



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

---

# Standing Committee on the Status of Women

TÉMOIGNAGES

**NUMBER 136**

**PUBLIC PART ONLY - PARTIE PUBLIQUE SEULEMENT**

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

---

Chair: Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman





## Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

• (1635)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC)):** I call this meeting to order.

[English]

Welcome to meeting number 136 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

To all members, please wait until I recognize you by name prior to speaking. I'd also like to remind everyone that all comments should be addressed through the chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, the committee will commence its study of hate-motivated violence targeting the 2SLGBTQI+ community.

At this point, I would like to welcome our witnesses. From the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, we have Peter Madou, assistant deputy minister, operational intelligence and assessment requirements. From the integrated terrorism assessment centre is Michael Wallis, executive director. From the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, we have Catherine Dubuc, acting director general, hate crimes, and director general, culture, innovation and GBA+.

We will now begin with our opening statements.

I welcome Mr. Madou.

You have the floor for approximately five minutes.

**Mr. Peter Madou (Assistant Deputy Minister, Operational Intelligence and Assessment Requirements, Canadian Security Intelligence Service):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Peter Madou and I am the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operational Intelligence and Assessment Requirements at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

[English]

I would first like to thank the committee for inviting CSIS to appear on this very important issue.

CSIS takes all threats of violence very seriously and continues to monitor, investigate and mitigate threats against the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Canada on a priority basis.

[Translation]

Violent extremism continues to pose a significant and growing threat to Canada's national security. While only a small number of Canadians are actually willing to engage in serious violence in support of their gender and identity driven views, their actions continue to have devastating real world consequences, as we saw in Waterloo just last year.

[English]

The increase in violent extremist activity is felt acutely within the 2SLGBTQIA+ and other marginalized communities, as they can be the target of threats emanating from both ideologically and religiously motivated violent extremists. The anti-gender movement, which rejects the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, is a national security issue when associated with extremists who exercise gender identity-driven violence as a result of personal beliefs stemming from misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, religious interpretations, conspiracy theories or a generalized fear of socio-cultural change.

[Translation]

It is important to note that while violent rhetoric itself does not equate to or necessarily lead to violence, the ecosystem of violent rhetoric within the anti-gender movement, compounded with other extreme worldviews, can lead to serious violence.

[English]

Exposure to entities espousing anti-gender extremist rhetoric could inspire and encourage serious violence against the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and its allies. Violent actors may also be inspired by real-world events, like the University of Waterloo attack, to carry out their own extremist violence, sometimes with little to no warning.

Anti-2SLGBTQIA+ rhetoric is also spreading widely through social media and online forums among violent extremists, increasing the risk of extremist violence against the community and its allies as well as the risk of vulnerable youth being radicalized on online platforms.

To counter these threats and protect public safety, CSIS continues to vigorously investigate and disrupt the threat activities of violent extremists in collaboration with foreign and domestic security intelligence and law enforcement partners. Where appropriate, CSIS leverages the full extent of its authorities to mitigate threats of gender identity-driven violence.

[Translation]

CSIS is also committed to building resiliency and increasing public awareness of these threats, including through modernized authorities granted to CSIS under Bill C-70. CSIS' new resiliency disclosure authority recognizes that protecting Canada's national security is a shared endeavour that includes partnering with all levels of government, Canadian communities and the private sector. CSIS is actively using this new tool and is committed in its efforts to bridge across sectors and find ways to cooperate in the national interest. This includes increased sharing of relevant threat information to a wider range of recipients to protect national security.

[English]

However, more work needs to be done to ensure that all persons in Canada feel safe to express themselves and their identities without threats of violence. Canadians must work together to prevent radicalization at its root by combatting misinformation and disinformation, slowing the spread of violent content and hateful rhetoric, and fostering cohesion between Canadian communities.

I will conclude by noting that while CSIS cannot publicly comment on its operational activities or ongoing investigations, I welcome this opportunity for a frank and transparent discussion on the threats to Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

I am happy to answer your questions.

Thank you, Chair.

• (1640)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Madou.

At this point, I would like to welcome Mr. Wallis.

You have the floor for five minutes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michael Wallis (Executive Director, Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre):** Madam Chair, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to speak today on this important topic as we approach the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

[English]

As the executive director of the integrated terrorism assessment centre, I am responsible for assessing and advising the government on the threat of violent extremism to Canada and to Canadian interests abroad. This includes recommending the national terrorism threat level.

As the leader of a national fusion cell, I am accountable to the national security intelligence adviser to the Prime Minister and the director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

ITAC produces all-source assessments to predict the likelihood of a violent extremist attack. To reach a spectrum of clients, ITAC publishes at multiple levels of classification. In this way, we seek to inform many stakeholders and police postures as well as their dialogue with communities.

The ITAC paper that is cited in the report is a threat assessment on 2024 pride events. In preparing that document, analysts evaluated the complex interplay between threat actor intentions, capabilities and opportunities to carry out violence. The centre forecasted a period of heightened propaganda during pride season, and it reinforced the possibility of a lone attacker.

Then, as now, the most likely scenario facing Canada is an individual motivated by a personalized world view. Inside this view, there can be contradictory grievances. This person would use unsophisticated weapons.

Every day, ITAC personnel evaluate potential violence against those who advocate for sexual equality, diversity and equal opportunities. That is because, to be clear, women and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are constantly cited in violent extremist rhetoric and have been the target of specific violence in recent years. Both the ideologically motivated violent extremist and the religiously motivated violent extremist seek to victimize women and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

[Translation]

Two recent examples punctuate the point: In 2023, a former student of the University of Waterloo went on a stabbing rampage in a gender-studies class to 'instil fear'. That same year, Calgary police disrupted a foursome supporting the Islamic State; an underage male in the group wanted to kill a woman and made threats against Pride.

[English]

Since April 2024, 26% of ITAC's outputs addressed real or potential threats to individuals based on identity factors such as gender or sexual orientation. This category of violent extremist mentality is rooted, to be sure, in homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

Our IMVE-related publications have increased each year over the past few years. IMVE is a global phenomenon, so ITAC also, unfortunately, provides products of this sort from allied agencies around the world. Western democracies have acknowledged how social media has contributed to the mainstreaming of violence. Our societies are increasingly polarized.

The impact of rhetoric on Canadians' perception of safety and security cannot be underestimated, even if the average number of terrorist attacks in Canada has remained at 1.8 attacks per year for the last five years. This causes me to acknowledge an important point, which is that the vast majority of hateful messages and actions fall below the threshold of national security.

Nonetheless, my colleagues in national security and I are deeply concerned that anti-gender violent rhetoric could inspire youth or other vulnerable members of our society to mobilize to violence. National security stakeholders, ITAC included, are using all of the tools at their disposal to prevent this outcome.

• (1645)

For its part, ITAC continues to serve as an early warning for serious violence against women, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, public policy-makers and community events.

[*Translation*]

I hope that my comments have advanced the committee's understanding of the issues. It would be my pleasure to answer questions.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Wallis.

Ms. Dubuc, you have the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc (Acting Director General, Hate Crimes, Culture, Innovation and GBA Plus, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the committee.

I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe peoples.

My name is Catherine Dubuc. I am currently acting director general of the hate crimes policy team, and I am also responsible for the culture, innovation and gender-based analysis plus directorate within the RCMP's reform, accountability and culture sector. Thank you for inviting me here today as part of your study of hate-motivated violence against 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

I would like to begin by sharing or explaining the mandate and work of the RCMP, as well as some key points on hate crimes in the Canadian context. The RCMP across Canada continues to support the Government of Canada's efforts to combat hate crimes through collaboration with federal and provincial governments and agencies, non-government organizations, communities and law enforcement partners. Hate crimes are motivated by prejudice or bias against an identifiable group. Under the Criminal Code of Canada,

identifiable groups include those defined by sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, among many other groups.

According to Statistics Canada, police-reported hate crimes targeting sexual orientation have increased 225%, and hate crimes targeting transgender and non-binary individuals have increased 120% between 2019 and 2023. This data encompasses all police of jurisdiction across Canada.

The RCMP has experienced similar increases in hate crimes targeting 2SLGBTQI+ people across Canada. It is especially concerning to the RCMP that crimes motivated by hatred towards these communities are reported to be more violent in nature when compared to all other reported hate crimes.

Current data indicates that 2SLGBTQI+ communities are disproportionately represented in hate crimes targeting gender and sexual orientation. For every crime targeting sexual orientation or sex and gender outside of these communities, there are 28 crimes motivated by hatred against 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Four out of the top five hate-motivated crime types perpetrated against these communities are violent in nature.

Hate crimes targeting the 2SLGBTQI+ community have increased at a faster rate in 2023 and 2024 than in the previous three years. The full extent of the impact of hate crimes on the 2SLGBTQI+ communities remains difficult to measure. There is a need for more information on the barriers that prevent these individuals from reporting hate crimes, including the fear of escalating violence. Under-reporting remains significant, often stemming from the reluctance of victims and witnesses to come forward.

The RCMP is aware that 2SLGBTQI+ communities have historically faced criminalization and persecution by police, noting that many who experienced violence did not report it primarily because they did not think it would make a difference. The RCMP has been committed, and continues to be committed, to rebuilding trust, fostering engagement and building community connections.

In 2022, the RCMP, in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, launched the hate crimes task force to increase the scope, nature and impact of efforts to address hate crimes in Canada. Progress continues through this forum to increase officer and public awareness of hate crimes and how to report them. On September 24, 2024, the Government of Canada announced Canada's action plan on combatting hate, bringing together new and existing federal initiatives to confront hate in its various forms through three pillars: empowering communities, supporting victims and survivors, and building community trust, partnerships and institutional readiness.

The RCMP is providing national leadership in combatting hate crimes through operational policy development, centralized access to relevant data and research and strengthening partnerships between the RCMP and police of jurisdiction to address hate crimes in Canada.

The mandate to investigate hate crimes falls to the local police of jurisdiction. To ensure a coordinated approach to detecting, investigating and combatting hate crimes, the RCMP is supporting these efforts through integrated resources, information sharing and community partnerships, promoting policies and best practices that are critical to law enforcement's effective response.

• (1650)

The RCMP has strengthened and continues to strengthen its connections with community groups and organizations, working to support victim support services and community-based resources. Hate crimes against 2SLGBTQI+ communities are a significant concern for the RCMP, which is dedicated to the safety and security of all Canadians.

[Translation]

I am pleased to be here today to answer your questions, and to provide additional information on the projects and initiatives that the RCMP has been working on.

[English]

Thank you for continuing to bring attention to this crucial area that impacts the lives, health and well-being of 2SLGBTQI+ people throughout Canada.

[Translation]

Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you all; that concludes our opening remarks.

At this point, we will move to our first round of questioning.

[Translation]

Mrs. Vien, the floor is yours for six minutes.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank every one of the witnesses for being available to meet with us today. We are pleased to have you here.

We've just completed a study on violence against women, and since we're still in that frame of mind, we're looking a little further afield and examining the situation of a new community, the LGBTQ+ community.

As you noted, gentlemen, December 6, this coming Friday, is a very important date that we must not forget. It's the date of the Polytechnique massacre, in which 14 women were murdered solely because they were women. We will be commemorating its 35th anniversary this year.

Ms. Dubuc, you said that victims find it very hard to trust the police. We've often heard that in the course of our proceedings. You're

telling us that that trust has to be restored, and the Quebec government has moved forward on that by implementing its strategy to address sexual and domestic violence and to rebuild trust.

Since we don't have a lot of time, would you please tell us in a few words exactly what you're going to do to convince victims to go to the police or the RCMP to document their case so that perpetrators can ultimately be arrested and convicted?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you very much for that question.

Yes, those are comments that we regularly hear, and we've introduced a number of mechanisms.

Victims who don't feel comfortable contacting police services directly can file complaints and report problems anonymously through websites and various police services.

Individuals who really want to contact the police can do so through all our programs in co-operation with their community police force thanks to the bridges we've built with non-governmental organizations and members of minority groups within the organizations in question. The RCMP is very actively involved at that level.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** You mentioned four violent crimes in particular. What are the crimes targeting the LGBTQ+ community? What kind of crimes are they?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** There are two classes of hate crimes to consider.

For example, some hate crimes are covered by Canada's Criminal Code; these are offences that have actually been committed. Four specific provisions in the Criminal Code apply to certain crimes that are hate-based, such as hateful antisemitic crimes.

There are also more minor incidents, although their consequences are no less serious for a community, such as hate-based incidents involving inappropriate language toward an already racialized or minority group.

• (1655)

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** Would you please tell us how many crimes you deal with in a year that target individuals in the LGBTQ+ community?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you for that question.

That's what we're trying to determine through the Hate Crimes Task Force, which the RCMP has established in collaboration with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the 13 police services we work with across the country. We're in the process of creating mechanisms and tools to expand our capacity to report a hate crime rate that's slightly more representative of what's happening in the world.

It's hard to give you an actual figure because we know that some crime rates and questioning crimes aren't reported.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** Is it harder to investigate hate crimes committed against the LGBTQ+ community than those targeting individuals in society as a whole?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** No, not necessarily. It's all relative, of course.

We have a partnership with Statistics Canada, which prepares quarterly reports that are now publicly available. The information is provided by police officers, who record underlying motivations for hate crimes in a database. This enables us to focus in on the LGBTQ+ community.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** What are your officers telling you? Why are these people targeted?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** That's a good question.

These people are targeted for a variety of reasons. For example, they include fear in the community, policies that are adopted by various levels of government and external, even foreign, forces from outside Canada. I don't want to speculate on that, but I'd say that there's basically a lot of misunderstanding and fear.

[English]

**The Chair:** MP Damoff, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Thank you.

Thank you to all the witnesses for being here today.

I want to start by focusing on transphobia. In 2021, of the 30.5 million people in Canada aged 15 or older and living in a private household, only 0.33% identified as trans or non-binary. It's a minuscule portion of the population, yet the rhetoric, misinformation and hate directed at transpeople are quite astonishing, and we see them here in Canada, not just in the United States.

In my riding, there were complaints about drag storytimes at the Oakville Public Library. I don't know that anybody's died at a drag storytime, but they certainly have died because of transphobia. It's not just far-right YouTube channels that are pushing this; Alberta just passed three bills to supposedly protect kids and females in sport.

My assistant Rodney dug up a story that happened in British Columbia. During a track meet, a man stepped forward during an event and began questioning the gender of a nine-year-old because she had a pixie cut. He demanded that her parents provide documentation to prove her sex.

Do you believe this kind of transphobic hate also hurts people toward whom the hate is not even directed? Here's a little girl who's no doubt being traumatized because of the rhetoric that gets into the general discourse.

I wonder if you could talk about the impacts this kind of language and tone have on society.

Maybe we'll start with you, Ms. Dubuc, and then go across.

● (1700)

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Okay. That sounds great. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair, for the question. This is an example that is very heartbreaking to hear, but, unfortunately, it's something that I would say is certainly well known. I won't be commenting personally, but from the RCMP standpoint, what's important to us, obviously, in terms of our mandate, is ensuring the safety and security of all Canadians.

In terms of just my overall observations.... I'm sorry. Could you please hone in on the question?

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** How does this kind of hate impact other people in the community?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Overall, when we look at, for example, anything that attacks the fabric of our society or the values we purport to have here in Canada in terms of feeling safe and feeling like we can lean on our community members, it really affects the fabric of our society. Ultimately, what is done to one individual who's harmed impacts all of us as well.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Mr. Madou, do you want to add to that?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** Thank you for the question.

I think violent extremism stems from a range of different ideologies that are built on people's fears and hate.

From a CSIS perspective, we intersect only when they're acts of serious violence that are motivated either by someone radicalizing another person or by someone inciting them to violence, so we don't have a very clear aperture, but we do notice that there is a growing movement of online radicalization that's going on, specifically among youth. That's what we can observe from our national security investigation.

A lot of it might just be because there are youthful members of our society who are stuck in an ecosystem online where there's nobody countering the mis- or disinformation that they're getting, and that builds toward that hatred.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** We passed Bill C-16, which actually added hate crimes based on gender identity to the Criminal Code. That was during my first term as an MP, and I'm quite proud of that.

You mentioned how you've been able to lay charges. Has that bill assisted you in being able to lay charges around hate-motivated crimes because of gender identity?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Unfortunately, I'm unable to comment on that. I don't have the information available to me.

What I can say is that for any bill that's enacted or that's even on the table being proposed at this time, we continue to monitor the impacts in terms of effects on our policing operations and investigations that are under way.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Do you know if you've successfully charged anyone under that, or could you find out for us?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** I certainly could find out and provide a written submission following the meeting today.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** That would be great.

How safe do you think queer spaces are in Canada right now, given the rise of hate, Mr. Wallis?

**Mr. Michael Wallis:** I get asked this question a lot.

Indeed, the centre provides a lot of time and attention to this, because we are often asked to evaluate special events in communities. As my colleagues alluded to, the challenge is that there's just a lot out there, and it's the non-rationality of this hatred. It's the disinformation that could cause someone to believe something that is completely false for even a long period of time.

I would even suggest that the person who would approach that nine-year-old is under a delusion, and that delusion could make them a victim of this echo chamber. In the strangest of circumstances, somebody that would propagate the hate could be deluded.

Based on the experience, keeping the finger on the pulse of events that are occurring in this country, we get to a position where we can, through the RCMP and through the service, keep track of subjects of interest who might have intent and capability. If they don't have it, then it comes back to this individual who is having a really unfortunate day and has been consuming unfortunate material and decides to take action.

When they do take action on that day, it may not even be because of a grievance against that particular community; it could be that they're unstable and that they've had a fight with their parent, or that they've lost a loved one or a job, and they're unhinged in this current society.

• (1705)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Larouche, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I have a lot of questions, but I may have a total of only six minutes because then it will be the turn of a Bloc Québécois colleague. So I'll try to be as brief as possible. I'd like to have a chance to ask each of the witnesses a question.

Mr. Madou, you mentioned religiously motivated crimes in your opening remarks. As you know, we have a gap in the Criminal Code, and I'm going to explain the way it relates to our study.

The National Assembly of Quebec has requested that Ottawa take action to address hate speech, which has been on the rise since the Middle East war. However, Canada's Criminal Code protects individuals who promote hatred by allowing them to express their hate speech if they do so in good faith or if their speech is based on a religious text.

How can this religious exception encourage individuals to commit certain crimes against the LGBT community?

The Bloc Québécois introduced Bill C-367 to eliminate that exception in the Criminal Code. I don't know if you've heard about it. If not, have you heard about this gap, and do you think it would be important to fill it?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** Thank you for your question.

I find it hard to answer your question directly. However, I think we can see from our investigations and analyses that hateful rhetoric, whatever it may be, mainly occurs online and further encourages many young people to commit violence.

What we've seen in the religious space in recent years is that, unlike what was happening a few years ago when people became radicalized in Canada and committed attacks abroad, radicalization now originates online outside the country and young people are radicalized and commit their acts here.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Great. I'll definitely have an opportunity to come back to that during this study.

Mr. Wallis, you brought up this point. Both you and Mr. Madou actually discussed the online hatred issue. How important is it to monitor online hatred so we can determine at what point it becomes criminal? How important is it to monitor online hate speech and threats more closely.

You can also discuss the religious exception I mentioned.

[*English*]

**Mr. Michael Wallis:** Yes, I believe it's absolutely important. I believe it's critical to address this. If I have been eloquent today, it's to speak to the ambiguity in this space, such that some of these statements and actions might be criminal or both criminal or national security. That ambiguity is entirely problematic.

It is for this reason that I sit as a member of the counter-terrorism and national security committee of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. It's so that I can work with my assessments to help the police understand the ambiguity of this, so that it can clearly be addressed as either hate or hate with national security considerations.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** There's a great deal of misinformation and disinformation online. These activities also have to be recognized as criminal, but police officers say they don't currently have the right tools to address them. The religious exception in the Criminal Code is also a problem.

Ms. Dubuc, yesterday I spoke with representatives of an organization I had recently met at the Fondation Émergence Gala in Montreal. The Vivago inclusive health clinic provides care to women and people in the LGBTQ+ community. The organization's representatives told me it isn't as easy for people in that community to find appropriate care in the health care system because there's still too much misinformation and disinformation out there.



They also confirmed that there really is a lack of trust in the system and that no one dares to report it. They've drawn that conclusion from information they've received while providing care. Without violating professional secrecy, they nevertheless confirmed that those who do report are only the tip of the iceberg because people are afraid of the health and justice systems. So there's a lack of trust.

In one minute, what would you add to that in response to the Vivago inclusive health clinic?

• (1710)

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you for your question.

As for the RCMP, through our Hate Crimes Task Force, which is a national group involving 13 police forces across the country, we are in the process of putting tools in place for our frontline officers, including investigators. For example, we want to define what a hate crime is and what a hate incident is and to expand our capacity to build trust and put tools in place in the communities. We're working with community organizations like the one you mentioned in order to establish the necessary resources and encourage the co-operation of a variety of people in attempting to increase the rate at which people report hate crimes and incidents. The idea is really to equip our officers and the public.

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** I was about to end on that note. I've also been told how important it is to properly train and inform judges and stakeholders and that there's a great deal of work to do in that area. That's all, Ms. Dubuc. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thanks to you both.

[English]

MP Gazan, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Thank you so much, Chair.

I'd like to thank all our witnesses for coming today to do what I feel is an urgent study in regard to the rise of anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes in the country.

I want to speak specifically about a report that CSIS released in 2023. It stated that "the ecosystem of violent rhetoric within the anti-gender movement, compounded with other extreme world views, can lead to serious violence."

I would argue that there are many public figures now, especially with social media, who are contributing to an increase in violence. I'm going to give you examples. There's Jordan Peterson, who lost his licence to practise as a psychologist...inciting much hate, including transphobic hate. There's True North, which is a right-wing—in my opinion extremist—media outlet.

You don't have to talk about them specifically as people, but do you feel that this kind of rhetoric is fuelling the fire for people who are vulnerable to extremist behaviour?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** Most definitely, I think violent extremism stems from a range of ideologies that are driven by hate. There's been a clear echo chamber of hate and violence online that doesn't always meet a criminal threshold or intersect with national security,

but it most definitely contributes to aggravating people who are more susceptible to being radicalized.

From a service perspective, what we notice is that, specifically in terms of the religiously motivated violence and extremism that we investigate, when that violence is exercised, it tends to go against anti-Semitism or against the anti-2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

Often, I would say it's a bit like how my colleague referred to it. Some of these things are so individual that you don't know when someone's going to mobilize to violence, but when they do, they may just take a target of opportunity, and it would be among those communities that are easily vulnerable to being attacked.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Has that violence increased since the pandemic? Answer yes or no. I don't have a lot of time.

**Mr. Peter Madou:** I would say we have an increase in investigations, for sure.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Is that in hate crimes perpetrated against the 2SLGBTQ+ community?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** We don't investigate hate crimes, but in terms of the violent extremists who are espousing these views, we have an increase.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Dubuc.

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Without a doubt. Part of my opening remarks indicated that since 2019, there's been a significant rise, and it's certainly a concern the RCMP shares with other police forces across the country.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** As members of Parliament, we have a lot of power and influence. That's the reality of it. We have a huge audience.

Amnesty International put out an article called "Pierre Poilievre's comments about trans women 'a dangerous distraction'". Basically, what it says.... You don't need to comment about the leader specifically. I'm not asking about him. I'm talking just about the kind of political rhetoric we're hearing in the House of Commons. That's my intention. That's coming from very deep worry.

A person named Elishma Khokhar said in the article:

Targeting trans women is a dangerous distraction that threatens the lives and rights of 2SLGBTQIA+ people and diverts attention from the real systemic causes of gender-based violence. Politicians serious about ending gender-based violence in Canada must base their policies on the facts rather than harmful and divisive rhetoric.

We certainly see in Canada an increase of disinformation in politics. We certainly see a rise in disinformation coming from the States.

I'll ask you this question, Mr. Wallis, because you haven't had a chance to speak. Would you argue that the disinformation campaigns being perpetrated by political parties place 2SLGBTQIA+ at greater risk for harm?

• (1715)

**Mr. Michael Wallis:** I spoke earlier about this ambiguity, which requires us, as a society, to look at things that are acceptable and unacceptable.

I would say that in normal times, when society isn't as polarized as it appears to be at present, what happens is we have voices that are extreme existing on the fringes of the Internet. These folks used to meet in areas that were private, but they have now mainstreamed their violence. The truth is that public discourse is now mixed with a whole bunch of violent, extremist rhetoric, and it is difficult for some more vulnerable members of our society to truly understand what is being said to them and who, in their view, is responsible for their grievances.

The ambiguity and the mainstreaming of violence are the problem in question.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'm sorry, MP Gazan.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** I need way more time, Chair. Really.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** I know. We all do.

[*Translation*]

Go ahead, Ms. Vien.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Ladies and gentlemen, the number of hate crimes has increased at an alarming rate since 2015. Violent crimes, generally speaking, have risen by 50%, sexual assault by more than 74%, murders by 28%, firearm-related violent crimes by 116% and the number of homicides linked to street gangs by 80%.

What's your assessment of the current Criminal Code provisions? Aren't the public policies that the government has in place somewhat lenient given all the figures I just cited?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** Thank you for your question.

I find it hard to comment specifically on the Criminal Code since our focus is mainly on violent hate crimes, which pose a threat to national security.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** Ms. Dubuc, you represent a police service. Would you please tell us about the quality of the current public policies and Criminal Code sections that are quite lenient? It's not me not saying that; it's the police services, in particular.

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you for your question.

I can tell you that the Criminal Code provides no definition of what constitutes a hate crime. There's no such thing yet.

What it does contain are four criminal offences that refer to certain elements. For example, there are advocating genocide, promoting antisemitism and public incitement of hatred, which means generating that energy in a public space. These hate-based motivations under various Criminal Code sections are actually put to good use.

There's obviously what comes into play once an individual is arrested, tried and convicted. Everything that's a motive for hatred

serves as an aggravating factor at sentencing, and that can have an impact on the length of sentence for the individual in question.

I don't have any other available information.

• (1720)

**Mrs. Dominique Vien:** Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Ferreri.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here.

I have just a couple of quick questions. We've heard.... Obviously, intimate partner violence is a massive problem that we're seeing in the country as well, and a lot of folks have said, "The offender was out on bail. There aren't consequences to prevent people from committing crime." We had a gentleman in Peterborough who was arrested for homophobic slurs—we've seen an increase in hate crimes—but he was out on bail. My question is, do you have any data on how many of these targeted crimes against specific groups are by offenders out on bail?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** I don't have that information available today. However, I'm happy to follow up in a written submission following today's meeting.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** That would be tremendous. Thank you.

Do any of you have any asks from specific groups asking for stricter bail conditions?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Not to my knowledge, no, but again, I'm happy to find out.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** That's great.

The other question I would love to ask is about the data around.... I have some hate crime in my own riding. In 2023, Peterborough had the second-highest incidence of hate crime by metropolitan area in Canada, with 33.5 per 100,000. In 2015, Peterborough had 7.4 police-related incidents of hate crime. Do you have any data on what we've seen in hate crime in the last...? My question is, has it increased?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** It certainly has increased, and this is something I mentioned in my opening remarks. Statistics Canada releases data taken from the uniform crime reporting survey. It's data that's publicly available every quarter, that's been released, and it's actually carried out within their Canadian centre for criminal justice. If you're looking for RCMP-specific data, I could provide further information in a written submission.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Thank you. What's—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Michelle. Thank you.

MP Serré, you have the floor for five minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses.

Ms. Dubuc, you mentioned that the Criminal Code doesn't really provide any definition of what constitutes a hate crime.

Mr. Madou and Mr. Wallis, you mentioned that many hate crimes that are currently being committed aren't a threat to national security. Would you please help us unravel those definitions?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** Thank you for your question.

From the standpoint of national security and under the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act, a crime must be an act of serious violence and be motivated by a political or religious objective for us to be able to investigate. Consequently, it takes more than a simple crime for us to intervene.

We obviously aren't a police service; we only conduct national security investigations. When an element of a case falls within the ambit of the Criminal Code, we forward that information to the RCMP, with whom we often work very closely, or to the appropriate police service in that jurisdiction. We can forward certain information so that the police service can continue its criminal investigation.

**Mr. Marc Serré:** Mr. Wallis, as you know, our study focuses on hate-motivated violence targeting the 2ELGBTQI+ community. We focus on hate-based violence against that community. Can you help us gain a clearer understanding of the definitions that govern your work?

[*English*]

**Mr. Michael Wallis:** Yes, I would like to add a little.

The integrated terrorism assessment centre is a functional component of CSIS. We don't exist in legislation. We have the CSIS Act to guide us, and it represents the scope. However, we are an integrated centre, so you would be surprised to find out that we have, for example, a complement from the RCMP, and that we work actively through the CSIS regional offices in particular to engage police of jurisdiction across the country.

The assessment function that we undertake in the current threat environment causes us to be as elastic as possible in understanding what is occurring in—to use a term but not to employ jargon—what I prefer to call a “verge activity”. These are activities that are very close to meeting the threshold of the definition of violent extremism and terrorism that my colleague identified but that understand that there is a bit of a permeable membrane where certain activities can be hate one minute and national security the next minute.

To answer the question, then, I will say that we operate from a functional perspective based on the definition. However, practically speaking, we are engaged with law enforcement to try to cover the spectrum, particularly because the threat of a lone actor in Canada requires it of us.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marc Serré:** Thank you.

Ms. Dubuc, your opening remarks didn't focus directly on the subject of our study and contained very little information on the 2ELGBTQI+ community. Would you please have your organization provide the committee with a report on the training you provide for RCMP officers to improve their knowledge of that community?

Mr. Madou, Ms. Gazan discussed the policy in the context of on-line messaging. Who are the players exerting influence in Canada? Is it Russia or China? Homosexuality is punished by the death penalty in some countries. What are the influencer countries when it comes to online hate speech in Canada?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** Thank you for your question.

I have to say that state actors aren't specifically the ones that try to promote terrorist acts, including seriously violent acts. It's more radicalized individuals who live abroad or, in some instances, in Canada and who represent religious groups. They mainly promote incidents online, in chat rooms, some of which are encrypted and can't always be detected. So it isn't specifically state actors that are behind this, but rather large and small terrorist groups that like to proselytize.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Bérubé, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses for being here today for this very important study.

My question is for all the witnesses. Earlier you said that the LGBTQ+ community is subjected to intimidation and violence. I also think society suffers from a lack of acceptance. As you know, the community is facing a great deal of violence in the United States. Are you concerned that this violence may reach us here?

[English]

**Mr. Michael Wallis:** My perception is based on having access to information on violent extremism as an integrated centre and access to various databases, and keeping a finger on the pulse of the threat of terrorism in this country and to Canadian interests overseas. In general, at this moment, the internationalization and the Internet-based propagation of violent extremist threats means it's not necessarily the partner next door. The influences are coming from various corners of the Internet and, indeed, the globe. The truth is there are individuals in Canada who could be in communication with folks in Europe, the United States or Southeast Asia, and that is what seems to be the driving factor.

• (1730)

**Mr. Peter Madou:** From a service perspective, these acts that are taking place anywhere—they're kind of borderless—could aim to inspire people to mobilize towards violence. If there are individuals who are radicalized but not quite sure they want to get to violence, an act that takes place, say, in the United States or anywhere else could incite them and mobilize them to do so. That's an instance we can sometimes see: A terrorist attack somewhere may inspire others to mobilize to violence more immediately.

[Translation]

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you for your question, Ms. Bérubé.

I just want to add a few points to my colleagues' responses, even though they did a very good job of answering the question.

Given the way people mobilize these days through social media and the Internet, for example, the RCMP's concern is to monitor all external forces. For example, we monitor the potential consequences of major political decisions and the tendency of movements that mobilize in one country or another. However, the RCMP's primary concern is the safety of all Canadians.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Dubuc.

[English]

MP Gazan, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Thank you so much.

I'm hearing more about this rise of Christo-fascism that is occurring in the United States and Canada. There was an article written in the Times Colonist, a paper from Victoria, which says:

We are witnessing the rise of Christo-fascism in the US and Canada. It is especially white Christian men finding political identity outside of previously trusted democratic institutions including public health. Sometimes this identity reveals itself as skepticism and hate for government leaders and vaccine mandates. The skepticism and hate is becoming increasingly personal, widening to include racialized people, queer folks, and women who suffer threats of violence.

Is Christo-fascism starting to infiltrate Canadian politics?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** I'm not aware of that term yet being used in our parlance. Ideologically driven violent extremism is typically very much driven by individuals who are xenophobic or have issues with gender-based identities. It's a variety of different things in terms of ideologies that can mobilize people to violence, so this could be a phenomenon, but it hasn't yet hit my radar. I'm not sure about others.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** I've been very public about this. I think people are just not well since the pandemic. I think we have a real mental health crisis in the country. People are suffering and struggling more than ever, and when people are struggling, they're more vulnerable to being usurped by these extremist groups.

Do you see a rise in people who are being, I guess, recruited by extremist groups?

Ms. Dubuc, you were nodding your head, so I'll let you answer.

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** The RCMP is aware of this trend, yes. I cannot comment any further in terms of actual data, but if you're looking for further information on this, I'd be happy to follow up after today's meeting.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the last Conservative and Liberal members, we'll do three minutes each.

[Translation]

Mr. Généreux, you have the floor for three minutes.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses for being with us today.

Ms. Dubuc, how can you charge people with a hate crime if the Criminal Code doesn't contain an exact definition of what a hate crime is?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you very much for that question.

[English]

I will respond in English this time. Hate crime is not defined in Canadian law per se, but there are four criminal offences in the Criminal Code that deal with hateful motivation. I talked a bit earlier about willful promotion of anti-Semitism, advocating genocide, public assignment of hatred and willful promotion of hatred.

What happens is that when an individual is accused and ultimately convicted under the Criminal Code, the Criminal Code requires that the court consider that the hateful motivation be used as an aggravating factor to address the sentence or the length of the sentence of the individual who's been convicted.

• (1735)

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** All right. Thank you.

From 2015 to 2023, the Canadian population increased by nearly 7 million inhabitants, from 35 million to 42 million. Do you think the percentage of hate crimes and of total crimes committed against the LGBTQ community has increased, or has it remained in proportion to the population?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you for your question.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, it's essentially hard to assess hate crime rates. We're really starting to focus more on increasing the capacities of both the RCMP and all police services in the country. We really need to focus our joint efforts on how to report and evaluate the actual numbers.

Awareness campaigns have been introduced to enable our officers and the public to understand what a hate crime is. Then there are the elements that come into play in building the public's trust when it comes to reporting the crimes in question. That remains to be seen.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** So you don't really have any statistics, or you can't give us any. However, do you think that the policies of the present government, which has been in power since 2015, have caused this increase in hate crimes?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you for your question.

That's a nice try, Mr. Généreux, but I'm definitely not going to comment on the present government's policies. However, I can say that measures have been put in place, such as those implemented by the RCMP. Apart from the measures we have now, steps have also been taken to gather more information.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Sidhu, you have the floor for five minutes.

[*English*]

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses.

My question is for Ms. Dubuc.

Ms. Dubuc, this year the RCMP hate crimes report notes that roughly 60% of hate crime incidents are committed by thrill-seeking offenders, usually youth and teenagers. How can education and social programs be restructured to disrupt these pathways among youth? I know that you already talked about removing barriers and special events happening, but what else can we do?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** There are a few things right now. I think the first is that, with the RCMP and the Canadian Race Relations Foundation we put in place a couple of years ago, the hate crimes task force that I mentioned earlier is foundational to really establishing public awareness, not only for, of course, members of the public and our communities, but also for the police in terms of what constitutes a hate crime and what constitutes a hate incident.

I mentioned earlier as well that we're looking at, of course, mobilizing capacity to be able to report and, obviously, identify those hate crimes and the incidents in question. There is also anti-hate training and anti-racism police training that's happening within the RCMP and the police jurisdictions across the country, through the Canadian Police College. Most important, coming back to your question, is really focusing our efforts on culturally sensitive and trauma-informed engagement with victims, members of the community, survivors and witnesses alike.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Thank you.

My colleague said that social media contributed to amplifying hate and extremism in Canada. How can social media be leveraged

as a tool to raise awareness, promote education and counteract hate narrative?

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** I'm sorry. Can you clarify the question? How can social media be used to dispel some of the misinformation that's online?

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Yes, it's that misinformation.

**Ms. Catherine Dubuc:** Thank you. I really appreciate that we had two of your colleagues nodding and saying yes. This is a fun group.

I think there's a lot of information out there. I know the RCMP have most of their tools and information available on their external website. I'm not sure why I'm saying "their"—I'm part of the organization. We're certainly leveraging elements like community policing, and having conversations with marginalized groups and vulnerable populations is really important to ensure that we're supporting the community and really trying to, I'll say, bridge those connecting tissues and dispel some of the myths that perhaps are being purported through misinformation and social media.

• (1740)

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Mr. Madou, do you want to add to that?

**Mr. Peter Madou:** I actually just aligned with my colleague here. I would say that the service has invested significant resources in terms of outreach. We believe that, aside from our investigations, the ability for the service to reach different communities, different levels of government and different associations towards becoming more alive to the threats around there will help stitch all the right elements for a better dialogue within society and potentially a way to fight misinformation and disinformation.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I'm sorry. Yes, Pam?

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** On a point of order, I'm wondering if we can get unanimous consent on something. I don't think there are three more important agencies that the federal government has on this study, and it feels like we've barely touched the subject. We haven't talked about how we can disrupt the dens that lone wolves live in. We haven't talked about foreign interference.

I'm wondering if we could get unanimous consent for them to return for an hour. I appreciate that you gave them extra time, Chair, but I'm hoping that we can agree to invite them back for another hour.

**The Chair:** That's for an additional hour as part of the study. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Okay, the invitation will go out—we'll have our clerk coordinate with you.

We have Ms. Hefner on another point of order.

**Ms. Lisa Hefner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Thank you. I'd like to acknowledge that we have Senator Kristopher Wells in the room. He's also been invited as a witness to this study. He's let me know that Wednesdays are better for him.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

He's usually travelling on Monday, so if the clerk is doing some scheduling, perhaps we can keep that in mind as well.

**The Chair:** We will keep that in mind.

Welcome, Senator.

Thank you to all the witnesses for their testimony today.

At this point, I guess I don't have to encourage you to submit anything that you didn't get to provide an answer to, because you may be back.

I will be suspending now for approximately five minutes. We're going to close quickly. Thank you so much.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

---









Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>