

Methodology:

Results are based on an online survey conducted from August 2 to August 4, 2026, among 802 adults in British Columbia. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in British Columbia. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.5 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

The B.C. Supreme Court's recent decision states that Aboriginal title is a "prior and senior right" to other property interests, regardless of whether the land in question is public or private. Thinking about this, do you think property owners in British Columbia should be concerned about the consequences of the decision?

Definitely / Probably – 69% (+1)

Probably not / Definitely not – 17% (+1)

Not sure – 13% (-2)

Views on Indigenous Issues Turn Negative Across British Columbia

More than two thirds remain concerned about the ramifications of the B.C. Supreme Court's Cowichan decision.

Vancouver, BC [August 13, 2026] – British Columbians are not as enthused about specific matters related to Indigenous communities as they were at the end of 2025, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative provincial sample, almost half of British Columbians (47%) say they have heard about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), up 12 points since a similar Research Co. poll conducted in [November 2025](#).

UNDRIP establishes global standards for the rights of Indigenous peoples. It outlines collective and individual rights, such as self-determination, and the right to maintain distinct cultures, languages and institutions.

The UNDRIP Act, which came into effect in June 2021, requires the Canadian government to ensure all laws are consistent with the Declaration, in consultation with Indigenous peoples, and mandates the creation of an action plan to achieve the Declaration's objectives.

Just under three-in-five British Columbians (59%, -14) believe the UNDRIP Act is a positive development for Canada, while 25% (+11) regard it negatively and 16% (+3) are not sure.

"Animosity towards the UNDRIP Act is particularly high among those who voted for the Conservative Party of BC in the 2024 provincial election (46%)," says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. "Only 23% of BC New Democratic Party (NDP) voters and 16% of BC Green Party voters think it has been a negative development for Canada."

More than half of British Columbians (53%, -10) say the right of self-determination—meaning that Indigenous people can determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and dispose of and benefit from their wealth and natural resources—has been positive for Canada.

Majorities of British Columbians believe First Nations and Indigenous organizations across British Columbia should decide what type of housing projects can be built on their territories (64%, -2) and if natural resource projects can be established on their territories (59%, -3).



British Columbians are almost evenly split on the practice of non-Indigenous Canadians and Permanent Residents calling themselves “settlers”: 38% (-7) regard it as adequate, while 36% (+6) consider it inadequate.

Three-in-five British Columbians (60%, -8) say territory acknowledgements are adequate in today's Canada, while almost one-in-four (24%, +6) think this gesture is inadequate.

Only 33% of British Columbians (-6) believe people should speak positively about the Residential School system, while 45% (+2) consider this course of action as inadequate.

There are also significant drops since November 2025 on the proportion of British Columbians who think that, compared to 20 years ago, First Nations and Indigenous organizations are doing better on cultural development (45%, -5), economic development (42%, -7) and social development (37%, -7).

Economic Reconciliation is defined as “the process of making economic amends for historical injustices to Indigenous Peoples.”

Almost three-in-ten British Columbians (28%) consider that the provincial government is doing “too much” to foster Economic Reconciliation. Fewer express the same feeling when assessing the actions of the federal government (25%) or their municipal government (20%).

As was the case in November 2025, more than two-in-five British Columbians (45%, +1) say they are following news related to the B.C. Supreme Court's Cowichan decision “very closely” or “moderately closely”.

The B.C. Supreme Court ruled that the Cowichan Tribes had “established Aboriginal title” to more than 5.7 square kilometres of land in Richmond and stated that Aboriginal title is a “prior and senior right” to other property interests, regardless of whether the land in question is public or private.

Almost seven-in-ten British Columbians (69%, +1) believe property owners in British Columbia should be concerned about the consequences of the court's decision, including 76% of those aged 55 and over and 75% of those who own their primary residence.

More than three-in-five British Columbians (61%, +9) think all negotiations related to Aboriginal title agreements in British





Columbia should be paused until the Cowichan Tribes case is settled.

Majorities of British Columbians also believe that fee simple title in private property should always be superior to Aboriginal title (53%, +6) and that the B.C. Supreme Court's recent decision erases private property ownership (51%, +6).

Fewer than half of British Columbians (46%, -2)—and 42% of property owners—say they believe the Cowichan Tribes when they say they are not looking to displace any individual from the properties they own.

Most British Columbians (55%, +1) think the City of Richmond took the correct course of action by sending an official letter to property owners in the claimed area, warning them that the decision “may compromise the status and validity” of their ownership.

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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