



# Foreign Interference

## A THREAT TO CANADA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

A safe, secure and prosperous Canada through trusted intelligence, advice and action.  
Des renseignements, des conseils et des interventions fiables pour un Canada sûr et prospère.



Canadian Security  
Intelligence Service

Service canadien du  
renseignement de sécurité

Canada



# Atlantic Region

## CSIS in the Atlantic Provinces

- Canada's National security intelligence agency
- A civilian organization
- Work is preventative
- No power to arrest or detain



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# What is foreign interference?



Foreign interference is defined within the CSIS Act as “activities within or relating to Canada that are detrimental to the interests of Canada and are **clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person.**” It is at the direction of a **foreign state.**

## *What is the aim?*

Foreign states engage in FI activities in Canada for:

- strategic, military, intelligence and economic gain;
- regime preservation; or
- discrediting liberal-democratic institutions.

## Foreign Interference is NOT

### Foreign Interference Includes...

Obfuscation of state involvement in influence efforts (e.g., in Canadian media outlets);

Stifling open discussion of contentious issues through threats or coercion;

Seeking to control, unduly influence, or monitor diaspora communities, groups, and dissidents;

Foreign state coordination with private or non-state entities (e.g., companies, people) to pressure policymakers (without attribution);

Corruptive practices (e.g., exchange of small favours, payments, inducements to further a relationship);

Providing support (financial or otherwise) to 'friendly' community organizations in Canada (without attribution);

Disinformation campaigns — both online and offline.

Aggressive lobbying, lawful advocacy, or dissent

Over engagement with entities in Canada

Use of foreign state media outlets in Canada to spread propaganda

Canadian entities openly advocating support for a foreign state

# Why Canada?



Characteristics that make Canada an attractive target:

- membership in multilateral and bilateral defence and trade agreements;
- abundance of natural resources;
- leadership in many sectors;
- rich diversity and multiculturalism; and
- open society.



# What is the GoC and CSIS doing to protect against FI?

- Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force
- Ongoing whole-of-government approach to defend against FI threats
- CSIS:
  - investigates threats to the national security of Canada,
  - advises the Government of Canada, and
  - takes threat reduction measures.

# Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force - Partner Roles

## Leading to the next General Election



### SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE THREATS TO ELECTIONS TASK FORCE

#### WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Covert, clandestine, or criminal activities  
Interfering with or influencing electoral  
processes in Canada

	MANDATE/ROLE	ACTIVITIES
 <b>CSE</b> Communications Security Establishment	<b>Information Technology Security</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing advice, guidance, and services to help ensure the protection of electronic information and of systems of importance</li> </ul> <b>Foreign Intelligence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection of foreign intelligence for Government of Canada on threat actors</li> </ul> <b>Supporting CSIS and RCMP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing assistance on technical operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing intelligence and cyber assessments on the intentions, activities, and capabilities of foreign threat actors</li> <li>Protecting Government systems and networks related to elections through cyber defence measures</li> <li>Providing cyber security advice and guidance to political parties, provinces and other institutions involved in democratic processes</li> </ul>
 <b>CSIS</b> Canadian Security Intelligence Service	<b>Intelligence and Threat Reduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection of information about foreign influenced activities that are detrimental to the interest of Canada and are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person</li> <li>Countering such activities through threat reduction measures</li> </ul> <b>Intelligence Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing advice, intelligence reporting and intelligence assessments to Government of Canada about foreign influenced activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing threat briefings and intelligence reporting to Elections Canada and the Commissioner of Elections</li> <li>Providing an assessment of hostile state activity methodologies and capabilities to Government of Canada decision makers</li> </ul>
 <b>GAC</b> Global Affairs Canada	<b>Mandate/Role</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open source research on global trends and data on threats to democracy</li> <li>Partnership with G7 countries to share information and coordinate responses to threats as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing research on disinformation campaigns targeting Canada by foreign actors</li> <li>Reporting on global trends, metrics, and incidents</li> <li>Coordinating attribution of incidents</li> </ul>
 <b>RCMP</b> Royal Canadian Mounted Police	<b>Mandate/Role</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary responsibility for preventing, detecting, denying and responding to national security-related criminal threats in Canada</li> <li>Investigates criminal offenses arising from terrorism, espionage, cyber attacks, and foreign influenced activities</li> <li>The key investigatory body for Elections Canada if criminal activity is suspected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigates any criminal activity related to interference or influence of Canada's electoral processes</li> <li>Works closely in partnership with intelligence, law enforcement and regulatory agencies</li> </ul>



# Who are the targets?

***Foreign interference activities are persistent, multi-faceted, and target all areas of Canadian society***



# Targets of FI: Elected and Public Officials

- Elected officials include:
  - members of Parliament,
  - members of provincial legislatures,
  - municipal officials, and
  - representatives of Indigenous governments.
- Public servants, ministerial and political staff, and others with input into, or influence over, the public policy decision-making process
- Electoral candidates and their staff



# Common FI tactics and techniques

FI can take multiple forms, employ diverse techniques, and target many different Canadians and their communities.



**Elicitation**



**Illicit and corrupt financing**



**Social Media Manipulation**



**Cultivation**



**Cyber attacks**



**Blackmail/  
Threats**

# How to protect yourself



- Being discreet
- Keeping track of unnatural social interactions
- Being aware of inappropriate requests which involve money, suspicious donations or “gifts”
- Being cyber safe
- Being mindful of your online presence
- Following security of information protocols
- Being diligent with information sharing and partnerships

*Please report suspicious activities to CSIS*

# References

- **Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force**  
<https://www.canada.ca/fr/institutions-democratiques/services/protection-democratie/groupe-travail-securite.html>
- **Foreign Interference and You**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/security-intelligence-service/corporate/publications/foreign-interference-and-you/foreign-interference-and-you.html>
- **Foreign Interference Threats to Canada's Democratic Process (July 2021)**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/security-intelligence-service/corporate/publications/foreign-interference-threat-to-canadas-democratic-process.html>
- **CSIS Public Report 2022**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/security-intelligence-service/corporate/publications/csis-public-report-2022.html>
- **How to report foreign interference**  
<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-sctr/frgn-ntrfrnc/hr-en.aspx>

Questions?