

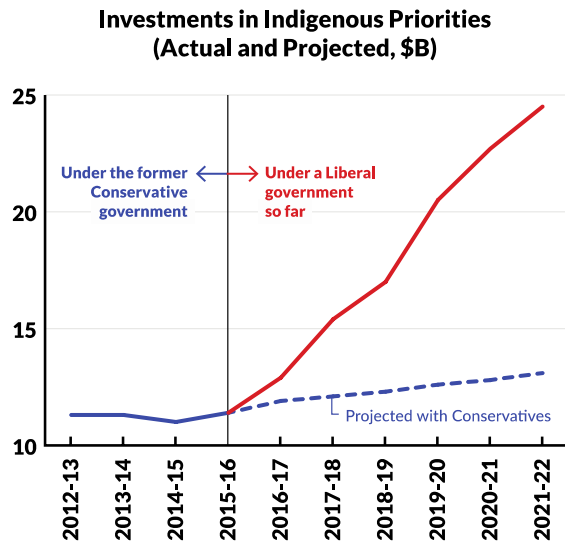


CHAPTER SIX

Moving Forward on Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Key Actions to Support Indigenous Peoples Since 2015

- ✓ Made historic investments to support Indigenous Peoples from coast to coast to coast.



Source: Budget 2021, *A Recovery Plan for Jobs, Growth, and Resilience*

- ✓ Worked across the federal government, and with our partners, so that 80% of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action involving the Government of Canada are now completed or well underway.
- ✓ Working with residential school survivors, Indigenous Peoples, provinces, territories, and educators to incorporate aboriginal and treaty rights, the history of residential schools and Indigenous contributions into the school curricula.
- ✓ Introduced Bill C-15 to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which received Royal Assent on June 21, 2021, National Indigenous Peoples Day.
- ✓ Passed the *Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families*, which affirms the inherent right of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services.
- ✓ Built and refurbished almost 200 schools so that tens of thousands of Indigenous kids have a better education.

- ✓ Continued to invest in Child and Family Services including an additional \$3 billion to support communities in providing child and family services.
- ✓ Launched the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Released Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People this June, which outlines concrete actions we will take to end systemic racism, sexism, and economic inequality that has perpetuated violence against Indigenous women and girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.
- ✓ Invested in Violence Prevention to provide shelter and support for Indigenous women, children and 2SLGBTQIA+ People facing gender-based violence.
- ✓ Accelerated the government's 10-year commitment to close the infrastructure gap in Indigenous communities.
- ✓ Invested over \$4 billion in 535 water infrastructure projects, including 99 new plants and 436 upgrades.
- ✓ Lifted 109 long-term water advisories, including reaching the milestone of lifting 105 water advisories this past April, matching the number in place when Liberals committed to eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories on public systems on reserves, a testament to five and a half years of real progress.
- ✓ Prevented 188 short-term drinking water advisories from becoming long-term.
- ✓ Invested to help Indigenous women and girls participate in sports.
- ✓ Made sure First Nations, Inuit, and Métis were prioritized for vaccination in all jurisdictions and supported engagement and vaccination campaigns.
- ✓ Announced \$5.4 billion of targeted COVID-19 support for Indigenous and Northern communities and organizations since March 2020.
- ✓ Committed to making high-quality health care designed to meet the unique needs of Indigenous communities a reality.

Moving Forward on Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed fundamental gaps in our society. Challenges that existed before the pandemic remain and others have been exacerbated. These are especially felt by Indigenous peoples who face overcrowded housing, lack of access to health services, and systemic discrimination. Recent events have shone a light on the tragic legacy of colonialism. We must work to address these difficult issues and move forward on the path of reconciliation, together.

Addressing the Legacy of Colonialism and Residential Schools

The legacy of residential schools is a dark chapter in Canada's history. Thousands of children were sent to these schools, ripped from their homes and communities, deprived of their cultures and robbed of their languages. Tragically, many of these children never came home.

While we cannot bring back those who were lost, we can—and we will—tell the truth of these injustices, support communities and survivors, and forever honour their memory.

We have and we will continue to support and provide funding to Indigenous communities: in their work to uncover burial grounds; for commemoration ceremonies, honouring memorials, and re-burial in their home communities; and to manage the buildings of former residential schools, such as demolition, rehabilitation, or construction of new facilities.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Continue work to build a national monument in Ottawa to honour residential school survivors and all the children who were taken from their families and communities.
- Move forward on work with Indigenous partners to appoint a Special Interlocutor who will work with Indigenous communities, provincial and territorial governments, to develop the necessary legal and regulatory framework to advance justice regarding unmarked graves and make recommendations relating to federal laws, regulations, policies, and practices surrounding unmarked and undocumented graves and burial sites at residential schools.

Support for Mental Health

A critical component of our continued support will be expanding the availability of culturally appropriate, trauma-informed mental health support and services.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Commit an additional \$1.4 billion for a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation, expanding on our recent commitment of \$597.6 million, for a total investment of \$2 billion over five years.

We understand that this work will take time and will need to be guided by communities, survivors, and their families.

Uncovering Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites at Other Federally Run Institutions

Residential schools were not the only federal institutions Indigenous peoples were forced to attend. Institutions such as Day Schools and Indian Hospitals also furthered colonial and racist policies of assimilation. These sites should also be explored to uncover remains of ancestors and loved ones.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Provide the necessary supports for communities who wish to continue to undertake the work of burial searches at the former sites of these institutions.

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation was established in response to the *Calls to Action* of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The Centre is a critical hub for research, teaching, and healing, particularly in light of the recent findings of unmarked graves at sites of former residential schools.

To support the continued work of the Centre, a re-elected Liberal government will:

- Provide funding towards the construction of a permanent home for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

- Provide sustained financial support for the Centre for core operations in fulfilling the mandate issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with dedicated support for the work on Missing Children and Unmarked Graves.

We will also continue to accelerate implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*.

Protecting the Wellbeing of Indigenous Children

Protecting the well-being of Indigenous children has always been a top priority for us. For far too long, Indigenous children have been overrepresented in the child welfare system—part of the troubling legacy of colonialism. All children in Canada deserve to grow up in their communities, immersed in their cultures, and surrounded by loved ones

Supporting Indigenous Children and Families

Over the last six years, we worked to reduce the number of Indigenous children in care and make sure Indigenous communities have the support they need to keep families together.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Continue to fully implement the *Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families* and continue to support communities looking to lift up jurisdiction over child and family services.
- Continue to reform child and family services in Indigenous communities.
- Continue to work with Indigenous communities to help children and families stay together.
- Permanently ensure that First Nations youth who reach the age of majority receive the supports they need for up to two additional years and implement the orders of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

As Liberals, we agree that First Nations children who suffered harms under the First Nations Child and Family Services program deserve fair and just compensation.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Continue to work with Indigenous partners to ensure fair and equitable compensation for those harmed by the First Nations Child and Family Services program.

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care

In 2018, we co-developed Canada's Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework because we believe that programs for Indigenous communities are developed by Indigenous communities, especially when it comes to

children. Every child in Canada should have the best possible start in life. But there is still progress to be made.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Move forward on building an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care system that meets the needs of Indigenous families, wherever they live.
- Ensure more Indigenous families have access to high-quality programming.
- Create 3,300 new spaces.
- Invest in Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern communities.
- Continue to support before and after school care for First Nations children on reserve.

Making Sure Indigenous Children Get the Care They Need

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children deserve the same access to health care, social services, and education as every other child in Canada.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Continue to fully fund Jordan's Principle.
- Continue to fully fund Inuit Child First Initiative.
- Continue to work with the Métis Nation to fund the unique needs of Métis children.

Clean Water

Decades of neglect led to the unacceptable reality of the people who live on First Nations' reserves not having access to safe, clean, and reliable drinking water.

We have taken strong action and invested over \$4 billion in 535 water infrastructure projects, including 99 new water plants and 436 plant upgrades. As a result, Indigenous communities have been able to lift 109 long-term water advisories, which includes lifting all advisories in British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada; prevent 188 short-term advisories from becoming long term ones; provide communities with funding to cover up to 100% of the costs, of maintaining their water infrastructure and ensure clean water for their communities. In every community with a long-term drinking water advisory, there is a project team and action plan in place to resolve it.

We cannot, and will not, abandon our obligation to ensure First Nations peoples on reserve have safe and clean drinking water.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Make any investments necessary to eliminate all remaining advisories.

- Make sure that resources and training are in place to prevent future ones.
- Continue to move forward on our agreement in principle to resolve national class action litigation related to safe drinking water in First Nations communities.
- Maintain our commitment to invest \$6 billion to ensure sustainable access to clean water for First Nations.

Continuing Progress on Reconciliation and Self-Determination

Since day one, we have been committed to working with Indigenous peoples to build a nation-to-nation, Inuit-Crown, government-to-government relationship that is based on respect, partnership, and the affirmation and recognition of rights. We have made good progress with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation. But this work must continue.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Continue to support Indigenous-led processes for rebuilding and reconstituting nations, advancing self-determination and work in partnership on implementation of treaties, land claim and self-government agreements with appropriate oversight mechanisms to hold the federal government accountable.
- Continue to support First Nations-led processes to transition away from the *Indian Act*.
- Accelerate resolution of outstanding land claims.
- Continue to advance the priorities of Indigenous communities to reclaim full jurisdiction in the areas that matter to them such as child and family services, education, health care, policing, tax, and the administration of justice.
- Further support and fund the revitalization of Indigenous laws, legal systems, and traditions.
- Host a First Ministers Meeting on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation priorities.

Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or UNDRIP, provides a road map to advance lasting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. That's why we made sure to pass legislation to implement the Declaration here in Canada. But full implementation of the Declaration requires a whole-of-government approach.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Include, in all cabinet ministers' mandate letters, the requirement to implement UNDRIP, and ensure their offices and ministries work alongside Indigenous peoples to advance their rights.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People

The violence endured by generations of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people is a national tragedy. We understand that addressing this tragedy requires a new approach that recognizes the full breadth of the problem and addresses root causes. This year, we released the federal portion of the 2021 National Action Plan, the Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, and have made significant investments to support its implementation.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Accelerate the implementation of the Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People with Indigenous partners.
- Accelerate our work with all partners in our collective and shared priorities in the 2021 National Action Plan.
- Create a standing Federal-Provincial-Territorial table on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People to facilitate and coordinate this work.

Better Housing for Indigenous Peoples

COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the acute need for safe and affordable housing in Indigenous communities that were already facing housing shortages, overcrowding, and a critical need for repairs.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Invest a further \$2 billion in Indigenous housing for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation, with over half of the funding available by the upcoming summer construction period.
- Co-develop a new Indigenous Urban, Rural, and Northern Housing Strategy with Indigenous partners and organizations that will be a stand-alone companion to the National Housing Strategy, supported by a \$300 million initial investment.
- Co-develop and fund Canada's first-ever National Indigenous Housing Centre, through which Indigenous people will fully oversee federal Indigenous housing programs once fully realized.

- Continue to support the establishment of Indigenous-led institutions in housing and infrastructure, such as the First Nations Infrastructure Institute, that assists First Nations with their infrastructure needs.

Fair Access to Health Care

Joyce's Principle aims to guarantee to all Indigenous peoples the right of equitable access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services, as well as the right to enjoy the best possible physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Fully implement Joyce's Principle and ensure it guides our work in co-developing distinctions-based Indigenous Health legislation to foster health systems free from racism and discrimination where Indigenous peoples are respected and safe.

A New Framework for Indigenous Long-term Care

The pandemic has widened existing health gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and highlighted the lack of long-term care services in or near Indigenous communities. In addition, COVID-19 made it even more difficult for Indigenous peoples to access culturally appropriate programming and services. Furthermore, the complexity of various health systems can further impede Indigenous peoples' ability to access the care they deserve. But we know more work is necessary to close the gap.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Co-develop a distinctions-based, community-led, Indigenous Long-term and Continuing Care Framework that prioritizes ensuring Indigenous peoples can receive long-term and continuing care services in or near their own communities and culturally appropriate care and programming, whether they are in urban, rural, and northern areas.
- Bolster Indigenous health system navigators so they can provide dedicated support to Indigenous people and their families to specifically help them navigate services related to long-term and continuing care.

Helping Indigenous Businesses Grow

We are committed to renewing and strengthening Canada's economic relationship with Indigenous communities including by mandating that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis businesses and entrepreneurs hold at least 5% of the total value of federal procurement contracts.

But often Indigenous businesses face barriers.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Expand the Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program to enable businesses to access a new, zero-interest loan when a 10% advance is not possible.
- Create a navigator position to help Indigenous entrepreneurs find programs that apply to their situation.
- Work with all government departments to analyze and, as appropriate, adjust eligibility criteria to ensure that programs are as inclusive as possible.

Supporting First Nations Priorities

Co-developing and continuing to invest in a distinction-based Mental Health and Wellness Strategy that meets the deep and unique needs of all First Nations to address the ongoing impacts of colonization and residential schools. A co-developed mental health and wellness strategy could also respond to the prevalent opioid crisis, include culturally appropriate wraparound services for addictions and trauma, suicide and life promotion, and the building of treatment centres based on the priorities of First Nation communities.

Working with First Nations to ensure that the *Indigenous Languages Act* continues to be fully implemented, in order to preserve, promote, and revitalize Indigenous languages in Canada, supported with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding.

Working with First Nations to continue to fully implement *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families* with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding to support its full implementation.

Continuing – in close collaboration with First Nations – to deliver distinctions-based support in response to COVID-19.

Continuing to develop a new national benefits-sharing framework to ensure that First Nations communities directly benefit from major resource projects in their territories.

We will continue to work in partnership with First Nations through the economic recovery to support the growth of First Nation economies.

Continuing ongoing work with First Nations to redesign federal policies on additions-to-reserves, and the Specific Claims process to provide just and timely resolution.

Fully implementing *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and co-developing the Action Plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration.

Continuing to work in partnership with First Nations on addressing climate change, specifically in tracking the impacts of climate change on their traditional lands and waters and charting collaborative strategies forward.

Working with First Nations to implement \$2.2 billion over 5 years beginning in 2021-22, and \$160.9 million ongoing, to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people through implementation of the Federal Pathway and the 2021 National Action Plan.

As set out in our permanent bilateral process, we commit to meet regularly with the Assembly of First Nations to make progress on First Nations priorities.

Supporting Inuit Priorities

Work with Inuit to finalize a co-developed Inuit Nunangat Policy and accelerate its implementation.

Co-developing and continuing to invest in a distinction-based Mental Health and Wellness Strategy that meets the deep and unique needs of all Inuit to address the ongoing impacts of colonization and residential schools. A co-developed mental health and wellness strategy could also respond to the prevalent opioid crisis, include culturally appropriate wraparound services for addictions and trauma, suicide, and life promotion, and the building of treatment centres based on the priorities of Inuit communities.

Continuing—in close collaboration with Inuit—to deliver distinctions-based support in response to COVID-19.

Work to establish a new national benefits-sharing framework to ensure that Inuit communities directly benefit from major resource projects in Inuit Nunangat.

We will continue to work in partnership with Inuit through the economic recovery to support the growth of Inuit economies.

Continuing work to fully implement Inuit land claims agreements.

Fully implementing *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and co-developing the Action Plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration.

Working with Inuit to implement \$2.2 billion over 5 years beginning in 2021-22, and \$160.9 million ongoing, to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people through implementation of the Federal Pathway and the 2021 National Action Plan.

Continuing to support Inuit-specific approaches on the elimination of tuberculosis in Inuit Nunangat.

Continuing to fully implement the *Indigenous Languages Act*, in order to preserve, promote, and revitalize Indigenous languages in Canada, supported with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding.

Working with Inuit to continue to fully implement *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families* with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding to support its full implementation.

Continuing to work in partnership with Inuit on addressing climate change, specifically in tracking the impacts of climate change on their traditional lands and waters and charting collaborative strategies forward.

Continuing to work with Inuit to improve food security in Inuit Nunangat, including through the Harvester Support Grant, and amending the Nutrition North Canada program to make the program more transparent and responsive to Inuit needs.

As set out in our permanent bilateral process, we commit to meet regularly through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee to make progress on Inuit priorities.

Supporting Métis Nation Priorities

Continuing to move forward on self-government with Métis Nation partners to implement their visions of self-determination by:

Continue working with the Manitoba Métis Federation to move forward on their Manitoba Métis Self Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement.

Continue working with the Métis Nation of Alberta to move forward on their Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement.

Continue working with the Métis Nation of Ontario to move forward on their Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government.

Continue working with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to move forward on their Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government.

Moving forward on the Self Government Framework Agreement with the Northwest Territory Métis Nation.

Co-developing and continuing to invest in a distinction-based Mental Health and Wellness Strategy that meets the deep and unique needs of all Métis Nation to address the ongoing impacts of colonization and residential schools. A co-developed mental health and wellness strategy could also respond to the prevalent opioid crisis, include culturally appropriate wraparound services for addictions and trauma, suicide, and life promotion, and the

building of treatment centres based on the priorities of Métis Nation communities.

Working with Métis Nation to ensure that the *Indigenous Languages Act* continues to be fully implemented, in order to preserve, promote, and revitalize Indigenous languages in Canada, supported with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding.

Working with Métis Nation to continue to fully implement *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families* with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding to support its full implementation.

Continuing—in close collaboration with Métis Nation—to deliver distinctions-based support in response to COVID-19.

Continuing to develop a new national benefits-sharing framework to ensure that Métis Nation communities directly benefit from major resource projects in their territories.

We will continue to work in partnership with Métis Nation through the economic recovery and to support the growth of Métis Nation economies.

Fully implementing *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and co-developing the Action Plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration.

Working with Métis Nation to implement \$2.2 billion over 5 years beginning in 2021-22, and \$160.9 million ongoing, to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people through implementation of the Federal Pathway and the 2021 National Action Plan.

Continuing to work in partnership with Métis Nation on addressing climate change, specifically in tracking the impacts of climate change on their traditional lands and waters and charting collaborative strategies forward.

As set out in our permanent bilateral process, we commit to meet regularly with Métis Nation partners to make progress on Métis priorities.

Gender and Diversity Impact Summary

In 2016, close to 5% of Canada's population self-identified as Indigenous. The Indigenous population is the fastest growing in Canada and is also the youngest population with 44% under the age of 25 in 2016. Our approach to reconciliation takes into account the different lived experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities and key socio-economic indicators like income, education, employment, housing, gender, geography, health, and justice.

Indigenous children are significantly overrepresented in the child welfare system. In 2016, Indigenous children represented 7.7% of all children ages 1-14, but they represented 52.2% of children in foster care. The measures to protect the wellness of Indigenous children will most benefit Indigenous children from low-income families and single parent—majority women-led—households.

Intimate partner violence is more prevalent for Indigenous women (61%) and even more prevalent for LGBTQ2 Indigenous women (86%). Additionally, they face challenges in securing housing due to financial insecurity. The lack of accessible and affordable housing means Indigenous women in abusive relationships may choose to stay in an unsafe environment.