



Gouvernement du Canada
Bureau du Conseil privé

Government of Canada
Privy Council Office

Trust, Information, and Digital Ecosystems Study (TIDES)

Summary

Prepared for the Privy Council Office (PCO)

Supplier: EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC.

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For more information on this report, please contact: POR-ROP@pco-bcp.gc.ca

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français

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This public opinion research report presents the methodology for the conduct of four online surveys conducted by EKOS Research Associates Inc. on behalf of the Privy Council Office (PCO).

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre: L'étude sur la confiance, l'information et l'écosystème numérique (ECIEN).

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SUMMARY

A. Background and Methodology

The Privy Council Office (PCO) is the hub of non-partisan, public service support to the Prime Minister and Cabinet and its decision-making structures. Led by the Clerk of the Privy Council, PCO helps the Government implement its vision and respond effectively and quickly to issues facing the government and the country.

The proliferation of mis/disinformation is a growing challenge for Canadian society. Previous research has found that exposure to, and belief in, mis/disinformation can erode public trust in institutions and impact the Government's ability to protect public health and deliver on broader national interests (e.g., responses to COVID-19, and climate adaptation/mitigation policy support). The federal government has prioritized combating mis/disinformation with an emphasis on developing and implementing government-wide counter-measures to protect our democracy.

To support the government's agenda on these issues, the IIU - working with partners within PCO and at PHAC - is carrying out a series of research initiatives, expanding upon two multi-year programs of research related to COVID-19 response efforts and climate action already underway. Specifically, these series of initiatives aim to:

- Build a greater understanding of the factors that shape individuals' relationship with information and institutions in the digital age, and test interventions that reduce the greatest harms of mis/disinformation – such as threats to public health, climate action, democratic and shared values, and diversity and inclusion.
- Deepen and broaden the Government's understanding of challenges in maintaining and enhancing trust in the institutions people count on to support informed public discourse and debate, as well as the role that access to reliable information plays in those conversations.
- Develop a more robust understanding of the human factors that are associated with greater resilience to mis/disinformation for individuals, and the contextual and systemic factors that affect its spread.

In alignment with these broader objectives, EKOS conducted a multi-wave, cross-sectional study exploring the impact of public trust (in government, in institutions, and in each other) and susceptibility to mis/disinformation on outcomes of interest for the Government of Canada, assessing convergence and divergence within and across priority policy areas and aspects of our democratic society.

The goal of the study was to provide PCO and PHAC with research-based information on Canadians’ beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours relating to a variety of topics under the broader umbrellas of mis/disinformation, public trust, and democratic resilience. This report outlines the methodology used in undertaking this study.

The target audience for the study was adults living in Canada 18 years of age and older, aiming for appropriate representation of gender, age, education, and regional split (Canadian citizens as well as permanent residents).

The study consisted of four survey waves. A total of 3,375 respondents were surveyed in each wave. The sample included general population respondents in all survey waves, as well as an oversample of selected underrepresented populations in all waves.

B. Expenditure

The contract amount for this project was **\$299,760.75** (including HST).

C. Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as Senior Officer of EKOS Research Associates Inc. that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research.

Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed by: 

Derek Jansen (Vice President)