

Foreign Interference in Canada's Next Federal Election: What You Need to Know

In recent years, there have been mounting concerns over alleged attempts by foreign governments—particularly the Chinese government—to sway Canadian elections and undermine democratic institutions. High-profile incidents include disinformation and pressure campaigns aimed at certain political figures, such as former Conservative MP Kenny Chiu, who faced targeted attacks and misinformation spread among Chinese-speaking communities that contributed to his electoral defeat in 2021. NDP MP Jenny Kwan has also reported being a target of online harassment and intimidation, seemingly linked to her vocal stance on human rights issues in China. Meanwhile, Conservative MP Michael Chong was sanctioned by Beijing in response to his condemnation of China's human rights record, highlighting the regime's willingness to retaliate against critics in Canadian politics.

Collectively, these examples illustrate the breadth and intensity of foreign interference tactics employed by the Chinese state, from misinformation campaigns to direct diplomatic pressure, all of which threaten Canada's democratic processes. Foreign governments may also attempt to interfere in Canada's 2025 federal election. Here's what you should know.

Beware of These Forms of Interference:



- **Disinformation Campaigns:** False or misleading stories intentionally spread online to create division or confusion.
- **Social Media Manipulation:** Bots and fake accounts used to amplify certain narratives or harass candidates.
- **Targeting Nomination Processes:** Foreign actors may infiltrate or influence local party nominations to promote sympathetic candidates.
- **Cyber Attacks:** Hacking campaigns aimed at political parties, candidates, or critical infrastructure.

Common Narratives



- **Divisive Issues:** Foreign interests may exploit wedge issues like immigration or national security to stoke tension.
- **Undermining Trust:** Spreading rumors about election fraud or corruption to discourage voter turnout.
- **Attacks on Candidates:** Personal or character attacks designed to discredit specific political figures or parties.



Who Might Be Targeted?



- **Diaspora Communities:** Tactics may pressure or mislead voters with ties to other countries.
- **Activists & Journalists:** Those critical of foreign regimes or reporting on election integrity.
- **Voters at Large:** Anyone using social media or consuming online news could be exposed to manipulated content.

Protecting the Nomination Process



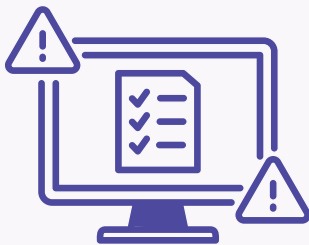
- **Vigilance:** Watch for unusual membership drives or external funding.
- **Transparency:** Demand clear disclosure of donations and candidate backgrounds.

What Can You Do?



- **Verify Information:** Cross-check news with credible sources.
- **Think Before Sharing:** Consider the source and motive of any sensational story.
- **Stay Informed:** Follow trusted journalists, researchers, and fact-checking organizations.
- **Report Suspicious Activity:** If you see signs of interference, contact Elections Canada or share tips with civil society groups.

Where to Report & Key Safeguards



- **Elections Canada:** Oversees election integrity and enforces federal election laws.
- **SITE Task Force (Security & Intelligence Threats to Elections):** Monitors and responds to foreign threats.
- **RRM (Rapid Response Mechanism):** Tracks foreign interference trends and coordinates government responses.
- **Civil Society Partners:** Organizations like DisinfoWatch, Digital Public Square, and CDMRN monitor and expose disinformation, offering resources to the public.