



# RACIALIZED PEOPLE

Equity & Inclusion Lens  
**Snapshot**



City for All Women Initiative  
Initiative: une ville pour toutes les femmes



# RACIALIZED PEOPLE

We are a complex and fast-growing population in Ottawa. By 2031, more than 1 in 3 residents will be racialized. Two-thirds of us are Canadian born and our families have been part of building Ottawa for generations. We are grouped together for being non-white, but in reality we are a rich mix of ethnic origins, cultures, and as many as 100 different nationalities.

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This booklet is one of 11 Snapshots that serve as background information to aid in implementing the Equity and Inclusion Lens. To access them in an electronic version, visit the City of Ottawa Internal Site ([Ozone](#)) or the [Equity and Inclusion Lens webpage](#). Or the City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) [Equity and Inclusion webpage](#).



# 1. Who We Are

By 2031, 36 percent of Ottawa will identify as racialized, with 29 percent of us having been born outside of Canada (Statistics Canada 2011a). We are a complex and fast-growing population in Ottawa. Many of us (32.8 percent) are Canadians by birth and our families have been part of building Ottawa for over 150 years (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b). More recently, a greater number of us (67.2 percent) are choosing to live in Ottawa as new immigrants.

We are grouped together simply for being non-white, but in reality we are a rich mix of ethnic origins, cultures, and as many as 100 different nationalities (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b). For example, one in every five members of racialized communities in Ottawa is Black (Statistics Canada 2011c); however, there are unique personalities and great diversity among us (e.g., a Black person may be from Canada over many generations, identify as mixed race, or be a relative newcomer from the Caribbean, Europe, or countries in Africa).

We form nearly 20 percent of Canada's population. From 2006 to 2011 our population increased by 3 percent and this was largely the result of immigration. Most of us live in urban settings (96 percent). As a whole, we are younger than the non-racialized population (median age of 33 vs. 40 years).

## INTERSECTIONALITY: COMPLEX, OVERLAPPING IDENTITIES

Each of us could identify with more than one group. It is this intersection, or crossover of identities of who we are that affects how we experience the city. This is called intersectionality. People's lives are multi-dimensional and complex. Lived realities are shaped by different factors and social dynamics operating together.

For more info access the [Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook](#) and [Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide For Municipalities](#).

## THE CONCEPT OF RACIALIZATION

The term **“racialized”** is used in this document. “Visible minority” refers to “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (Statistics Canada 2015). It is the term used in Canada's human rights legislation and in Statistics Canada data. The City of Ottawa's Equity and Diversity Policy also uses the term.

There is significant debate about the use of the term “visible minorities” (See [Definitions](#)) because “visible” is used to denote the difference in skin tone, and the word “minority” to denote numerical smallness or weakness in power relations (Pendakur 2005). Some of us prefer to be called people of colour, while others prefer more specific language (e.g., Black, Chinese, Somali). The term racialized is preferred because it acknowledges the fact that the barriers we face are rooted in the historical and contemporary racial prejudice of society and are not a product of our own identities or shortcomings.

In this document we use the term ‘visible minority’ only where quoting from official documents.

The key is to respect each person's self-identity and dignity. If you are not sure what a person or a specific community prefers to be called, just ask: **“How would you like to be addressed?”**



## 2. Overview of Racialized People in Ottawa

### Ottawa is home to...

- » The second highest proportion of racialized people in Ontario, after Toronto (20.2 percent);
- » A young racialized population that is growing at the rate of four times Ottawa's general population;
- » Diverse backgrounds including Black (5.7 percent), Chinese (4 percent), South Asian (3.9 percent), Arab (3.7 percent), Southeast Asian (1.6 percent);
- » 156 ethnic groups and more than 70 languages;
- » One in five of residents who speak non-official languages. The top five are: Arabic (3.6 percent), Chinese, not otherwise specified (1.5 percent), Spanish (1.4 percent), Italian (1.2 percent), and Mandarin (0.8 percent);
- » A racialized population that is mostly female (51.4 percent). Particularly in the Filipino (60.5 percent), Japanese (59.6 percent), Latin American (54.5 percent), and Black communities (52.5 percent); and,
- » A greater diversity of religious affiliations among the racialized population than among the non-racialized population.

(Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b, c, Statistics Canada 2011c)

## 3. Contributions We Make

**W**e are contributors to, and an integral part of, every aspect of Canadian life. We are not separate from “the rest” of society.

We are essential to Canada's labour force and help fill a labour shortage. By 2016, we will account for 0.5 percent of Canada's labour-force growth (\$80.9 billion in value) (Antunes 2004). Our availability in the workforce is on the rise, at almost 18 percent in 2011.

We bring unique cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity assets to Ottawa. In Ottawa, we are employers, entrepreneurs, students, and taxpayers. Some members of racialized communities (for example, Lebanese, Chinese, etc.) have achieved significant economic inclusion in Ottawa (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b). As students, we hold better credentials than the Canadian average, with nearly one in three of us holding a university degree (Employment and Social Development Canada 2014, 20).

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— Employment and Social Development Canada 2014, 20

Many of us are active volunteers in our communities, schools, faith groups, and businesses. We are political leaders at different levels of government and engaged citizens. We enrich the diversity and vibrancy of Ottawa’s arts, cultural, and music communities (e.g. Chinatown Remixed, Carnival of Cultures, Carivibe, CARIBE-EXPO and Lebanorama). We have contributed to the building of Ottawa’s infrastructure and institutions and look forward to shaping our city’s future.

According to a recent study, by 2020, “[Racialized people] will open enormous opportunities for new products and services, improved access to global markets and a big competitive advantage for Canada” (*Globe and Mail* in Bloom 2010).

## 4. Barriers and Inequities

**R**acial discrimination is a major barrier for racialized people. It is present in how society is organized, including the norms and assumptions that underpin institutional practices and the way we do business. This results in advantages for those who are considered “white” and inequities for those who are considered to be the “other” or “non-white”.

### RACISM

Race continues to be used as a marker of human difference. Ideas of race have very real effects on the lives of individuals and groups. A racial hierarchy has emerged that places those groups identified as white in positions of power and groups identified as non-white in positions of lesser-power. While this hierarchy is based in historical and current ideas about groups and their value, it is manifest into action in the way society works.

Racism can be broadly defined as “the assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, as well as the institutional policies, processes, and practices,” that emerge from understandings of race (Henry and Tator 2010,5). It can manifest in interpersonal interactions (racial slurs, abuse, harassment) but also institutionally through policies or practices that systemically exclude groups of peoples (biased interviewing procedures, practices that do not take into account the needs of all employees).

In Canada, institutional racism is tied to the history of European imperialism and to the [Transatlantic Slave Trade](#). There are also examples of legally mandated institutionalised racism against the [Aboriginal population](#), [Chinese Canadians](#) and [Japanese Canadians](#) as well as other non-white groups.

The most extensive research conducted on racism in the justice system was the Report of the Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System (1995). It found that “black men, women, and male youths are massively over-represented” in Canadian prisons and that Black people are far more likely jailed before a trial at the judge’s discretion. These results are the outcome of a complex network of related factors, including poverty.

Politics and geography affect how racism works. Since the 9/11 attacks on the United States, political discourse and policies have framed Arabs and Muslims as terrorists with the result of vilifying and marginalizing these communities. In Canada, critics have argued that national security policy and

anti-terrorism legislation unfairly and disproportionately targets Arab and Muslim groups with the effects of promoting discrimination and exclusion.

Even though racial profiling is not permitted under Canadian law, a study shows that nearly four times as many racialized people felt that they had been the target of racial profiling over the last four years compared to non-minority participants (20 percent vs. 6 percent) (Crutcher and Budak 2005).

## ATTITUDES

People are socialized to perceive physical and social characteristics (e.g., skin tone, hair texture, cultural habits, dress, language, accents, as well as religions, political beliefs, and surnames). When these perceptions become consciously or unconsciously linked to a specific group of people, they become racial signifiers. The perceptions are also defined as either desirable or undesirable (Lopes and Thomas 2006).

As a result of these socially created perceptions, people may think, say, or do things that marginalize racialized people. In some cases, people may not intend to act negatively, but do so because they have not questioned the way they think, or informed themselves on more inclusive ways to live.

Attitudes about who belongs and who doesn't are also embedded in institutional and organizational assumptions and practices. Assumptions create disadvantage in racialized communities. When we catch ourselves making unconscious assumptions and work to unlearn them, we take a positive step to end racism. When we check for assumptions that are embedded in institutional practices, we are contributing to a racism free institution, workplace and community.

## STEREOTYPING

A stereotype is a false or generalized idea about a group of people that results in the categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences (Henry and Tator 2010). While it can be helpful to be sensitive to a person's cultural concerns or experiences, it is not ok to assume that **all** people in a particular group are the same.

Examples include statements that begin with: "*Chinese students are...*"; "*Muslim men are...*"; "*Latina women are...*". Stereotypes ignore the diversity within a group of people and perpetuate false assumptions that can lead to discrimination. For example, many racialized people are often seen as recent immigrants even if they were born and raised in Canada, or have lived here for many decades or generations. This makes racialized people "feel like outsiders in our own country" (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2009).

Stereotypes also work to keep groups out of professions, work teams, neighbourhoods, and services. In Canada, stereotypes have contributed to policies and practices that limited the immigration of Chinese, Jewish, and Black communities; and spurred the cultural assimilation of Aboriginal Peoples. This history still shapes our institutions today.

## DENIAL OF RACISM AND COLOUR-BLINDNESS

For people who don't experience racism in their everyday lives, it can be hard to understand not only that it exists, but how it negatively affects groups. When a person is a member of the dominant culture, they may not realize the privilege they enjoy because they have not had the experience of being a racialized person.

At the same time, many people feel uncomfortable discussing racism for fear of being labelled a racist, saying the wrong thing, or having to change the way they think and act (Stephenson and Foster 2015). Consequently, two of the biggest barriers in our society are the denial of racism and "colour-blindness".

Colour blindness is a way of seeing the world wherein people (mostly Whites) insist that they do not notice the skin colour of a racialized individual. While race is not a biological reality, it is a social reality and the refusal to recognize that race is part of the lives of racialized people is part of the psychological and cultural power of racial constructions (Henry and Tator 2010).

The discourse of denial is based on the assumption that because Canada is a country that upholds the ideals of democracy it cannot possibly be racist. When racism is shown to exist, it is written off as a one-time event limited to a few social deviants, or economic instability, or undemocratic practices that are on their way out. Racialized people are often expected to prove that racism exists. Racialized people are often extremely careful in how they name racism and racial privilege or disadvantage for fear of reprisal or claims of preferential treatment (Lopes and Thomas 2006).

When all people, white and racialized people, take care to recognize when racism is happening and acknowledge it, we make it visible and easier to address in our day-to-day lives as well as in the society at large.

## INCOME

The racialization of poverty refers to a phenomenon where people living in poverty become disproportionately concentrated among racialized group members, in some cases inter-generationally. The impact of these forces "accentuates historical forms of racial discrimination in the Canadian labour market and creates a process of social and economic marginalization. The result of this marginalization is a disproportionate vulnerability to poverty among racialized communities" (Block and Galabuzi 2011, 15).

The pay gap between racialized and non-racialized Canadians is large, with racialized Canadians earning only 81.4 cents for every dollar paid to non-racialized Canadians. There is also a pronounced gendered dimension to Canada's racialized income gap. The greatest gap is seen when comparing the earnings of non-racialized men (1 dollar) to racialized women (55.6 cents) (Block and Galabuzi 2011).

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In Ottawa, racialized people represent almost 50 percent of poorer citizens – a number grossly disproportionate to their representation in the general population. However, the nature and degree of economic exclusion varies among racialized groups (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b).

In 2010, 21.1 percent of racialized residents lived in poverty (Statistics Canada 2011a). Racialized women were more likely to be in a low income situation than non-racialized women. Of the racialized women in an economic family, 28 percent were below the low-income cut-off before tax, compared with 14 percent of non-racialized women. The incidence of low income for racialized women (28 percent) was slightly higher than for their male counterparts (27 percent). When immigrant status was taken into account, 22 percent of racialized immigrant women were in low-income situations (Chui and Maheaux 2011). Racialized women, especially Black women, are more likely to be living below the Low Income Cut Off line (LICO) than any other group in Ottawa (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2007).

## EMPLOYMENT

Racialized workers tend to work in some occupational groups more than others, such as professional and sales and services. Lower than average percentages are posted for management, semi-professional and technical, supervisors, and skilled crafts and trades (Employment and Social Development Canada 2014).

Census data show that the unemployment rate in 2011 was 9.9 percent for racialized workers compared to 7.3 percent for white workers. The unemployment rate in 2011 was especially high for Arabs (14.2 percent), Blacks (12.9 percent) and South Asians (10.2 percent).

Most racialized groups find themselves on the unemployment line more often than non-racialized Canadians. Racialized men are 24 percent more likely to be unemployed than non-racialized men. Racialized women are 48 percent more likely to be unemployed than non-racialized men. This may contribute to the fact that racialized women earn 55.6 percent of the income of non-racialized men (Block and Galabuzi 2011). Higher proportions of racialized people face labour market exclusion and as such, turn to self-employment. This often results in long hours, lack of benefits, and lower incomes.

### **RACIALIZED PEOPLE IN OTTAWA FACE A GREATER RISK OF POVERTY. THEY:**

- » Comprise 34 percent of the total population of Ottawa-Gatineau living in poverty;
- » Experience a higher unemployment rate than the general population (10.8 percent vs. 4.8 percent);
- » Are underrepresented in senior, middle and other management positions (7.3 percent vs. 9.9 percent).
- » Are more likely to be in precarious jobs, with job insecurity, lower income, limited benefits and upward mobility, de-skilling, and depression. This is especially true for women;
- » Are less likely to be employed for the full-year, despite their willingness to work full-time.

(Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b, Statistics Canada 2011b, Employment and Social Development Canada 2014)



Many racialized people experience pre-employment barriers that limit access to the labour market and good jobs. For example, employers often discriminate against applicants with non-English names, even without intending to do so (Oreopoulos 2009). Other issues might include lack of recognition of [foreign credentials/qualifications](#) (Houle and Yssaad 2010), which is an issue that is currently of interest to Ottawa's [Social Planning Council](#) (2015).

## EDUCATION

Racialized individuals have better credentials than the Canadian average. According to Statistics Canada (2011a), more than 30 percent of the racialized population aged 15 and older hold a university degree (compared to 21 percent for the total population).

While members of racialized groups are more likely to be recent immigrants than other Canadians, 40 percent of racialized youth aged 20-24 were born in Canada and thus have the same educational experience as other Canadians. Many others came to Canada as young children and were mainly educated in Canada. Unfortunately, they still encounter greater problems in the job market than whites.

As reported in the study by Social Planning Council of Ottawa (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b), just as adults experience racism in the workplace, many racialized students experience discrimination and alienation in schools (from grade school through to university). Teachers who may not understand the community's demographic diversity may unknowingly perpetuate stereotypes in the schools. For example, a disproportionate number of Black and/or Somali male students are directly or indirectly discouraged from aspiring to higher education and are streamed into basic non-academic levels or special needs programs.

In Ottawa, Black, Arab, and Southeast Asian students are disproportionately represented among early school leavers compared to their percentage in the general population (36 percent vs. 27 percent, 21 percent vs. 18 percent, and 8.2 percent vs. 5.6 percent) (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008c).

## Examples of Labour Market Exclusion

- » Job requirements include “Canadian experience,” an ambiguous standard that unfairly excludes racialized immigrants;
- » Invisible barriers including biases, stereotyping, and discrimination based on a person's colour or name- rather than an assessment based on his/her actual skills or performance;
- » Destructiveness of lower expectations placed on racialized employees that may, in fact, lead to lower achievement;
- » A poisonous work environment caused by racial jokes, abusive slurs and, on occasion, physical abuse (harassment).

(Office of the Employment Equity Commissioner 1991, Ontario Human Rights Commission 2013)

## EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In Ottawa there are many barriers to meaningful employment for racialized people. These include the dominate cultural contexts of hiring and promotion, lack of access to networks, the importance of French-English bilingualism, the presence of racism, and the spread of Islamophobia since 9/11.

Many racialized people experience the “glass ceiling” in their workplace. The glass ceiling is a concept that refers to the inaccessibility of promotion in an environment thought to be inclusive and barrier-free. Barriers to promotion can also come from the external work environment. Despite objective performance measures, racialized people often receive lower ratings in anonymous customer feedback surveys than do white males.

## WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Harassment is defined as a malicious course of comment or action against an individual that is “known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome” (Government of Ontario 2014). The Canadian Human Rights Commission goes one step further to prohibit harassment on several grounds, including race, colour, ancestry and creed. “Harassment is a form of discrimination. It involves any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates you.”

(Canadian Human Rights Commission 2013)

Harassment leads to negative repercussions in the workplace, such as unhappiness, loss of self-esteem, low productivity, low morale, depression, higher rates of absenteeism, and higher staff turnover. When left unchecked, workplace harassment can have lasting psychological and physical impacts on its victims and their families.

### Examples of Racial Harassment:

- » Racial epithets, slurs or jokes;
- » Being subjected to racial name calling or nicknames;
- » Racial jokes, cartoons or graffiti, including when circulated by e-mail;
- » Ridiculing comments related to race-related characteristics;
- » Being subjected to references to racist organizations, such as having “KKK” painted on a locker.

(Ontario Human Rights Commission 2008)

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## RACIAL PROFILING

Racial profiling means making assumptions about an individual because they belong to a specific group. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2015), racial profiling includes “any action undertaken for reasons of safety, security or public protection that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, or place of origin rather than on reasonable suspicion, to single out an individual for greater scrutiny or different treatment.”

Many racialized people, especially young black males, Muslims, and Arabs, are suspected, targeted, and highly monitored in the realms of policing and security, the justice system, schools, and stores.

Profiling has a devastating impact on people’s self-esteem and attitudes, and also results in unfair imprisonment and the disruption of career and family lives. Since 9/11, Muslim men are often suspected and questioned because of Islamophobia (see [Definitions](#)).

Racialized people in the justice system may continue to face discrimination. Some of the manifestations of racism include:

- » Racially biased attitudes and practices of judges, jurors, lawyers, and other court officials;
- » Biased jury-selection procedures;
- » Sentencing disparities;
- » Lack of representation;
- » Perceived neutrality of the law.

(Henry and Tator 2010, 126)

### Racial Profiling Facts:

- » In Ontario, Black suspects are 5.5 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured from police use of force than white suspects, and they are 10 times more likely to be shot by police;
- » In Ontario, African Canadians make up 14 percent of the federal offender population, but only 3.3 percent of the provincial population;
- » Black women are seven times more likely to be sent to Ontario prisons than white women;
- » One of three women in prison is from a racialized group.

(Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008a, Colour of Poverty 2010)

## HATE CRIMES

Hate crimes are motivated by hatred and can involve intimidation, harassment, physical force, or threat of physical force. It may be directed against an individual, a group, or a property. It is also a crime to incite others to hatred.

According to Statistics Canada, “In 2012, there were 1,414 police-reported criminal incidents motivated by hate, or 4.1 incidents per 100,000 population. ... About half of all hate crimes (704 incidents, or 51 percent) were motivated by hatred toward a race or ethnicity (or ancestry) such as Black, Asian, Arab or Aboriginal populations. Another 419 incidents or 30 percent of incidents were motivated by hatred towards a religious group, including hate crimes targeting Jewish, Muslim, Catholic and other religious populations” (Allen 2014).

Ottawa is among the worst cities in Ontario for hate crimes and the number is increasing (8.7 incidence per 100,000 people, the average for Canada is 3.9). Moreover, Ontario has the highest rate of hate crime of any province in Canada (Boyce 2015).

According to the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization, 16 percent of respondents reported having come across content on the Internet that promoted hatred or violence toward an identifiable group. Hate content on the Internet was most frequently reported as targeting ethnic or religious groups (57 percent) (Perreault 2011).

## HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

Due to higher incidences of poverty and limited affordable housing, many racialized people experience housing difficulties. Difficulties may include a lack of access to capital for home ownership, poor housing conditions, overcrowding and stress for larger or extended families, and risk of eviction and homelessness (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b).

High concentrations of poverty and substandard housing can lead to geographic segregation (e.g., neighbourhood exclusion by race and income). Segregated neighbourhoods generally have poor community design, limited public services, lower quality of schools, few stores or businesses, restricted transportation, and lack of places for arts, recreation, and gathering.

Such neighbourhoods become known as bad areas, and local residents are labelled as “delinquent.” This, in turn, impacts the mental health, economic prosperity, and social conditions of future generations growing up (Government of Ontario 2008, Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2008b, Colour of Poverty 2010).



## CIVIC AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Many racialized communities have a strong practice of civic engagement in their own community infrastructure and support networks, both based in their culture and tradition and out of necessity resulting from exclusion from mainstream society. People’s hesitance to enter into political, social or community activities can be attributed to:

- » Financial barriers and not having a good job (especially single-earner families);
- » Lack of time (working long hours and child care);
- » Past and current history of discrimination, and lack of trust in the mainstream institutions;
- » Lack of knowledge of the political system and voting practices;
- » Overextended resources of community groups;
- » Exclusion, discrimination or lack of openness in political institutions;
- » Public participation processes that are not designed with the needs of all groups in mind (e.g., evening meetings conflict with care-giving responsibilities, language barrier);
- » Experience of not being listened to or not seeing results from consultation;
- » Communities do not see people “like them” in civic institutions;
- » Lack of role models and members in positions of authority;
- » Civic participation materials are not distributed in multiple languages.

(Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2006, 2008b)

## 5. *We Envision: A Racism-free City*

- » Groups of people are no longer racialized – e.g., negatively defined or disadvantaged based on skin colour, culture, language, religion, etc;
- » Individuals take ongoing responsibility to address systemic and individual racism;
- » The City takes leadership on, and is committed to, addressing issues of racism;
- » The City works closely with communities to create shared solutions to racism (e.g., UNESCO Coalition of Canadian Municipalities against Racism);
- » Racialized communities are included as an important part of the cultural fabric of the city;
- » Racialized people are integral and respected in the workplace, and work as staff, supervisors, managers and Councillors, alongside non-racialized people;
- » Clear and efficient processes are in place to support and report back to individuals who experience racism and discrimination;
- » Managers and decision-makers are pro-active in eliminating institutional practices and assumptions that may perpetuate systemic racism; and,
- » The contributions of diverse racial and ethno-cultural communities in the workplace and community are valued.

### WHAT CAN ALLIES DO?

- ✓ **Listen** to the voices of racialized people and learn from them.
- ✓ **Be open-minded** and avoid viewing white or European culture as the norm and other ethnicities or cultures as strange or exotic.
- ✓ **Ensure** our workplace, systems and services respect people of diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds.
- ✓ **Remember** that just because I don't see racism, it doesn't mean it isn't there.
- ✓ **Be aware** of unconscious bias.
- ✓ **Challenge** misinformation.
- ✓ **Recognize** that sometimes I will feel uncomfortable with the topic of racism, and know it's OK to feel that way.
- ✓ **Object** when I see or hear something that I think is racist (a joke, insult), even though it may be unpopular.
- ✓ **Partner** with community organizations working with racialized people.
- ✓ **Notice** if racialized people on my team are not heard in a discussion, and draw them into the conversation.
- ✓ **Check** for organizational practices and assumptions that perpetuate systemic racism.
- ✓ **Champion diversity** by connecting with communities.
- ✓ **Learn** about different cultures and ways of seeing the world and try to unlearn prejudices.
- ✓ And, if I am a Racialized person, I know that I can use my knowledge and experience to challenge the city as well as to enrich it.

## 6. Council Mandates and Legislation

- » [City of Ottawa, Equity and Diversity Policy](#)
- » City of Ottawa, Duty to accommodate
- » City of Ottawa, Workplace Harassment Policy
- » [Ontario Health and Safety Act](#)
- » [Ontario Human Rights Code \(Provincial\)](#)
- » [Employment Equity Act \(EEA\) \(Federal\)](#)
- » [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- » [Canadian Human Rights Act \(CHRA\) \(Federal\)](#)
- » [Canadian Multiculturalism Act \(Federal\)](#)
- » [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination \(ICERD\)](#)
- » [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- » [The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#)
- » [The United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)

## 7. What's Happening in Ottawa

- » In 2014, a Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Management Working Group was formed to provide interdepartmental leadership and advance corporate and departmental strategies that promote diversity and inclusion at the City of Ottawa. The goal of the Working Group is to “promote and advance the implementation of corporate and departmental diversity initiatives in order to strive for excellence in creating a respectful, diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace at the City of Ottawa” (Terms of Reference, 2014).
- » City of Ottawa Equity and Inclusion Lens training for City staff – The Guide and Training teaches staff about issues such as racism and discrimination and provides guidelines on how to talk about them and tools to address them in their daily work.
- » The City of Ottawa’s Diversity Champion Program aims to promote ongoing diversity initiatives within each department of the City and foster new initiatives and partnerships with the community. Diversity “Champions” aim to improve knowledge and understanding of diversity, build capacity around cultural competence, increase diversity within the workforce and better understand the needs of the diverse communities it serves and enhance customer satisfaction.

- » [Ottawa Police Service – The Diversity and Race Relations Section](#) works to ensure that the police respond effectively, appropriately and sensitively to all members of the community, particularly those who have traditionally been marginalized by society. They work to strengthen communication between police and immigrants, racialized people and Aboriginal peoples through various initiatives including monthly [Community Police Action Committee \(COMPAC\)](#) and [GLBT Liaison Committee](#) meetings.
- » [Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project TSRDCP](#) - The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) is committed to developing and maintaining the trust of the community it serves by providing responsive, effective and equitable policing to all residents. They are committed to the principle that all persons have the right to live and work in an environment that is free of police action based on racial bias and racial profiling. Starting June 27, 2013, Ottawa Police Officers, by their observation only, began recording the race of the driver at all traffic (motor vehicle) stops. They did so for a two-year period.
- » Ottawa-Carleton District School Board – [Anti-racism and Ethnocultural Equity Procedure](#) provides equity of access and treatment for all learners. The [Advisory Committee on Equity \(ACE\)](#) assists the Board of Trustees in its commitment to provide an equitable and inclusive educational and work environment which supports student achievement and well-being. ACE provides strategic policy and program advice on matters of diversity which support student learning and the development of citizenship.

## 8. Relevant Practices in Other Cities

[Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities](#) presents a flexible approach to equity and inclusion and is adaptable to the diverse structures, contexts, and experiences of municipalities from across Canada. Flip through the different sections of this guide or visit [City for All Women Initiative \(CAWI\)](#) to find examples from municipalities across Canada.



## 9. Sources

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## 10. Definitions

**ALLY:** Someone from a dominant group who takes a stand against injustice directed at oppressed groups and who joins or supports them in their struggle.

**ETHNIC / ETHNICITY:** Describes a person or community's cultural heritage in the broadest sense, including linguistic, historical, geographical, religious or racial identity. Everyone belongs to an ethnic group. However, the word is often used to identify only non-dominant or less powerful cultural identities in Canada (Lopes and Thomas 2006).

**ETHNOCENTRISM:** is the process of evaluating other cultures according to preconceptions originating in the standards and customs of your own culture.

**ISLAMOPHOBIA / ANTI-ARAB RACISM:** Expressions of negative stereotypes, bias, or acts of hostility towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general, especially after the 9/11 attacks. In Canada, examples include the depiction of Islam as violent and fundamentalist. It is reflected in the depiction of all Arabs as Muslim, and all Muslims as Arab (Lopes and Thomas 2006, Canadian Race Relations Foundation 2015a).

**PEOPLE OF COLOUR:** Many racialized people prefer to identify themselves as people of colour, as this is a term to name ourselves as people with a positive self-identity. This is different from being labelled as "non-whites," "coloured," "ethnics," or "visible minorities" which view whiteness as the standard by which everyone is defined (Lopes and Thomas 2006).

**RACE:** A social concept that differentiates people into a hierarchy based on arbitrary criteria such as skin colour, hair texture, facial features, etc. Race is not about inherent characteristics of a group. In fact, there is no clear scientific or biological basis for differentiating humans into different races. But socially, race still affects the lives of many people of colour negatively (Saloojee 2003, Lopes and Thomas 2006).

**RACISM:** Aspects of society that overtly or covertly attribute value and normality to White people or Whiteness and that devalue, stereotype, and label racialized communities as “other”, different, less than, or render them invisible.

- » **Individual racism** - the beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be unconscious or conscious, active or passive.
- » **Systemic racism** – the conscious or unconscious policies, procedures, and practices that exclude, marginalize, and economically disadvantage racialized communities or people of colour. Systemic racism is supported by institutional power which makes racism look normal and justified. (Lopes and Thomas 2006)

**RACIAL/SKIN PRIVILEGE:** The invisible advantages that are attached to being a member of the dominant white culture in Canada, and anywhere of European colonialism, has created racial inequity. Many white people don't recognize the privilege that comes with having lighter skin in our society (e.g., the ability to be unaware of race and racism; the assumption that getting hired or promoted was due to their competence and not because of their race).

People who are white may face discrimination because of their class, gender, sexual orientation, religion and age or because of their nationality, ethnicity, language, etc. (e.g. Armenian, Italian, Jewish, etc.). However, this does not erase the racial privilege (Lopes and Thomas 2006, McIntosh 1988, Canadian Race Relations Foundation 2015a).

**SHADISM:** Discrimination of individuals based on skin tone. This tends to affect women more than men and is rooted in European colonialism and the exportation of European ideals of beauty. More recently, [controversy](#) has surrounded media outlets and advertisers who have been accused of lightening the skin tone of celebrities.

**VISIBLE MINORITY:** A category used in the federal Employment Equity Act to identify people who are non-Aboriginal, non-Caucasian in race, and non-white in colour.

In March 2007, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination urged Canada to review its use of the term “visible minority” because it singles out a group in a way that perpetuates racism (Canadian Race Relations Foundation 2015b).

# 11. Acknowledgments

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**Status of Women  
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