

For Public Release

OPEN DATA ANALYSIS REPORT**UNCLASSIFIED
RRM CANADA****MANITOBA ELECTION ANALYSIS****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

[1] RRM Canada concludes that it is **very unlikely that any significant foreign interference campaigns** targeted the Manitoba election in the online space.

CONTEXT

[2] RRM Canada analysed open source data in the lead-up to the provincial election in Manitoba on 10 September 2019, to identify any potential foreign interference and draw lessons learned for the 2019 Canadian general election. RRM Canada supports the [G7 Rapid Response Mechanism](#) (RRM), in its mandate to strengthen G7 coordination to identify and respond to diverse and evolving threats to G7 democracies, including through sharing information and analysis, and identifying opportunities for coordinated response.

METHODOLOGY

[3] RRM Canada reviewed social media data to search for cases of coordinated and/or inauthentic behaviour. This type of behaviour could point to potential foreign interference activities.

[4] RRM Canada analyzed over 66,000 posts primarily on Twitter, Reddit and various news outlets and blogs.¹

- Approximately 87% of election-related content was shared on Twitter.
- Approximately 9% was shared through news articles, blogs and comments.
- Approximately 5% was shared on Reddit.

[5] Analysis of Facebook, the most popular social media platform in Canada, was limited due to restrictions in data access imposed by Facebook.

FINDINGS

[6] Based on available information, it is **very unlikely that any significant foreign interference campaigns** targeted the Manitoba election in the online space.

[7] The top sources of content shared were all known domestic sources of information. In order of number of links shared on Twitter and Reddit, the most widely shared sources were the following:

- www.cbc.ca 4,241
- globalnews.ca 1,162

¹ Recent analysis of the Canadian Digital Media landscape from the [Public Policy Forum's \(PPF\) Digital Democracy Project](#) indicates that alternative media sources with an ideological underpinning are not popular news sources in Canada. Nevertheless, they enjoy more prominence on Twitter among users who interact with Canadian political hashtags. As such, the conversation on Twitter does not necessarily reflect the perspectives of the broader Canadian population. The prominence of Twitter data combined with our lack of access to Facebook data limits the analytic scope of the findings of this report.

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[8] RRM Canada noted that an outlier poll conducted by a new Canadian firm elicited debate among a number of non-governmental groups monitoring the Manitoba elections.² However, the firm in question attributes the results to a statistical error in its methodology.³ Moreover, RRM Canada did not observe any attempts to artificially amplify the results of this outlier poll on social media.

[9] RRM Canada conducted a manual review of the Facebook Ads library for all ads related to the Manitoba election.⁴ Almost all election-related ads appear to come from Manitoba political candidates or parties.

[10] RRM Canada implemented a social network analysis of users interacting with the accounts of the PC, Liberal, NDP and Green parties, the party leaders or the #mbpoli, #mbelxn hashtags. All communities detected appear to be domestic with very few signs of artificial amplification and no indications of any coordinated inauthentic behavior targeting any particular audience.

[11] In its review of all the data related to the Manitoba election, RRM Canada found no evidence of foreign interference.

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² <https://globalnews.ca/news/5783760/controversial-poll-results-raise-red-flags-for-manitoba-election-watchers/>

³ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/coverso-manitoba-poll-pcs-well-out-front-1.5252766>

⁴ https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?active_status=all&ad_type=political_and_issue_ads&country=CA&q=manitoba

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