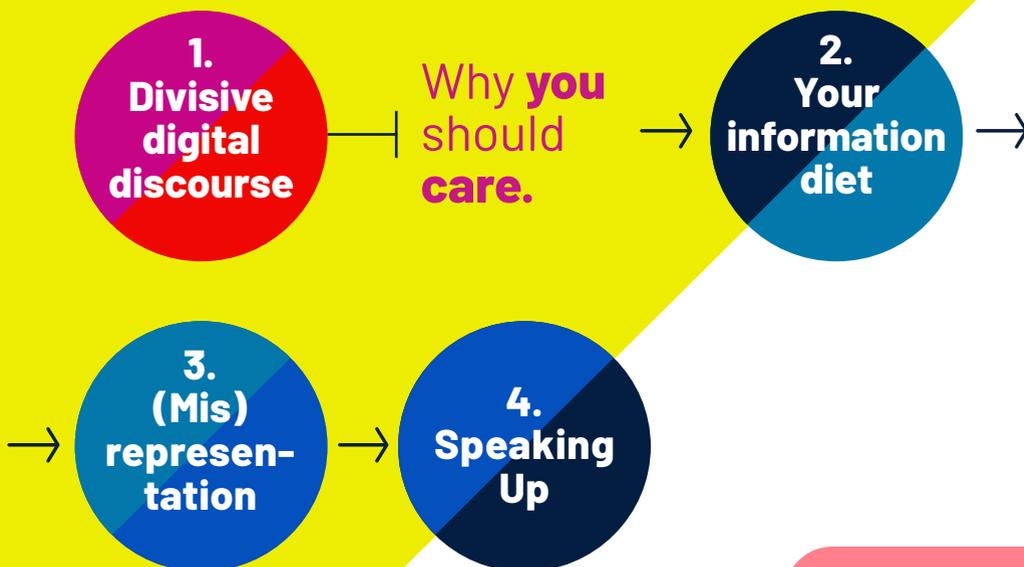


#Citizen Resilience Project

Part 1/4

Our aim is to **empower Canadians** to **recognize** the threats of **false information**, to **fight against it** as informed citizens, and to **engage** in **inclusive, productive discourse**.



About this project

The **#CitizenResilience Project** originated at 6 Degrees Toronto 2019. 6 Degrees is the global forum for inclusion, and a project of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, which convenes leaders from all sectors including arts, civil society, academia, government, activism, and business. Additionally, this project has been developed through research, national polling, and consultations with new Canadian citizens and was made possible by the Government of Canada. We encourage you to ask questions, share your experiences, and join us for [6 Degrees Montréal](#) on March 30, 2020.

Divisive digital discourse

Why you should care

From the impeachment of U.S. President Donald Trump, to Brexit, to talk of Wexit in the Canadian West, it is clear that we live in divided times. If we hope to address important public issues, from immigration to climate change, we need effective public discourse – and that starts with information.



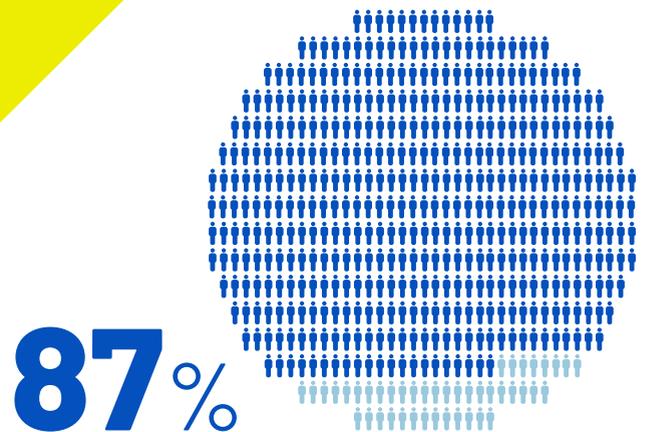
Join the conversation on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#), and [subscribe](#) to our newsletter to get updates and resources direct to your inbox.

Why we need to fight against these online threats

Malicious, deceptive, and/or ignorant actors can use digital spaces to spread false, skewed, and hateful information, while undermining facts and sowing division. In addition to people sharing news, social media sites like Facebook and YouTube have algorithms that push people to the most inflammatory content and the extremes of their views to keep people on their sites longer. This means the information people are consuming is more and more at the edges of the spectrum, increasing the divide, rather than bridging it.

The creation and sharing of that information and the debate that stems from it are now happening largely online. Digital spaces allow the spread of false, inflammatory, and even hateful content that can heighten divisions, and fuel mistrust in public institutions and each other.

Though that can seem discouraging, these digital spaces also create unprecedented opportunities for people to connect, build coalitions, and speak up about what they believe in. Over the coming months, we will be diving into this issue, sharing tips and tricks that can help each of us to be more resilient against these online threats.



87% of Canadians stated they are a **little concerned** (24%), **concerned** (32%) or **very concerned** (31%) that the **spread of false information** online is causing Canadians **to be less compassionate**.

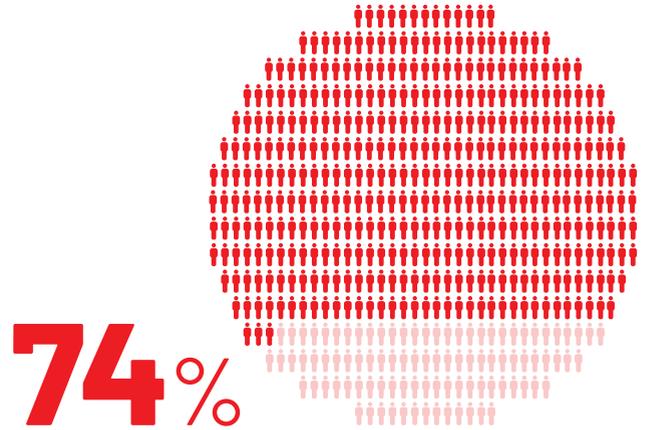
(ICC-Leger, 2019)



of Canadians strongly agree (35%) or agree (42%) that society's problems are better understood when people with diverse experiences and perspectives come together and work to solve them. (ICC-Leger, 2019)

Even though we agree that diverse perspectives are critical to addressing our collective challenges, people are retreating from public discourse online.

So, if **3 out of 4 Canadians** are discouraged from engaging in digital discourse, we have to ask ourselves: Who is filling the void? Whose voices are making up the majority of the Canadian public discussion?



of Canadians are discouraged from sharing their opinions online. Top reasons for this include **a lack of trust in information online, frustrations about conflicting information, or concerns about being targeted or bullied.** (ICC-Leger, 2019)

We know that the people with a voice are the people who have power. So if your reaction to hateful or conflicting information is to disengage – don't. We have the power to shape our own debate. That is what the Citizen Resilience Project is all about: making sure everyone has the tools to overcome these challenges and make a more inclusive and productive public discourse – both online and off.

→ **Want to learn more?**



Listen to the "[Big Tech](#)" podcast, where 6 Degrees speaker Kate Rowsell produces stories about the impact of emerging technologies on democracy and society, alongside hosts David Skok, CEO and editor-in-chief of The Logic, and Taylor Owen, senior fellow at CIGI.



Explore how a data company named Cambridge Analytica came to symbolize the dark side of social media in the wake of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Watch [The Great Hack](#) on Netflix.



Watch CPAC's [Digital Democracy](#) series, where Canadians talk about political participation in the digital age, and how the government can or should balance the benefits of unprecedented access with the unique threats of online disinformation and manipulation.



Check out 6 Degrees Toronto 2019 speaker and French journalist Aude Favre's popular YouTube channel "[WTFake](#)," where she debunks fake news, discusses disinformation, and uncovers truth through humour.