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RRM CANADA DAILY BRIEF

Key findings:

- RRM Canada did not observe any significant indicators of foreign state-sponsored information manipulation in its monitoring of the broader Canadian digital information ecosystem during the period of September 03 to 06.
- RRM Canada assesses the majority of English and French-language content originated from recognizable Canadian news sites.
- On Sept 6, Chinese Communist Party media accounts on WeChat shared widely Chinese Amb. Cong Peiwu's comments that "a small number of people in Canada are hyping the so-called 1,000 days detention of the two Michaels."
 - Cong said that Minister Garneau's remarks that the two Michaels were held in arbitrary detention and subject to opaque judicial processes were a "gross interference in China's judicial sovereignty" and that China expresses "strong dissatisfaction and condemnation"
 - Cong did not mention GE44, or any other political parties or candidates.

Scan performed at: 9:00PM, September 06, 2021

Scan covers: 9:00AM September 03, 2021 – 9:00PM September 06, 2021.

Platform used: Buzzsumo, Crowdtangle, Tweetdeck, WeChat

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Highest engagement numbers for English-language media on Facebook, Twitter and Reddit¹

Article title	Date	Publisher	Facebook	Twitter	Reddit	Total engagement
‘The ultimate selfishness’: Doctors grow frustrated as anti-vaxxers protest hospitals	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>Global News</i>	21.3K	207	1.4K	22.9K
Doctors frustrated with ‘selfishness’ of unvaccinated people, protesters	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>CTV News</i>	15.1K	492	1.5K	17.2K
Canada election: Singh pledges federal dental care program for Canadians	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>Global News</i>	0	3	16.7K	16.7K
In first leaders debate, Trudeau hints at another election in 18 months if denied majority	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>National Post</i>	12K	1.3K	50	13.3K
BREAKING: The Federal Court will hear our lawsuit against Trudeau TOMORROW!	Sept. 6, 2021	<i>Rebel News</i>	10.2K	1.1K	0	11.3K
‘You don’t want us to be powerful’: Bernier says he and the PPC aren’t going away	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>Global News</i>	8.7K	725	1.2K	10.7K
Early Canada election call backfires on Trudeau, who now trails in polls	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>Reuters</i>	5.9K	403	3.8K	10.1K
Federal election polling: Conservatives open 5-point lead, O’Toole ahead of Trudeau	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>CTV News</i>	8.4K	776	653	9.8K
LILLEY: O’Toole plan to tackle gun crime tops Trudeau’s empty rhetoric	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>Toronto Sun</i>	8.3K	766	258	9.4K
O’Toole reverses course on guns, will maintain Liberal ban during review of classifications	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>CBC News</i>	2.7K	1K	4.6K	8.3K

¹ Engagement numbers reflect the stated reporting period. RRM Canada uses the following keywords to determine which news stories among Canadian English-language media outlets receive the most engagement: “Canada”, “Canadian Election” OR “Canadian Federal Election” OR “44th General Election” OR “GE44”, “Bloc Quebecois” OR “Yves Blanchet” OR “Yves-François Blanchet”, “Erin O’Toole” OR “Conservative Party of Canada” OR “The Conservatives”, “Annamie Paul” OR “Green Party of Canada” OR “The Greens”, “Trudeau” OR “Justin Trudeau” OR “Liberal Party of Canada” OR “The Liberals”, “Maverick Party”, “Maxime Bernier” OR “PPC” OR “People’s Party”, “New Democratic Party of Canada” OR “NDP” OR “Jagmeet Singh”

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Highest engagement numbers for French-language media on Facebook, Twitter and Reddit²

Article title	Date	Publisher	Facebook	Twitter	Reddit	Total engagement
Manifestation contre la « vaccination obligatoire » dans le Vieux-Montréal	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>La Presse</i>	6.3K	72	385	6.8K
Une manifestation contre le passeport vaccinal dans le Vieux-Montréal irrite les restaurateurs	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>Journal de Montréal</i>	5.9K	29	0	5.9K
Accusé d'avoir contourné le BAPE: «Fais-toi pousser une colonne», répond Blanchet à Trudeau	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>TVA Nouvelles</i>	2.5K	23	0	2.5K
Maxime Bernier assure que son PPC est là pour rester	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>Le Devoir</i>	1.3K	4	0	1.3K
Le NPD promet de payer les soins dentaires des familles moins nanties	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>Radio-Canada</i>	1.3K	11	0	1.3K
Les voyageurs étrangers pourront venir au Canada dès le 7 septembre	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>Journal de Montréal</i>	1.2K	18	0	1.2K
Un autre gouvernement minoritaire pourrait ne durer que 18 mois, dit Trudeau	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>Radio-Canada</i>	1.1K	42	42	1.1K
« Où est le Canada? » L'attente et l'angoisse des évacués afghans	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>Radio-Canada</i>	1K	15	0	1.0K
Une hausse d'impôts pour soutenir le programme national de soins dentaires, dit Singh	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>Le Devoir</i>	924	7	0	931
Les libéraux promettent de durcir les lois sur les armes à feu	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>La Presse</i>	788	105	0	893

² Engagement numbers reflect the stated reporting period. RRM Canada uses the following keywords to determine which news stories among Canadian French-language media outlets receive the most engagement: "Canada", "Élections fédérales" OR "Élections Canada", "Bloc Québécois" OR "Le Bloc" OR "Yves Blanchet" OR "Yves-François Blanchet", "Erin O'Toole" OR "Les conservateurs" OR "Parti conservateur du Canada", "Trudeau" OR "Justin Trudeau" OR "les libéraux" OR "Parti libéral du Canada", "Nouveau Parti démocratique" OR "Le NDP" OR "Le NDP du Canada" OR "Jagmeet Singh", "Annemie Paul" OR "Parti vert du Canada", "Maxime Bernier" OR "Parti populaire", "Le Parti maverick"

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Highest engagement numbers on WeChat

Article Title ³	Date	Account	Total views ⁴
<u>中方绝不屈服!</u> (China will never give in!)	Sept. 6, 2021	<i>Guancha Syndicate</i>	100K
<u>中方绝不屈服!</u> (China will never give in!)	Sept. 6, 2021	<i>Global Times</i>	100K
<u>中方“报复”? 外交部回应!</u> (“Retaliation” from China? MOFA’s response!)	Sept. 3, 2021	<i>People’s Daily</i>	100K
<u>疯了! 特鲁多最后一搏? 3天后加拿大将对全球旅客开放入境! 谭咏诗: 每日新增将达15000! 大家自求多福吧...</u> (Crazy! Is this Trudeau’s last gamble? 3 days from now, Canada will reopen to global travellers! Tam: We’re about to reach 15K cases per day! Good luck everyone...)	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>Canada Talks</i>	38.7K
<u>疯了! 再过4天, 加拿大就对全球旅客重开国门! 谭咏诗警告: 又要封城了!</u> (Crazy! In just 4 days, Canada will reopen to global travellers! Tam warns: the city will shut down again!)	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>51.ca</i>	31.1K
<u>“难道加方人员还高人一等?” 网友为汪文斌的回应又加了一句话</u> (Are Canadians somehow superior? A web user adds a line to Wang Wenbin’s response)	Sept. 4, 2021	<i>China Daily</i>	17.5K
<u>安省急剧反弹! 周六新增944例! 紧急关头加拿大却正式向全球游客开放入境, 3天后国门大开!</u> (Dramatic rebound in Ontario! 944 new cases on Saturday! Canada will officially open its door to global tourists in 3 days!)	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>York BBS</i>	16.6K
<u>尴尬了! 46%选民: 特鲁多为胜出大会答应任何事情! 全部候选人不会遵守承诺</u> (Embarrassing! 46% of voters: Trudeau will do anything to win the election! None of the candidates will keep their promises)	Sept. 6, 2021	<i>Superlife</i>	8.5K
<u>【反制】孟晚舟归期未定, 中企开始抵制加拿大并撤资?</u> (Hitting back) Meng Wanzhou’s return isn’t fixed, will Chinese businesses start boycotting Canada and withdrawing investments?)	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>Canada Today</i>	5.2K
<u>【告急】又出一个变种病毒, 名叫 Mu! 疫情急剧反弹! 紧急关头加拿大却开放全球游客入境!</u> (State of emergency) Another variant, Mu! The pandemic rebounds! Canada opens the door to global tourists!)	Sept. 5, 2021	<i>Canada Today</i>	4.3K

³ Article titles translated by RRM Canada

⁴ Total engagement numbers reflect the article’s page views; WeChat does not calculate the number of comments an article receives

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On our radar

User engagement with French and English-language online media

- The majority of French and English-language stories shared on Facebook, Twitter and Reddit for September 03 to 06 originated from recognizable Canadian media outlets.
- The topics with the most user engagement for the reporting period include:
 - Reports on anti-vaccine protests in Ontario and Quebec by *Global News*, *CTV News*, *La Presse* and *Le Journal de Montréal* received considerable user interest.
 - According to data analytics tool Crowdtangle, Facebook groups and pages located in Canada – such as groups for local affiliates of *Global News* and *CTV News* – were responsible for driving engagement for these stories.
 - RRM Canada assesses it is likely domestic social media users who are engaging with the topic, not foreign actors.

User engagement with Sinophone online media

- Two of WeChat’s most popular news accounts (*Guancha Syndicate* and the *Global Times*) shared widely comments made by Amb. Cong Peiwu that “a small number of people in Canada are hyping the so-called 1,000 days detention of the two Michaels.”
 - Cong’s comments in Chinese media did not identify the “small number”, but later mentioned Minister Marc Marneau
 - Amb. Cong’s comments were also published on the Embassy of the PRC in Canada WeChat account, but received comparatively less engagement (1.2K views). Cong’s comments on *Global Times* and *Guancha Syndicate* received over 100K views each.
 - The *Global Times* and the *Guancha Syndicate* are the 1st and 7th most subscribed WeChat accounts.
 - Researchers of Chinese Communist Party media have called the *Global Times* and *Guancha Syndicate* part of a “new nationalist movement predicated on anti-Western sentiment”
- The *People’s Daily* and the *China Daily* carried an article about Chinese MOFA spokesperson Wang Wenbin discussing whether the arrest of the two Michaels was “retaliation” for the arrest of Meng Wanzhou.
 - Wang said it was not retaliation, and that Canada was “hyping” the case of the two Michaels.
 - Wang asked for the safe return of Meng to China, and cited that over “15 million people signed a [Global Times] petition demanding Canada to release her”
 - Wang did not mention GE44, or any political party or candidate in his comments.
 - Both the *People’s Daily* and the *China Daily* articles received considerable attention from users (over 100K views each).
 - The *People’s Daily* and the *China Daily* are the 4th and 56th most subscribed accounts on WeChat.

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- Some groups on Gettr were active in mobilizing others to take part in the September 4 anti-vaccine passport rally in Toronto, including the Himalaya Supervisory Organization, a political lobby group created by former Donald Trump advisor Steve Bannon, and funded by fugitive Chinese billionaire Miles Guo.
 - The Himalaya movement funds a network called "the New Federal State of China" with groups in the U.S., U.K., Australia and New Zealand. The groups frequently attend rallies that protest the Chinese government, or oppose the use of vaccines to treat Covid-19.
 - According to a May 2021 report from Graphika, Guo is the center of a "vast network of interrelated media" that "disseminates online disinformation" and is a "prolific producer" of claims of voter fraud during the U.S. 2020 election.
 - The rally attendees connected to Guo mostly chanted slogans to "take down the CCP" and did not appear to support a particular candidate or party.

- Group with supposed links to China's "united front" work invites WeChat users to a Vancouver East LPC campaign event
 - The Facebook page for the Vancouver Hong Kong Forum Society published screengrabs from a WeChat group with members of the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) of Vancouver chat that shows what is purported to be an offer of a free lunch to support a candidate who "cares about the issues of the Chinese people". The CBA message further encourages solidarity among Chinese voters as a counter to Indian voter solidarity.
 - The Vancouver Hong Kong Forum Society claims the offer for free lunch comes from a well-known group with links to China's United Front Work Department, a unit that seeks to influence elite individuals and organizations in China's favour.
 - A number of journalists have made similar claims about the group's connection to the United Front, including the South China Morning Posts' Ian Young, the National Post's Tom Blackwell, and Alliance Canada HK.
 - The WeChat invitation from the well-known group says that "the Chinese community and Chinese people have long been neglected. This LPC candidate in Vancouver East is running for the first time. We the Chinese people need to show our voting power to politicians. Indian people already have huge influence. The Chinese people should also show solidarity." The group then invites WeChat users to "bring some friends" and there's "no need to pay"
 - Vancouver Hong Kong Forum Society believes this is an instance of "vote buying" and is "in violation of the Elections Act"
 - The Facebook post inspired a heated debate on the r/Vancouver Reddit board, with many users questioning if the offer constitutes vote buying, and whether the group's supposed links to the CCP constitute foreign interference.

User engagement with Russophone online media

- There were no high-engagement posts from Canadian Russian-language media outlets for the September 03-06 reporting period

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- Topics of interest in global Russian-language media include:
 - a Russian-based tabloid mocking the results of Ukrainian Pres Zelenskyi's visit to the U.S.
 - Putin announcing a new tax regime for businesses in the Kuril Islands.
 - A likely Russian grey site citing a U.S. poll about Biden's falling popularity.
 - Belarussian media reported on Canadians protesting vaccine passports
 - State-media outlet RIA Novosti reported on the LPC's chance of winning the most seats; the article received low engagement.

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