

Country Summary: Russia

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- **Summary may be incomplete:** *The summary summarizes some, but not necessarily all, the intelligence information on this topic that is available to the Government of Canada's national security and intelligence community. For example, it only contains relevant information that can be appropriately sanitized for public release.*
- **Summary does not indicate time of collection:** *This summary does not indicate, unless expressly stated, when the summarized information was collected or obtained. This information was collected and analyzed over a period of time, which may/may not have been available to decision makers across the Government of Canada during the writ-period. As such, for example, it should not be assumed that the information was collected close in time to the events being described.*
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- **Summary does not indicate corroboration or lack of corroboration:** *The summary does not indicate whether other information exists that may corroborate the summarized information, or, alternatively, whether there is no such corroborating information.*
- **Summary does not analyze information:** *This document is a summary of intelligence; it is not an analysis of the overall import, meaning, or strength of intelligence.*

The Commission has been provided with all relevant intelligence and assessments, which indicates information on reliability and corroboration of the information contained therein.

WHAT

This summary has as its focus activities related to foreign interference related to elections and democratic institutions, per the mandate of the Commission. It does not address the full range of foreign interference activities observed in Canada, including transnational repression.

The Russian Federation continues to pose an FI threat to Canada, although it is likely not currently a significant foreign interference (FI) actor in relation to Canadian federal elections. Russia has the capability to escalate its disinformation¹ and interference operations to target Canada and its allies through social media and other platforms.

WHY

Russia carries out disinformation operations as part of its FI efforts in the West (Five Eyes and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Allies), including Canada. Russia's overarching goals in the conduct of disinformation operations against the West are to undermine perceived United States global dominance, discredit US and Western policies, and undermine support for US-led institutions, partnerships, and alliances; to shape public opinion, manipulate existing social issues, and exacerbate existing social divides; and to undermine public confidence in political systems and democratic processes in the West.

WHO

In recent years, Russia's FI and disinformation operations against some Western countries have been reduced, although Russian state-linked actors have continued their attempts to engage in some FI activities. Russian disinformation activities linked to the conflict Ukraine are expected to continue.

Russia coordinates its messaging efforts with an established network of media influencers in the West that are comprised of pro-Kremlin or opportunistically aligned activists which Russia uses to amplify pro-Russian narratives on a wide range of issues via various platforms.

HOW

Russia pursues various tactics, often opportunistically, according to its strategic requirements related to targeted countries or regions.

Canada does not have the same profile for Russia as some of our allies as a target for disinformation activities.

¹ Disinformation: For the purpose of this summary, disinformation is when false or modified information (including the use of truths and half-truths) is knowingly shared to deceive, cause harm or achieve a broader aim.