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Rapid Response Mechanism Canada: Global Affairs Canada

Addressing challenges to democracy and the rules-based international order requires international cooperation. The G7 Rapid Response Mechanism (G7 RRM) strengthens G7 coordination to identify and respond to foreign threats to democracies.

Canada and other G7 democracies can better safeguard our democratic values and institutions by:

- sharing information and analysis, and
- identifying opportunities for coordinated response

Rapid Response Mechanism Canada (RRM Canada) is the permanent secretariat to the G7 RRM. It convenes G7 RRM members and observers to drive the annual G7 RRM Action Plan and coordinate G7 efforts. RRM Canada also monitors the digital information environment for foreign state-sponsored disinformation, including during general elections. It also supports Canada's international engagement on foreign state sponsored disinformation.

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Canada and the G7 RRM

G7 RRM

The G7 Rapid Response Mechanism (G7 RRM) was established by Leaders at the 2018 [G7 Summit in Charlevoix](#). It strengthens coordination between G7 countries to identify and respond to diverse and evolving foreign threats to democracy. These threats include hostile state activity targeting democratic institutions and processes. It also includes the media and information environment, and the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Since its inception, the G7 RRM has focused on countering foreign state-sponsored disinformation. The G7 RRM comprises Focal Points from the G7 community, including the EU. It counts Australia, New Zealand, NATO, the Netherlands, and Sweden as observers. Focal Points leverage their respective institutional structures to support whole of government engagement.

The G7 RRM aims to enhance collaboration in the following areas:

- Building knowledge and capacity to counter foreign threats at national and subnational levels within the G7 RRM and key partners;
- Developing common data analytics tools and methods to identify foreign threats;
- Supporting research to advance a common understanding and approach to foreign information manipulation and interference;
- Strengthening the G7 RMM's capacity for coordinated response to foreign threats;
- Strengthening collaboration with other international organisations and initiatives, civil society, academia and industry to identify and counter foreign threats;
- Communicating the work of the G7 RRM to G7 publics through annual reports on foreign threats to democracy.

RRM Canada

Located at Global Affairs Canada, RRM Canada leads the G7 RRM on an ongoing basis. RRM Canada also supports Canada's international engagement to counter foreign state-sponsored disinformation. It monitors the digital information environment for foreign state-sponsored disinformation. This includes acting as an early warning system for the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force during general election cycles. RRM Canada provides open source data analytics about threats to democracy. It leverages the RRM network for information exchange and potential response.

RRM Canada's open-source data analytics are based on primary open-source data. They draw on secondary sources to find emerging trends and tactics related to foreign interference in democratic processes and

institutions. RRM Canada's work is subject to an ethical and methodological framework. It ensures that its methods respect and reinforce human rights and freedoms. This includes the right to privacy, freedom of expression and equality. The framework anchors the team's analytical activities in an existing policy, legal and regulatory context. It's intended to provide transparency and accountability to Canadians.

RRM Canada also contracts research to support its work in partnership with academia and civil society.

In March 2022, the Prime Minister announced additional funding for RRM Canada. In August 2022, he announced the creation of a dedicated Eastern Europe unit at RRM Canada. It will monitor and detect Russian disinformation.

G7 RRM annual reports

During the 2021 G7 Foreign and Development Ministers meeting in London, Foreign Ministers committed the G7 RRM to producing annual thematic reports. The reports highlight different aspects of the evolving threat landscape. They also provide possible responses in order to promote public awareness and resilience. At the request of G7 Foreign Ministers, the 2021 annual report focused on disinformation as an increasingly prominent aspect of foreign interference.

- [2022 G7 RRM Annual Report](#)
- [2021 G7 RRM Annual Report](#)

Partner resources

Countering foreign threats to democracy requires a truly whole-of-society approach. For example, the work of academia, civil society organizations, media organizations and industry is critical for:

- ensuring access to diverse and reliable source of news and information;
- fostering digital and media literacy; and
- increasing civic awareness and resilience to disinformation.

Foreign interference

Foreign interference is the attempt to covertly influence, intimidate, manipulate, interfere, corrupt or discredit individuals, organizations, and governments. It's an attempt to further the interests of a foreign country over the views of its citizens. Activities can be carried out by both state and non-state actors. It differs from normal diplomatic conduct because of its deceptive and clandestine nature.

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- Canadian Security Intelligence Service: [Foreign Interference Threats to Canada's Democratic Process \(2021\)](#)
- Canadian Center for Cyber Security: [Cyber threats to Canada's democratic Process: July 2021 update](#)
- Public Safety Canada: [Foreign Interference and Hostile Activities of State Actors \(2021\)](#)

G7 RRM partners

- Special Committee on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation (2022)
- UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office: Defending democracy from foreign threats and championing shared values (2021)
- US Homeland Security: Key Findings and Recommendations: Foreign Interference Related to the 2020 US Federal Elections (2021)

Disinformation

Disinformation refers to false or misleading information that is spread deliberately, as opposed to misinformation, which is spread unwittingly. It is a term often employed as shorthand for the broader challenge of information manipulation. In addition to false information, it includes:

- the omission of facts
- inauthentic amplification of narratives
- doctored audio/visual content
- trolling, and
- efforts to censor or coerce self-censorship of information

The efforts all aim to distort the public's perception of reality.

Democracies rely on access to diverse and reliable sources of news and information. A shared set of facts allows members of society to form opinions, hold governments to account and participate in public debate. Disinformation weakens the strength of free speech and shrinks the space for democratic engagement. It hinders open public debate and eroding trust in democracy.

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- Global Affairs Canada: [Canada's efforts to counter disinformation – Russian Invasion of Ukraine \(2022\)](#)
- Canadian Heritage: [Online disinformation \(2021\)](#)

G7 RRM partners

- European External Action Service (EEAS): [EUvsDisinfo \(2022\)](#)
- US Global Engagement Center: [Russia's Pillars of Disinformation and Propaganda \(2022\)](#)

Economic and research security

Scientific research partnerships and economic collaboration are possible vectors for interference by foreign actors. These activities can be of particular interest to foreign actors because of their role in contributing to scientific development and new technology.

G7 RRM partners

- European Union [Tackling Research and Innovation Foreign Interference \(2022\)](#)
- Australia [Guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector \(2021\)](#)

Latest news

- 2023-10-23 - [Probable PRC "Spamouflage" campaign targets dozens of Canadian Members of Parliament in disinformation campaign](#)
- 2023-08-09 - [Rapid Response Mechanism Canada detects information operation targeting member of Parliament](#)

- 2023-08-09 - [WeChat account activity targeting Canadian parliamentarian suggests likely foreign state involvement](#)

All news

Related links

- [Canada and the G7](#)
- [Charlevoix commitment on defending democracy from foreign threats](#)
- [Ministerial Declaration G7 Digital Ministers' meeting 11 May 2022](#)
- [G7 Rapid Response Mechanism announcement](#)
- [Canada's efforts to counter disinformation - Russian invasion of Ukraine](#)

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