policies, programs and services by adopting an intersectional approach that combats racism together with sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and discrimination based on language.

Transformation towards systemic change

Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 was informed by extensive community engagement across Canada, including:

- 15 town halls
- 2 national summits
- a national youth forum
- 21 roundtables on combatting hate and racism
- an online questionnaire on racism and discrimination open to people in Canada.

Likewise, Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate is informed by cross-Canada engagement and consultation activities organized by the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat, including:

- national summits
- a national forum
- 21 roundtables convened by the Minister responsible for Diversity and Inclusion
- an online survey

The Action Plan was also informed by community engagement conducted by the 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat for the development of the Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan, 3 Public Safety Canada-led roundtables on the Security Infrastructure Program, as well as research and recommendations from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

While these Action Plans and Strategies have transformational objectives and aim to make systemic changes in relation to combatting racism in Canada at large, tangible steps have been taken to ensure that they impact change in the context of anti-Indigenous racism. While the engagement and consultation noted above was not always specific to Indigenous populations, the engagement, collaboration and consultation with Indigenous partners that will be undertaken ensures that Indigenous recommendations, priorities and perspectives are amplified and integrated into the development of the strategies. When these are integrated, the unique needs of meaningfully engaged Indigenous partners can be reflected in accordance with their recommendations.

Addressing anti-Indigenous racism in health care

Indigenous Peoples have called for healthcare systems that uphold their dignity, cultural identities, and right to receive healthcare free of discrimination. This section highlights some of the federal efforts to support culturally safe healthcare services, improve service standards, and develop policy changes that respond directly to the lived experiences of Indigenous patients and families.

Highlights for 2024–25

Indigenous Services Canada's Indigenous Health Equity Fund has committed to provide \$2 billion over 10 years (or \$200 million annually), to address the unique challenges Indigenous Peoples face when it comes to fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health services. Investments included:

- \$190 million in distinctions-based funding to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, to support long-term, sustainable funding support for their health priorities
- approximately \$10 million to select Indigenous communities and organizations, to support short-term, innovative, activity driven projects on cross-cutting Indigenous priorities

Indigenous Services Canada's Addressing Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada's Health Systems initiative continued to strengthen cultural and patient safety for Indigenous people and families seeking health services, including culturally safe reproductive care. Investments supported:

- a toolkit for Indigenous women that included information on patient rights
- a toolkit for healthcare providers focused on how to improve healthcare for Indigenous women
- funding for Indigenous organizations to hire Indigenous health system navigators and patient advocates
- funding for education pathways for Indigenous midwives and doulas/birth support workers
- funding for some culturally appropriate services specifically serving Métis people living in urban centres

Through its Health Facilities Program, Indigenous Services Canada began implementing Budget 2024's \$241.7 million allocation to expand, renovate and build priority health infrastructure. As an example, in 2024–25, this program funded the Virtual Health Hub, led by the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, and supported its mandate to increase access to quality and culturally safe health services to those it serves.

Immediate action and progress

Together, these programs helped reduce immediate barriers to care while building trust, safety, and visibility for Indigenous patients who have been impacted by institutional racism. They reflect the growing federal commitment to ensuring that Indigenous Peoples can access health services that are safe, affirming, and grounded in Indigenous knowledges and rights.

In response to Calls for Justice 1.8, the Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada's Health Systems initiative provided funding to National Indigenous Organizations to support tool kits both on patient rights and providing healthcare for Indigenous women, as well as programming for Indigenous women on sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health, parental support, social support, and wrap-around services.

In response to Call for Justice 7.6, the Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada's Health Systems initiative funded national and regional Indigenous partners and organizations to provide culturally safe training to healthcare professionals, build awareness on Indigenous realities and respond to anti-Indigenous racism in Canada's health systems. These investments included funding to support Métis-specific culturally safe training to ensure that health services providers are knowledgeable and responsive to Métis cultures and realities.

The Indigenous Health Equity Fund responded to Call for Justice 7.1 and provided funding for self-determined, Indigenous-led initiatives to increase fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health services. The Health Facilities Program responded to Calls for Justice 4.1 and 13.5, and ensured that safe and stable health infrastructure was being constructed and/or renovated to serve Indigenous communities.

Transformation towards systemic change

In 2024–25, federal efforts to create safer healthcare environments demonstrated early momentum toward systemic transformation through significant funding commitments to address the unique needs of distinctions-based groups that will advance and support Indigenous-led health governance and shifting the foundations of care delivery.

The Indigenous Health Equity Fund (IHEF) supported self-determined, Indigenous-led initiatives to increase fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health services. The Addressing Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada's Health Systems initiative played an important role in operationalizing systemic change through distinctions-based, community-driven health initiatives. By supporting the recruitment of Indigenous patient advocates, expanding midwifery and doula education, and delivering cultural safety training, this initiative supported Indigenous-led practices that counter racism and centre Indigenous experiences in healthcare delivery. Simultaneously, investments in infrastructure, particularly under ISC's Health Facilities Program, supported First Nations-led approaches for the design and operation of health facilities. New models like the Virtual Health Hub in Saskatchewan and other First Nations-led health centres lead to improved service access while reframing the physical and operational environments of care to safely serve the unique needs of Indigenous Peoples.

Addressing anti-Indigenous racism through training for public sector employees

The federal government also recognizes the need for public servants to understand the impacts of systemic racism and colonialism, and that they receive cultural competency training to equip them to actively work toward change within the public service. This section outlines some of the federal investments in mandatory anti-racism and cultural safety training that were undertaken in 2024–25.

Highlights for 2024–25

Under the themes of Recognition, Respect, Relationships and Reconciliation, the Canada School of Public Service's [Indigenous Learning curriculum](#) continued to provide access to resources, courses, workshops and events on the history, heritage, cultures, rights and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, as well as on their varied and long-standing relationships with the Crown. Updates and highlights for this work in 2024–25 include:

- offering a total of 7 online self-paced courses, 6 instructor-led courses in the virtual classroom, and 2 in-person courses, including the KAIROS Blanket Exercise and a 4-day experiential course for executives, delivered by Indigenous leaders and traditional oral teachings and Indigenous leadership development
- surpassing 33,000 downloads (since launch) of The Reconciliation: A Starting Point mobile app which raises awareness about Indigenous reconciliation
- hosting 13 events with a total participation of nearly 18,000 on a wide range of current and pertinent topics, such as Recognizing the Resilience of Indigenous Women and the 2SLGBTQIA+ Community, Empowering 2SLGBTQIA+ Public Servants Through Personal Storytelling, Celebrating and Honouring Two-Spirit Pride, Indigenous Inclusion and Well-Being in the Federal Public, and [Being an Ally to Indigenous Peoples](#)
- delivering dedicated KAIROS Blanket Exercise offerings to intact departmental executive cadres to impact leadership from the top
- launching a new self-paced online course in partnership with CIRNAC, An Introduction to Modern Treaties and Self-Government
- releasing a video in partnership with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami titled A Conversation with Natan Obed about the Inuit Nunangat Policy, in support of the new Cabinet Directive
- developing the Learning Roadmap for Managers of Indigenous Employees to support inclusive practices and retention
- launching the Learning Portal on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to support the implementation of UNDA
- creating a unique learning hub on Indigenous Languages, called Revitalizing Indigenous Voices Through the *Indigenous Languages Act*, which features videos and audio of Indigenous languages and Indigenous sign language
- expanding the video gallery of Indigenous employee testimonials to amplify Indigenous voices
- undertaking key engagement opportunities aimed at further developing and refining its products and initiatives, and ensuring its work is informed by Indigenous perspectives, expertise and needs, including:
 - collaborating with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, relying on their invaluable guidance to ensure that the learning materials are culturally accurate, aligned with Indigenous values and traditions, and reflective of current, relevant issues
 - consultation and feedback sessions with Indigenous representatives within and outside the public service
 - integrating of Indigenous perspectives, done in consultation with academic experts, Indigenous leaders and community stakeholders
- 11 executive level learners having successfully completed the Building Meaningful Relationships with Indigenous Peoples in-person course, delivered by Indigenous leaders. This transformational learning experience was rooted in traditional oral teachings and Indigenous leadership development. Participants explored a conceptual policy framework that emphasized co-development and partnership in policy development and decision-making

The RCMP's Intercultural Learning Strategy continued both to build the knowledge and capacity of employees to understand racism and its roots, to understand the histories, lived experience, reality, values and principles of families of MMIWG2S+ people, while also engaging to ensure future training is inclusive, free of bias and representative of the lived experiences of the communities served by the RCMP. To this end, in 2024–25, federal investments supported:

- the Training on Hate Crimes and Incidents for Frontline Police Officers course by the Canadian Police Knowledge Network. To date 21 RCMP Regular Members completed this training. In 2025–2026, a national launch and communications strategy will be created, and this course will also be made widely available to RCMP employees of all categories
- the Cultivating Equitable and Unbiased Policing course, mandatory for British Columbia employees as of January 2025, has been completed by 4166 regular RCMP Member in British Columbia

- the Missing Persons Investigations course, which was updated in collaboration with National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) and contains modules specific to missing Indigenous persons. To date 8,826 RCMP employees have completed this training since its inception; 92.9% of those completions were by Regular Members

The Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (CRCC) continued to include Indigenous Awareness Training in the performance management plans of CRCC staff. Approximately 100 CRCC staff took a range of training including, but not limited to,

- Bougie Birch's dreamcatcher workshop
- Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) training courses
- First Nations principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP)
- the KAIROS blanket exercise
- Pacific Business & Law Institute's Indigenous Policing Conference

Immediate action and progress

These highlights are examples of some of the federal investments in resources and time that have been undertaken to ensure that federal employees are receiving cultural competency training that will counter anti-Indigenous racism with knowledge and understanding, especially training that challenges overt and unconscious bias among public servants.

Responding to Calls for Justice 9.1 and 9.2ii, the Intercultural Learning Strategy's introduced changes, updates and new learning processes/standards to work towards ensuring that the RCMP is inclusive, free of bias, and reflective of the lived experience of the communities it serves. Similarly, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP's (CRCC) Indigenous Awareness Training initiative responded to Call for Justice 9.2iv by providing mandatory and continued Indigenous awareness training and education. This ensures that CRCC staff are knowledgeable of the histories and realities faced by Indigenous Peoples. From a distinctions-based perspective, the Indigenous Learning curriculum at the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) responded to part of Call for Justice 17.24 and demonstrates one of the ways the federal government is working to expanded the quality of training and learning opportunities in the Federal Public Service as it relates to specific populations — in this case, as it seeks to increase knowledge about the Métis people and culture with courses that are led and co-developed in consultation with Métis Elders and knowledge keepers.

Transformation towards systemic change

As described above, the Intercultural Learning Strategy's response to Call for Justice 9.1 continued to build the knowledge and capacity of employees to understand racism and its roots, to become better allies and advocates. The RCMP's Intercultural Learning Strategy and the CRCC's Indigenous Awareness Training's responses to Call for Justice 9.2iv provided mandatory and continued Indigenous awareness training and education to ensure staff are educated about the histories and realities faced by Indigenous Peoples. On a broader scale,

the Indigenous Learning curriculum at CSPS indirectly contributes to other Calls for Justice by increasing the level of awareness, understanding, and Indigenous cultural competencies of public sector employees.

Together, these measures highlight some of the measures being undertaken by the federal government, making important progress toward the development of culturally competent public institutions and contributing to the elimination of anti-Indigenous racism and the advancement of policies and practices that uphold the rights, histories, and lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

Increasing transparency and accountability to build better relationships with Indigenous partners, families, and survivors, and monitoring progress

Calls for Justice 1.7 and 1.10, align with the fifth goal of the National Action Plan and call for the development of oversight bodies to monitor progress on the Calls for Justice, as well as both an Ombudsperson and an Indigenous human rights tribunal to increase transparency and accountability. These Calls for Justice underscore the importance of the establishment Indigenous-led oversight mechanisms — including a National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson and an independent oversight body — to monitor the implementation of the Calls for Justice and the National Action Plan. Indigenous families, survivors, and partners have consistently called for greater accountability, clearer roles for oversight, and tangible progress on these commitments.

In 2024–25, the Government of Canada continued to advance work aligned with these priorities. Efforts focused on releasing the Final Report of the Ministerial Special Representative on Call for Justice 1.7, further analyzing recommendations to inform the development of an Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson, and continuing dialogue on establishing an independent oversight body. The annual National Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial Meeting on MMIWG2S+, held on January 29 and 30, 2025, also provided a platform to support transparency, align cross-jurisdictional efforts, and center Indigenous leadership in implementation.

National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson

In January 2023, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations appointed a Ministerial Special Representative (MSR) to provide advice on the implementation of Call for Justice 1.7. To support this work, the Government of Canada allocated \$1.6 million over 2 years (2023–24 to 2024–25) for the MSR's engagement and reporting activities. Throughout 2023–24, the MSR engaged with national and regional Indigenous organizations, government accountability entities, and federal, provincial, and territorial officials. These efforts culminated in the delivery of the Final Report to the Minister in March 2024. The report was publicly released online on June 13, 2024, and made available in Inuktitut, Plains Cree, Western Ojibway, Michif, French, and English.

The Final Report recommended the creation of 4 national (First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Urban Indigenous) and thirteen regional Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudspersons with the authority to investigate rights violations, make policy and legislative recommendations, and promote systemic change. The report emphasized that these roles must be Indigenous-led and grounded in distinctions-based governance structures.

The Government of Canada is actively analyzing the report's recommendations and planning next steps in continued collaboration with Indigenous partners.

Independent oversight body to monitor implementation of the National Action Plan

To advance the implementation of Call for Justice 1.10, the Government of Canada allocated \$2.2 million over 5 years through Budget 2023 to support the development of an independent oversight body to monitor implementation of the National Action Plan. In spring 2023, CIRNAC concluded an engagement process in partnership with an Indigenous-led firm, resulting in the report MMIWG Envisioning Transformational Change. The report proposed the creation of an interim oversight body as a near-term objective and emphasized the importance of Indigenous-led design and leadership. In 2024–25, CIRNAC continued to analyze the findings and explore next steps.

National Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial (IFPT) Meeting

The National Indigenous-Federal-Provincial-Territorial (IFPT) Meeting on MMIWG2S+ is supported by a \$2.5 million investment over 5 years (2023-24 to 2027-28), committed through Budget 2023, to fund its coordination, facilitation, and Indigenous partner participation. Coordinated by CIRNAC, this recurring national forum provides a space for cross-jurisdictional collaboration on National Action Plan implementation. The national meeting brings together Indigenous governments and organizations, federal departments, and provincial and territorial representatives to support transparency, strengthen alignment, and elevate community-informed priorities.

The 2025 IFPT Meeting was held in Ottawa in late January 2025, and was co-chaired by federal, provincial/territorial, and Indigenous partner representatives. Planning involved families, service providers, national and regional Indigenous organizations, and government officials. Key discussion areas at the Meeting included continued engagement on the Red Dress Alert pilot, addressing gaps in MMIWG2S+ related data, and exploring strategies to address human trafficking.

These 3 initiatives reflect a shift toward more transparent and distinctions-based governance structures that recognize the leadership of Indigenous Peoples and the need for sustained intergovernmental coordination. For Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQI+ people, families, and communities, these changes begin to lay the groundwork for more consistent and culturally grounded oversight. They also respond to repeated calls for greater public transparency and shared responsibility in implementation. As this work continues, the Government of Canada acknowledges that building trust and delivering on its obligations will require ongoing effort, further engagement, and measurable progress that is guided by the priorities of those most directly impacted.

Conclusion

The 2024–25 Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report outlines important steps taken by the Government of Canada to respond to the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Through distinctions-based investments and Indigenous-led partnerships, federal departments and agencies have advanced immediate safety measures, expanded trauma-informed supports, and strengthened systemic responses aligned with the Calls for Justice.

The federal government's 2024–25 progress reflects a continued shift away from reactive and fragmented responses toward holistic, community-defined systems of care, protection, and accountability. Across all thematic areas — from culturally safe emergency shelters and transportation infrastructure to Indigenous-led policing and restorative justice initiatives to economic security and education programming and beyond — targeted investments and efforts have been made to uphold Indigenous rights, to respect Indigenous community governance and self-determination, and to support and restore Indigenous-led safety networks. Federal investments are not only working to improve service delivery but aiming to contribute to the structural transformation necessary to end the conditions that perpetuate violence.

At the same time, the report reaffirms the urgency and scale of the work that remains. Families, survivors, and Indigenous partners have been clear: systemic change cannot be measured solely through outputs or funding allocations. It must be evaluated through the lived experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people — especially those most affected by intersecting forms of violence and discrimination. Ongoing federal accountability is required to ensure that commitments translate into lasting improvements in safety, justice, and wellness.

As this fourth Annual Progress Report makes clear, there is continued momentum toward transformation, driven by Indigenous leadership, sustained engagement, and a shared commitment to reconciliation. Reflecting the commitments in the [Federal Pathway](#), in 2024–25, the Government of Canada continued its efforts to have families and survivors, Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people at the centre of this work, to be accountable to them, and all Canadians, in the implementation of the Federal Pathway and the federal investments contributing to ending the violence towards Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada.