

# BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

## Background

The provincial government introduced the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) in 2019 with the stated goal of advancing reconciliation while providing greater clarity, transparency, and certainty for decision-making in British Columbia. At the time, the government said that:

*“The new legislation aims to create further certainty for investment and reaffirms B.C. as a world-class destination providing opportunities for business while creating a strong inclusive economy. It provides an additional tool for establishing rules, transparency, and accountability when the Province works with indigenous governing bodies, business and local government on decisions affecting Indigenous rights.”*

— Office of the Premier, Oct. 24, 2019

Despite this commitment, concern within the business community about the impact of DRIPA has grown recently. The *Gitxaala Nation v. British Columbia* court decision, along with proposed changes to the Heritage Conservation Act and previously proposed amendments to the Land Act, have contributed to growing investment uncertainty in the province.

This uncertainty is being compounded by the lack of a clear direction on DRIPA and its implementation. The Province’s position has shifted several times in the past two weeks alone. The Premier initially indicated that the government would pursue amendments to the legislation, before signalling that portions of DRIPA could be suspended for a period. This was followed by an announcement that no changes would be made, and that the province would instead enter into six months of consultation with Indigenous leaders on the future of the Act.

Against this backdrop, the Business Council of British Columbia (BCBC) surveyed senior executives and C-suite leaders from across the province to assess how DRIPA is impacting their businesses, investment plans, and confidence in British Columbia.



## About the survey

BCBC surveyed its members from April 21-28, 2026, shortly after the announcement that the province would not proceed with introducing a bill to amend or suspend DRIPA in the spring 2026 session of the Legislative Assembly of B.C.

The survey canvasses the views of BCBC members who are senior decision-makers at large businesses, post-secondary institutions, and industry associations in the province. The survey was distributed to 297 individuals, with 88 responses received, representing a 30 per cent response rate. Of those respondents, 84 per cent identified as representing businesses, 10 per cent industry associations, and 6 per cent post-secondary institutions.

Survey results are not based on a random sample and are not weighted to reflect the industrial composition of British Columbia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). \*

## Overview of Findings

Survey results show that DRIPA is negatively impacting business confidence in the province, with real knock-on effects for the economy, including decreased investment, hiring, and project development. Respondents expressed near-unanimous concern about its current implementation and overwhelming agreement that the Act is not delivering on its promise of creating greater investment certainty in British Columbia.

While not directly related to DRIPA and the survey questions, the recent *Cowichan Tribes v. Canada* decision has added to broader uncertainty about the province's overall approach to reconciliation and its implications for investment. Questions around property rights and the clarity of government decision-making authority are key considerations for investors and came up repeatedly in open-ended survey responses.

The results make clear that strong relationships with Indigenous communities and advancing reconciliation remain important to businesses across the province, highlighting the need for a clearer and more effective path forward.

BCBC is committed to being part of that effort by bringing people together, supporting constructive conversations, and contributing data, analysis, and real-world perspectives to inform better decision-making.

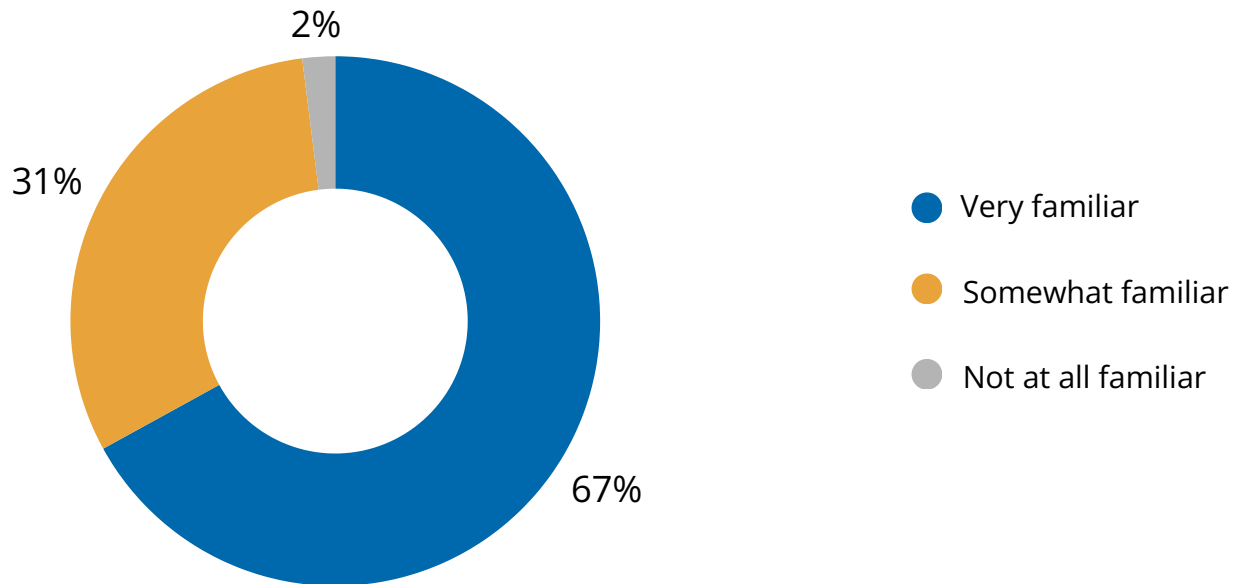
\*Note: The survey was distributed to 297 individuals representing 190 companies and organizations across British Columbia. A maximum of three individuals per organization received the survey, with most organizations having two or fewer recipients.

## Detailed Findings

- Respondents are very familiar with DRIPA and are unanimously concerned about its current implementation across all B.C. laws, with 98% very concerned and 2% somewhat concerned.
- Among companies, DRIPA was overwhelmingly described as having a negative impact on business operations. The top impacts were (multiple responses allowed):
  - Decreasing investment plans in B.C. (74%);
  - More time, cost, complexity, or uncertainty to obtain permits (73%);
  - Harder to obtain external finance (e.g., higher cost, less availability) (41%);
  - Slower or negative sales growth (36%);
  - Decreased hiring plans in B.C. (35%); and
  - Negative impacts on the balance sheet (e.g., from project delays) (32%).
- Notably, no companies said DRIPA had resulted in an increase to their investment plans, hiring plans or sales growth in B.C. Moreover, only 3% of responses described DRIPA as resulting in less time, cost, complexity, or uncertainty to obtain permits, while only 4% described DRIPA as having no direct impact on their business.
- When asked whether they agree with the statement that DRIPA is living up to its promise to create investment certainty in British Columbia, 98% of respondents disagreed.
- Respondents strongly disagree (83%) that the government has clearly articulated its vision for reconciliation, but there are mixed views on whether the opposition has done so.
- There is a broad consensus (82%) among respondents that finding a path forward on reconciliation with B.C.'s First Nations is important.
- Respondents strongly favour the repeal (59%) or amending (31%) of DRIPA. Only 2% of respondents said the Act should be left as is, while 8% were unsure.

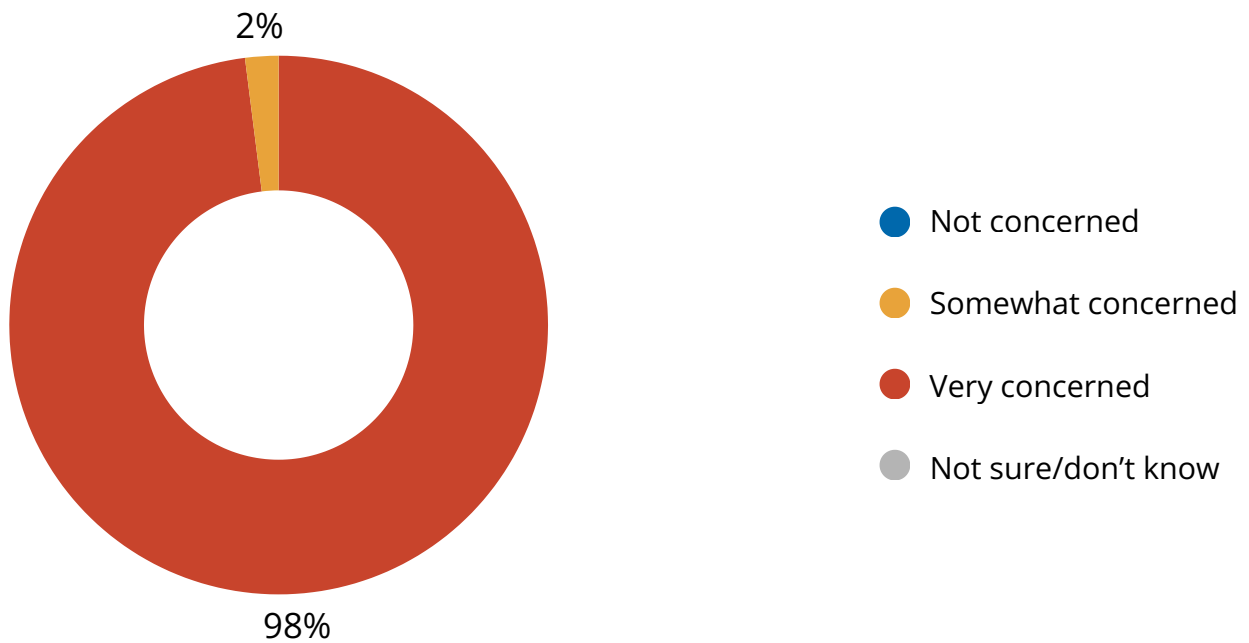
## Survey questions and answers

Question 1: How familiar are you with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)?



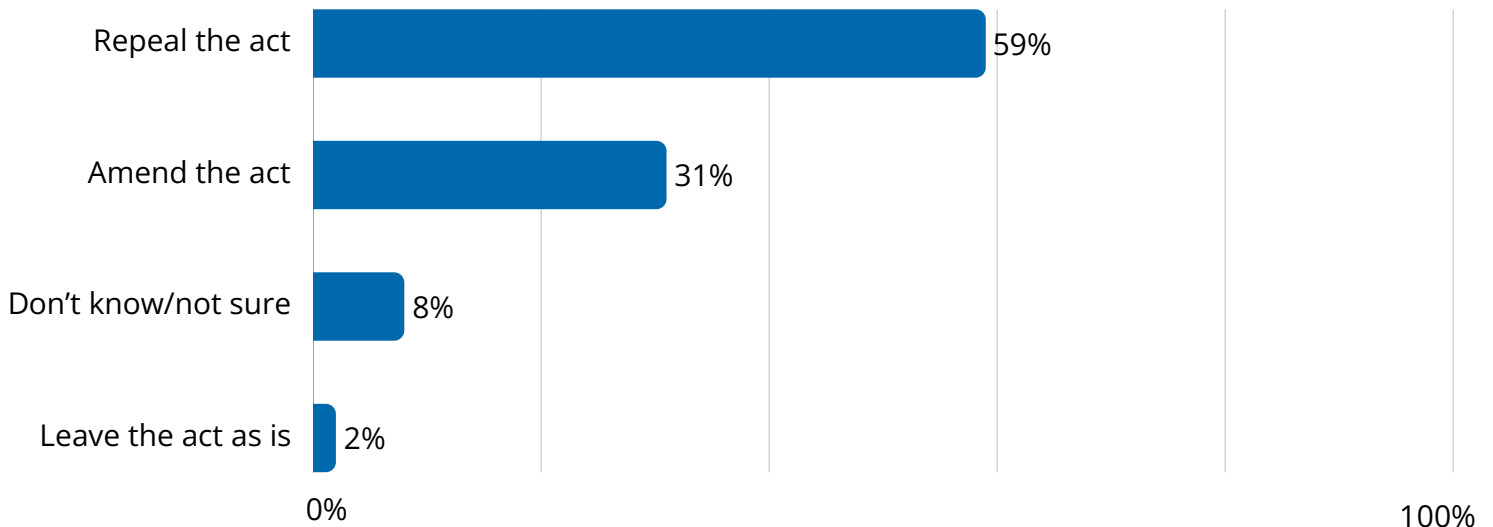
Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

Question 2: How concerned are you about the current implementation of DRIPA across all B.C. laws?



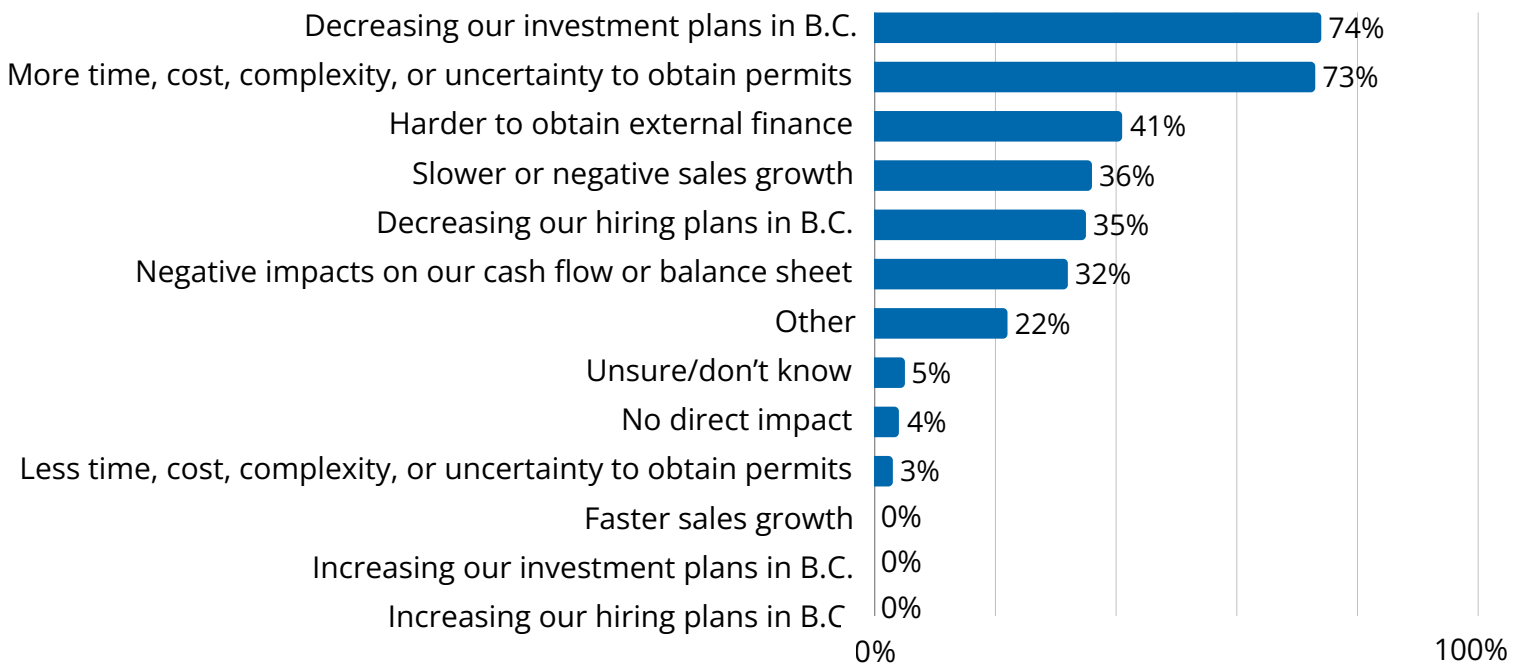
Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

**Question 3:** In your opinion, what should the government do with DRIPA?



Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

**Question 4:** What effects from the implementation of DRIPA are you seeing in your business? Select all that apply.



Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

Note: Of the 88 survey respondents, 74 were businesses. This graph includes only those business responses, as the question focused specifically on business impacts. Associations and post-secondary institutions were excluded.

Question 4 (Continued): Open-ended responses to "other, please specify" below.

Responses
B.C. is uninvestable.
B.C. is seen as an unpredictable place to do business which is driving investment away.
Uncertainty about the viability of holding property in B.C.
Adding uncertainty.
Removal of the FPIC veto would not be popular but would remove an imbalance in the relationship and must be replaced with some other mechanism that preserves the public interest and relationships with Indigenous communities.
Confusion and fear of working in B.C.
An overall lack of confidence that feeds on itself if we don't reverse this.
Contributing to a general sentiment on challenges with B.C. investment certainty and ability to execute projects.
Delay due to consultation process on land development.
Very serious concerns raised by the real estate sector and the impact on investment in B.C.
Negative investment in British Columbia, general negative market sentiment in British Columbia.
Too much uncertainty and higher costs.
Increasing negotiation leverage of Indigenous communities. Communities pushing for more when legally binding agreements with consent are in place. Challenging permits looking for more benefits when significant benefit agreements in place. Specific language used is referencing DRIPA as the justification.
Government departments are paralyzed and potential investors are more interested in Alberta power generation project opportunities.
Massive uncertainty.
Harder to attract employees to the province/unwilling to move due to confusion over property rights.
Lack of confidence from external investors is growing.

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Note: Of the 88 survey respondents, 74 were businesses. This table includes only those business responses, as the question focused specifically on business impacts. Associations and post-secondary institutions were excluded.

Question 5: To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

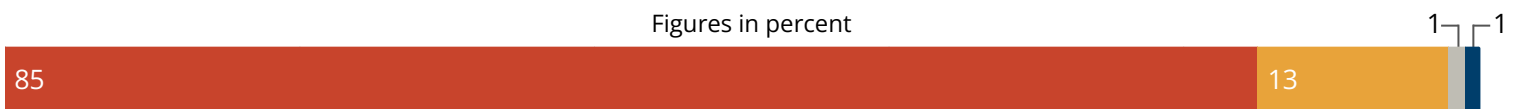
**Finding a path forward on reconciliation with B.C.'s First Nations is important.**

Figures in percent



**DRIPA is living up to its promise to create investment certainty in British Columbia.**

Figures in percent



● Strongly disagree ● Slightly disagree ● Unsure/don't know ● Slightly agree ● Strongly agree

Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

Question 6: To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

**Government has clearly articulated its vision for reconciliation.**

Figures in percent



**The opposition has clearly articulated its vision for reconciliation.**

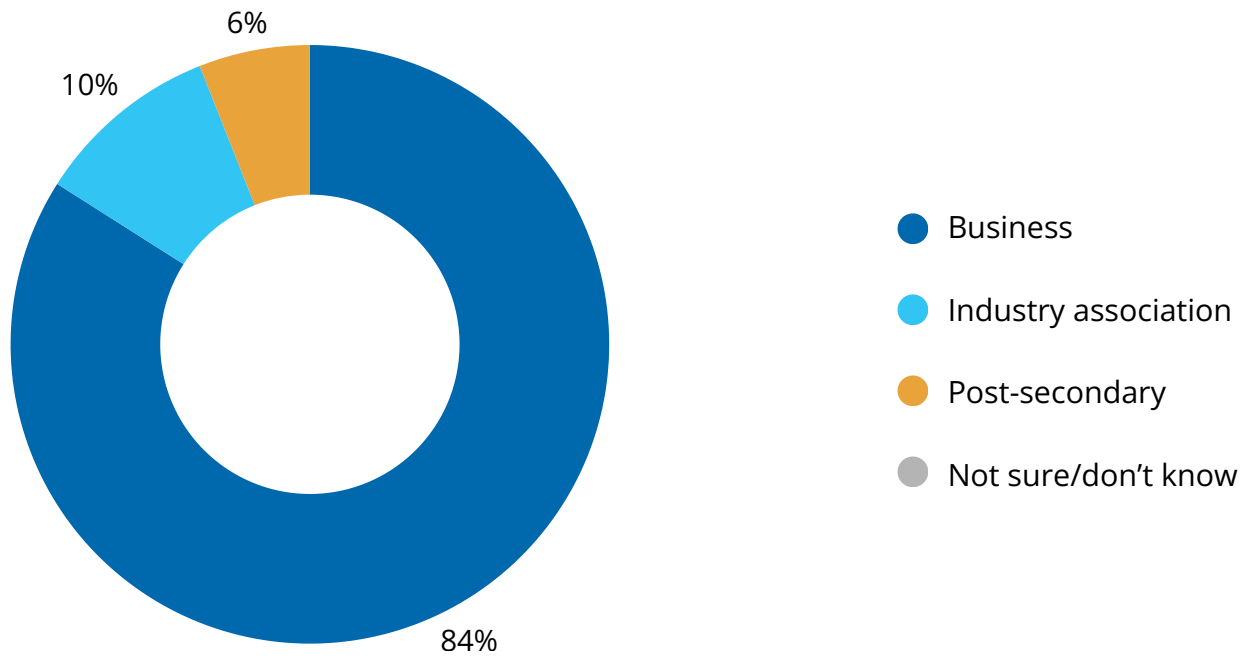
Figures in percent



● Strongly disagree ● Slightly disagree ● Unsure/don't know ● Slightly agree ● Strongly agree

Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

Question 7: Which of the following best captures the organization you represent?



Source: BCBC Member Survey on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - April 21-28, 2026, n=88

Question 8: Is there anything else you'd like to share about DRIPA's impact on your business? Specific examples, concerns, or experiences are useful.

A total of 30 open-ended responses were received, with four key themes emerging. A sample of those responses is included below.

**Theme 1: Concerns about investment and capital decisions**

*"Our shareholders have directed our team to deploy capital outside B.C. and not to bring any new projects forward if it's in B.C."*

*"B.C. is seen as an unpredictable place to do business, which is driving investment away."*

*"The impact has been devastating driving massive uncertainty and our decision to not invest any further capital in new projects in BC."*

## Question 8 (Continued):

**Theme 2: Frustration with permitting and approvals**

*"Government departments require consent for everything, citing DRIPA, even when the status quo will remain in place, and nothing happens as a result."*

*"[The current framework] has collapsed development entirely which impacts our business in B.C. directly."*

**Theme 3: Calls for greater clarity and direction**

*"Someone in government needs to have a road map for reconciliation that is achievable and has an 'end game' in mind or this uncertainty will last forever."*

*"Government needs to be direct and transparent about what reconciliation means, how to get there, how much it will cost, who will pay and they need to serve all British Columbians."*

*"What has transpired is fundamentally undemocratic and can't stand. It is incumbent upon the provincial government to clear up the uncertainty caused by DRIPA..."*

**Theme 4: Perceptions of B.C.'s investment climate**

*"Friends from around the world contact me and ask why on earth we are doing this?"*

*"We see increasing uncertainty on investment in British Columbia, both by B.C. businesses and foreign investors."*

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