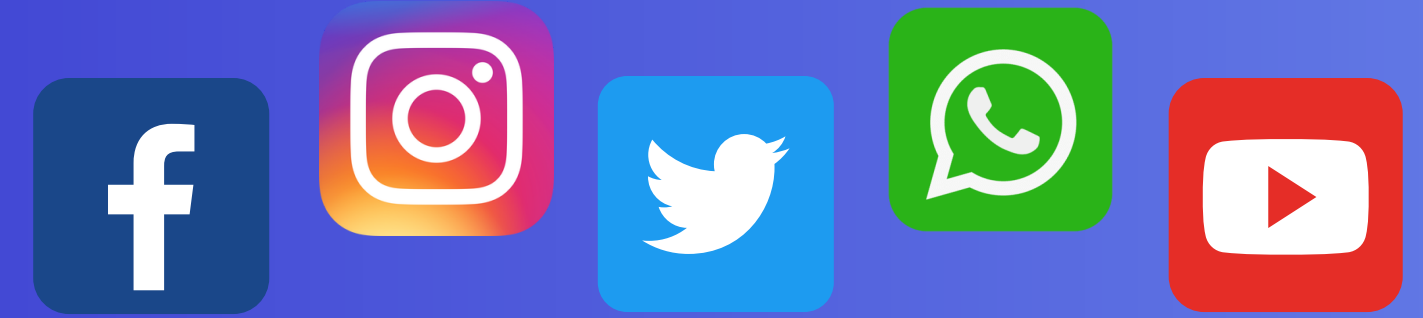


Digital Transnational Repression

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Social Media Company Policies



As the site of many of the practices of DTR, social media platforms have a vital role to play in combatting this threat. I found that while none of these companies had policies directly addressing DTR, most of the tactics used to perpetrate DTR were already banned under various company policies, terms of service, and community guidelines. The fact that DTR is still happening through these platforms is a sign that enforcement is an issue.

Digital transnational repression occurs when states try to silence or coerce citizens outside of their borders via digital means. Through spyware, disinformation campaigns, online harassment, hacking, and other means, authoritarians are using digital technologies to repress dissidents, activists, journalists, and others who have fled their country of origin. These tactics differ when the target is a woman and bear striking resemblance to instances of online gender-based violence. I undertook this research to uncover what can be done to regulate DTR and provide support for victims here in Canada.



The Hole in Canada's Response to DTR

Although the Canadian Government has begun to address these overlapping issues, there is a gap in understanding when it comes to DTR.

The diagram on the left shows initiatives taken by the government to address issues which are related to DTR, but so far the Canadian government has not acknowledged the existence of DTR in Canada and has no word to describe this threat specifically. With no definition, we cannot address this issue.

But there is hope. Canada could still be the first country to pass legislation regulating DTR so that no one in this country is targeted for speaking their mind, calling for democracy, or daring to defy the government in their country of origin. The rights and freedoms of people in Canada are under attack, our Criminal Code is being violated, and our democracy is being threatened. It is time for our government to act.

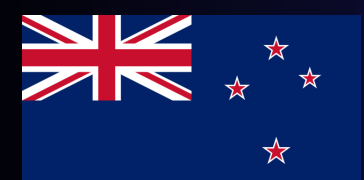
Government Responses: DTR Legislation?



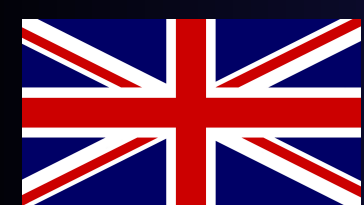
Australia: Online Safety Act (2021)



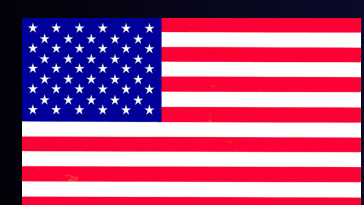
European Union: Digital Services Act (2022)



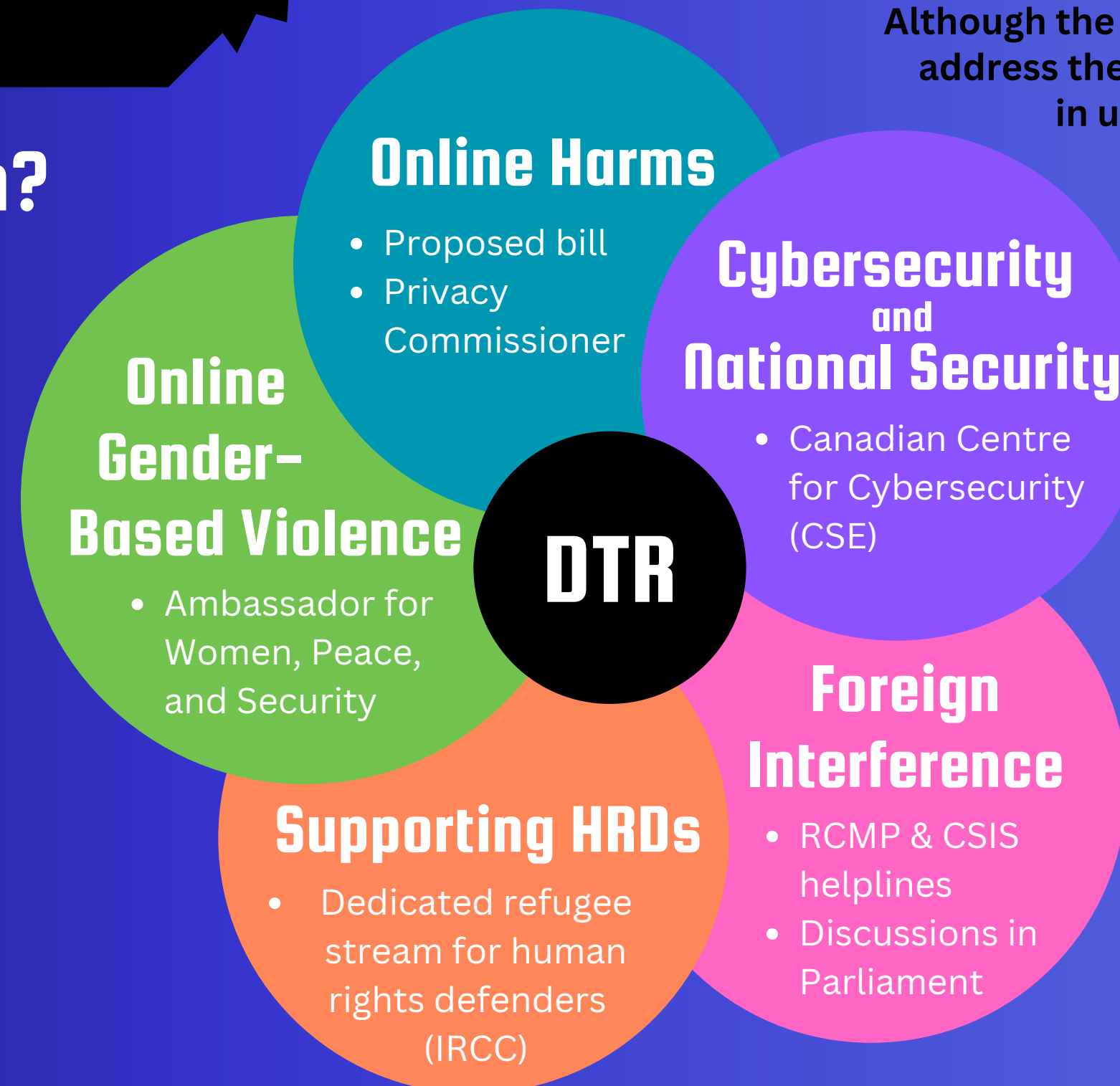
New Zealand: Harmful Digital Communications Act (2015)



United Kingdom: Online Safety Bill (not passed yet), National Security Bill (awaiting Royal Assent)



USA: Transnational Repression Policy Act (not passed yet)



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