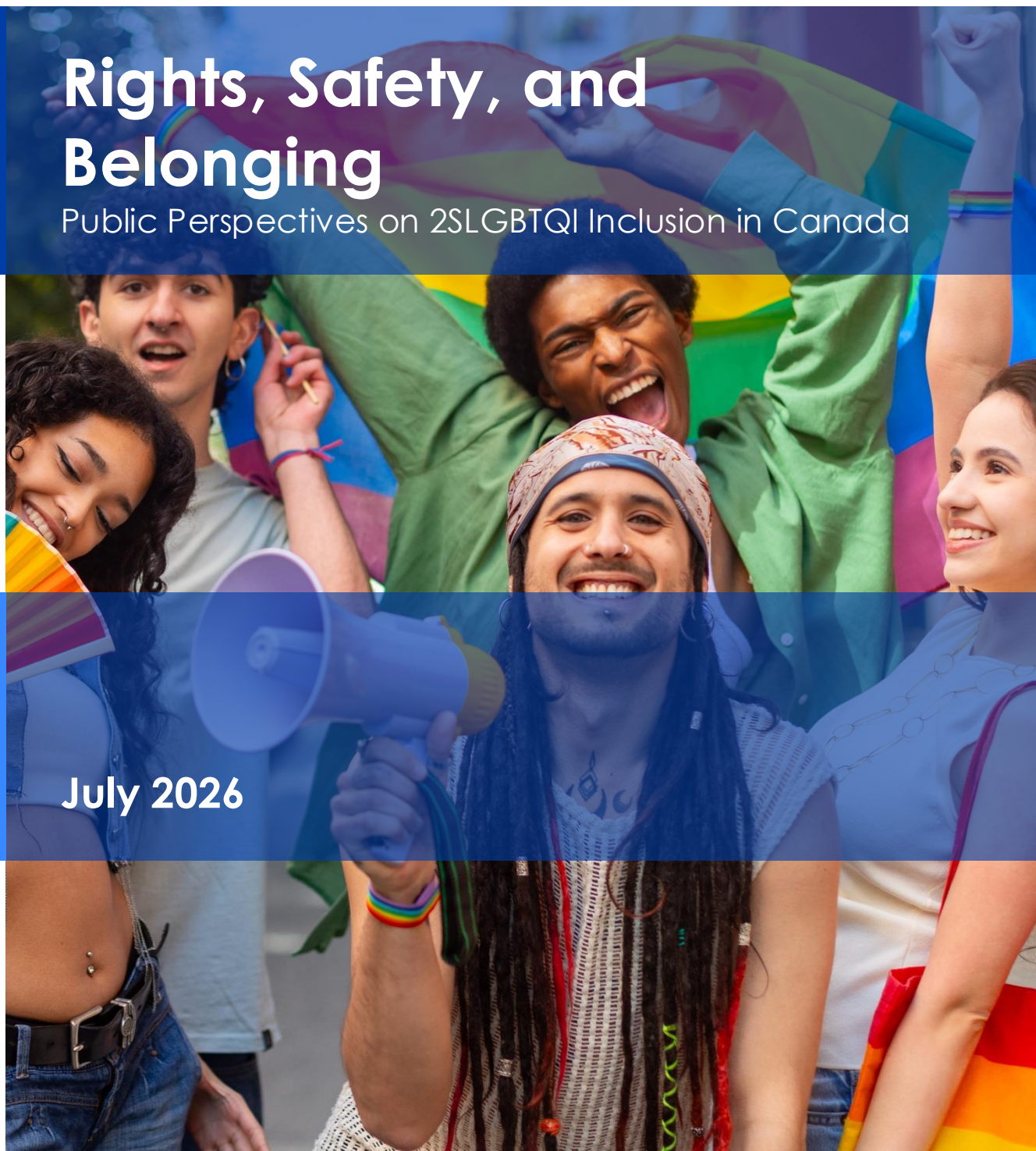




Rights, Safety, and Belonging

Public Perspectives on 2SLGBTQI Inclusion in Canada

July 2026



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Egale is based on the traditional shared territories of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. The territory is protected by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. The concepts of gender, sexuality, and oppression that we often rely on in 2SLGBTQI advocacy work are largely based in white, Western, colonial systems of thought and do not represent the multitude of understandings of identity that exist outside of this viewpoint. Colonial violence created the foundations for the landscape of gender-based violence that we understand today. Indigenous communities and Two Spirit activists, scholars, writers, and artists have gifted us with ample tools to work with as we move toward the collective liberation of gender and sexuality minority people. We are grateful to carry these with us here and in our work beyond. The violence of colonialism is ongoing. So too are movements toward resisting this violence.

Acknowledgments

About Egale Canada

Egale is Canada's leading organization for 2SLGBTQI people and issues. We improve and save lives through research, education, awareness, and by advocating for human rights and equality in Canada and around the world.

Our work helps create societies and systems that reflect the universal truth that all persons are equal and none is other.

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217-120 Carlton Street, Toronto, ON, M5A 4K2
(416) 964-7887 | info@egale.ca | egale.ca

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Methodology	4
Report Summary	4
Findings	5
Misinformation and Disinformation	5
Human Rights, Hate and Discrimination	7
Targets of Hate and Discrimination	8
Canada Still Has Work To Do	9
Support for Communities with Diverse Sexual Orientations	10
Support for Communities with Diverse Gender Identities	10
Access to Healthcare and Gender-Affirming Care	11
2SLGBTQI Education in Schools	12
Inclusion in Recreation Sports	14
Conclusion	15

Introduction

Advocating for 2SLGBTQI rights in Canada remains essential to safeguarding fundamental human rights and ensuring that progress toward equality is defended. Although Canada has achieved significant milestones, such as the legalization of same-sex marriage and the inclusion of gender identity and gender expression in federal human rights protections, and recent policy developments. Continued advocacy is critical to ensuring that 2SLGBTQI individuals, particularly vulnerable young people, are treated with dignity, have access to appropriate healthcare and safe educational environments, and that Canada upholds its broader commitment to equality, inclusion, and the protection of minority rights.

Methodology

The data presented in this report is based on responses collected from n=1,529 general population participants from across Canada, 18 years of age and above. Conducted between April 21 and May 1, 2026. The final survey sample is nationally representative based on provincial/territorial, age and biological sex distributions.

Report Summary

Canadians broadly recognize that 2SLGBTQI rights are human rights, with strong agreement that fair treatment regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, access to healthcare, and protection from hate and discrimination are fundamental to an inclusive society. The findings show clear concern about the role of misinformation in fueling hate, while also revealing a gap in public confidence around identifying and responding to misinformation.

Across the report, Canadians express support for inclusion in healthcare, schools, and recreational spaces when issues are framed around fairness, safety, medical autonomy, and young people's wellbeing. At the same time, many believe Canada still has work to do before 2SLGBTQI people can feel fully safe and free to be themselves. This points to an important opportunity for continued public education, advocacy, and policy leadership to protect rights, reduce harm, and strengthen belonging for 2SLGBTQI communities across Canada.

Misinformation and Disinformation

Canadians are deeply concerned about misinformation, and they see its connection to hate. The challenge is not only false information itself, but people's limited confidence in knowing how to recognize and respond to it.

Misinformation and disinformation are commonly known as "fake news".

Misinformation is false information that is shared without the intention of causing harm. An example of this could be an individual sharing information that they believe to be true, without properly evaluating and analyzing the information, or determining if the information is based in fact.

Disinformation is false information that is created and shared with the direct intention of misleading or manipulating the recipient of the information. An example of this could be an organization fabricating information about a particular segment of society to sway the public's perception or opinion. For example, the continued strategic linking of immigrants and refugees to criminality.

81%

of Canadians agree **hate, discrimination, and racism** are **fueled by misinformation and disinformation**.

17%

of Canadians agree people know **how to spot misinformation**.

39%

of Canadians are **confident** in their ability to **spot misinformation or disinformation**.



90% of Canadians are concerned about the impact of misinformation and disinformation on people in Canada

Human Rights, Hate and Discrimination

Canadians see human rights through the lens of dignity, healthcare, and fairness. For most, fair treatment regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation belongs in that same human-rights conversation.

70%

of Canadians consider being
treated fairly regardless of gender identity
is fundamental to human rights.

69%

of Canadians consider being
treated fairly regardless of sexual orientation
is fundamental to human rights.

83%

of Canadians consider being
able to access healthcare
is fundamental to human rights.

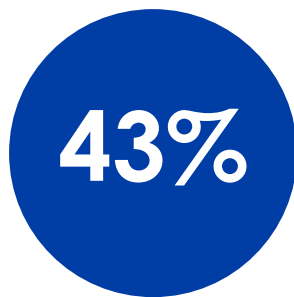
78%

of Canadians consider being
treated fairly regardless of race
is fundamental to human rights.

Targets of Hate and Discrimination

Many Canadians recognize 2SLGBTQI people are targets of hate and discrimination, along with many other communities. Looking at these findings through an intersectional lens helps show how hate and discrimination can affect people across overlapping identities, experiences, and communities.

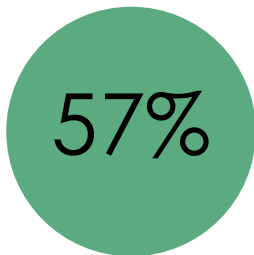
Percentage of Canadians who believe each group is a target of hate and discrimination in Canada:



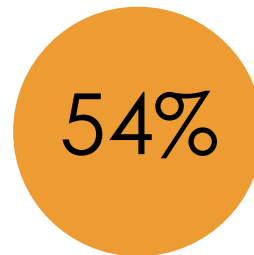
People with diverse
sexual orientations



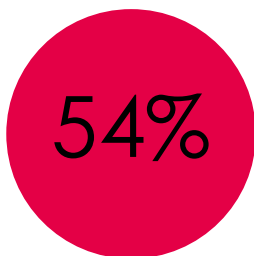
People with diverse
gender identities



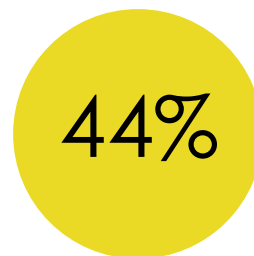
Immigrants



Racial groups
(e.g. Black, Asian, etc.)



Religious groups
(e.g. Jews, Muslims, etc.)

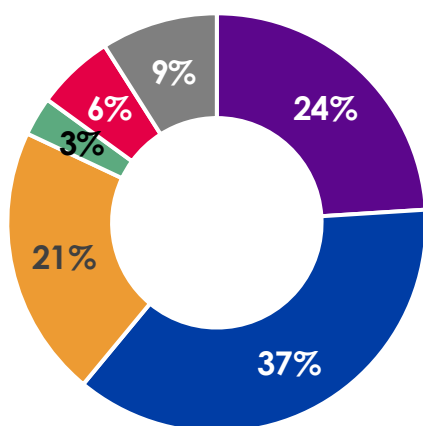


Newcomers

Canada Still Has Work To Do

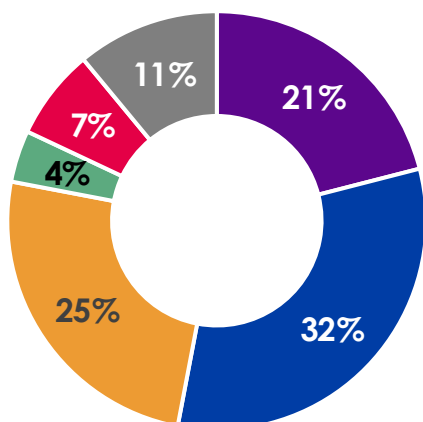
More than half of Canadians believe Canada still has work to do to ensure 2SLGBTQI people can be safe and free to be themselves. **1 in 4** say Canada is already that place for communities with diverse sexual orientations, falling to about **1 in 5** for communities with diverse gender identities. This points to a gap between Canada's inclusive self-image and the lived realities of 2SLGBTQI people.

For communities with diverse sexual orientations:

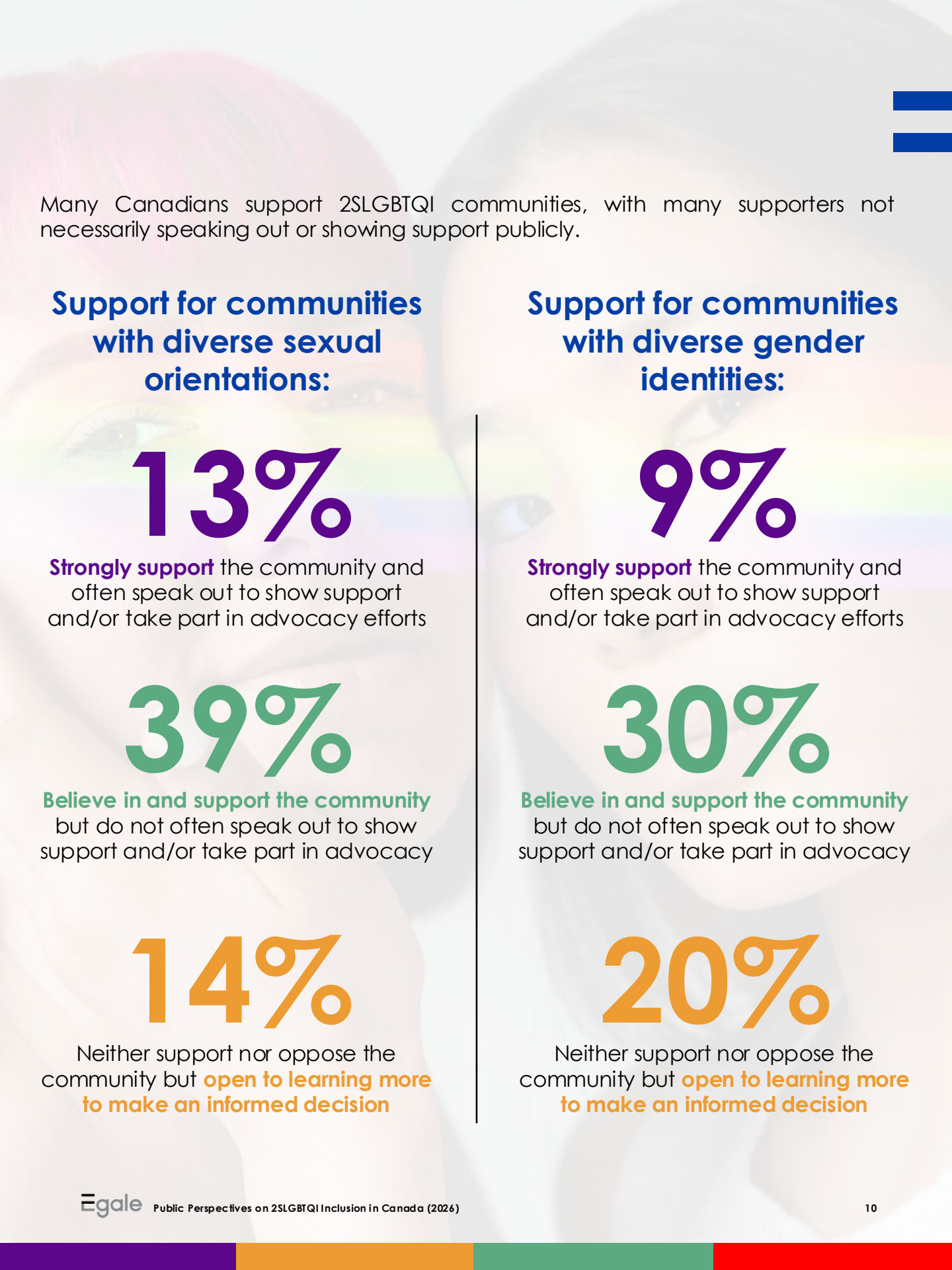


- Canada is a place where the community can generally be safe and be themselves
- Canada should be a place where the community can be safe and be themselves, but we still have work to do
- Canada often presents itself as inclusive, but many of the people in this community still do not feel fully safe or free to be themselves

For communities with diverse gender identities:



- Canada is becoming a less safe and welcoming place for people in this community
- Issues affecting the community are given more attention than they deserve
- Don't know/not sure



Many Canadians support 2SLGBTQI communities, with many supporters not necessarily speaking out or showing support publicly.

Support for communities with diverse sexual orientations:

13%

Strongly support the community and often speak out to show support and/or take part in advocacy efforts

39%

Believe in and support the community but do not often speak out to show support and/or take part in advocacy

14%

Neither support nor oppose the community but **open to learning more to make an informed decision**

Support for communities with diverse gender identities:

9%

Strongly support the community and often speak out to show support and/or take part in advocacy efforts

30%

Believe in and support the community but do not often speak out to show support and/or take part in advocacy

20%

Neither support nor oppose the community but **open to learning more to make an informed decision**

Access to Healthcare and Gender-Affirming Care

When gender-affirming care is seen as healthcare, Canadians strongly support principles of science-based care, medical autonomy, and decisions made by patients, families, and doctors – free from politics and government legislation.



Healthcare should be guided by science, not political opinion.

■ Agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree ■ Don't know



Nobody should be denied access to the medical care they need because of who they are.



Doctors, together with their patients, must be free to make the best possible medical decisions.



Decisions about gender-affirming care for young people should remain between young people, their doctors, and their families.



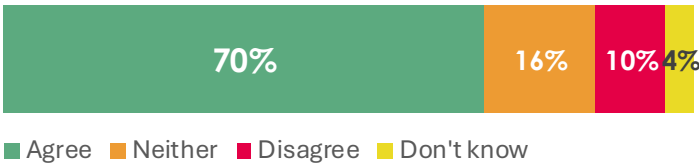
The government should not interfere with what is medically necessary.



The government has no place in personal medical decisions.

2SLGBTQI Education in Schools

Canadians broadly support schools as places where young people learn about diversity. Support is strongest when inclusive education is positioned as age-appropriate learning, belonging, safety, respect and fairness.



A benefit of public education is the opportunity it provides young people to learn about the society in which they live, in all its diversity.



School curriculums should include age-appropriate education about different gender identities, sexual orientations, and all types of families.



Young people should be able to be themselves at school, including choosing for themselves what pronouns and name they use while at school.





57%

Comfortable with age-appropriate discussions
about **diverse family structures** in schools.
(14% neither comfortable or not uncomfortable)

55%

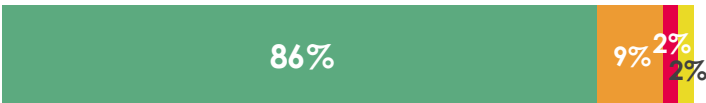
Comfortable with age-appropriate discussions
about **sexual orientations** in schools.
(19% neither comfortable or not uncomfortable)

48%

Comfortable with age-appropriate discussions
about **gender identities** in schools.
(21% neither comfortable or not uncomfortable)

Inclusion in Recreation Sports

Canadians strongly value recreational sports as a space for development, belonging, and community for young people. And most support participation in recreational sports regardless of gender.



■ Agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree ■ Don't know

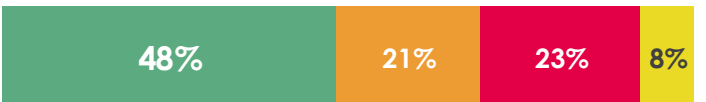
Sports and recreation are important to the healthy social development of young people.



Participation in recreational sports is important for people to feel a sense belonging and community.



Everyone should be able to participate in recreational sports, regardless of their gender.



I support removing barriers for transgender people to participate in recreational sports.



Conclusion

Canadians broadly support the values that underpin 2SLGBTQI inclusion – fairness, safety, access to healthcare, and the ability to live free from hate and discrimination. The findings show that support is strongest when issues are framed around universal principles: science-based healthcare, medical autonomy, age-appropriate education, young people's wellbeing, and belonging in community spaces.

At the same time, the data points to an important gap between Canada's inclusive self-image and the reality many 2SLGBTQI people continue to face. Many Canadians recognize that 2SLGBTQI communities remain targets of hate and discrimination, and more than half believe Canada still has work to do before people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities can be fully safe and free to be themselves.

Misinformation is a central challenge. Canadians are highly concerned about its impact and widely agree that misinformation fuels hate, discrimination, and racism, but far fewer feel confident in their ability to identify or respond to it. This creates a clear need for public education, trusted information, and continued advocacy.

Overall, this research with Canadians suggests that advancing 2SLGBTQI rights in Canada requires both protection and persuasion in 2026: protecting access to healthcare, inclusive education, and safe participation in public life, while also helping Canadians connect these issues to shared values of dignity, fairness, safety, and human rights.

Egale



217-120 Carlton St., Toronto, ON,
M5A 4K2



(416) 964-7887



communications@egale.ca



egale.ca

@egalecanada

