

2021

C-Dem Annual Report 2021

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Annual Report

Report on 2020 Activities

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Updates on the Network

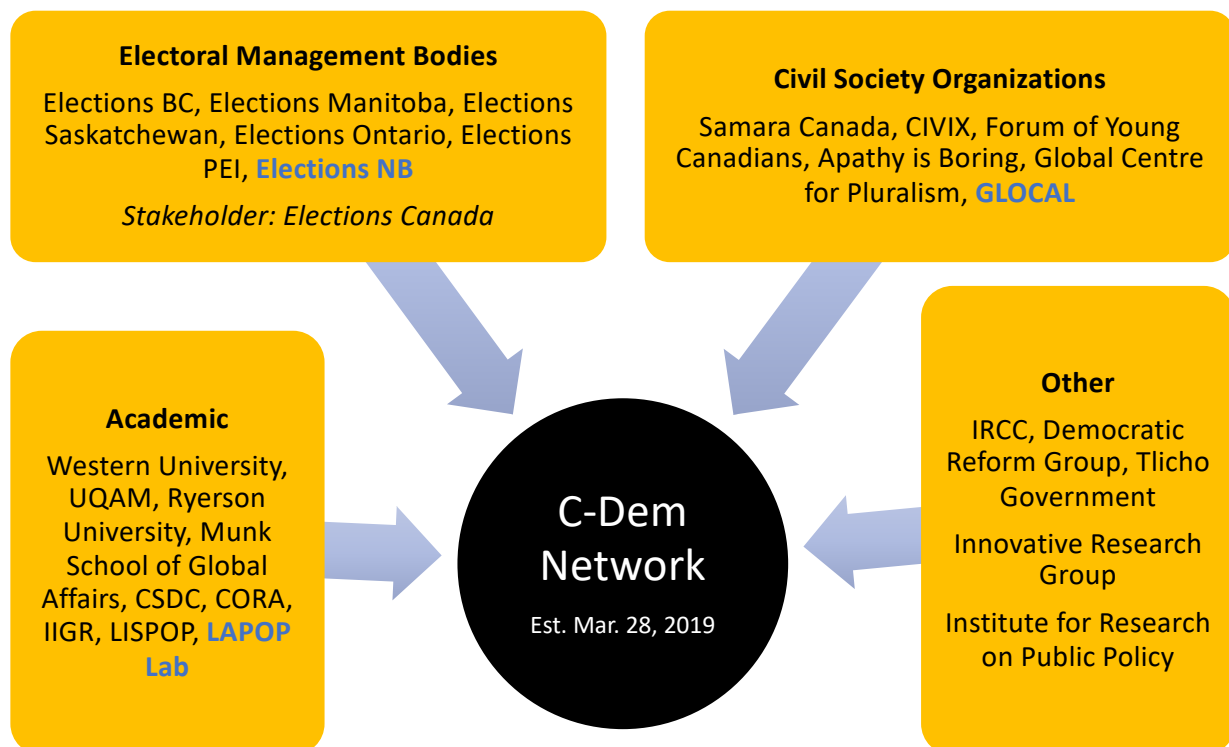
We're pleased to report that C-Dem has expanded! We have three new partners and a new collaborator. We also began discussions at the end of 2020 with the Electoral Integrity Project, and we expect to make the partnership official early in 2021.

Partners

LAPOP Lab at Vanderbilt University runs the Americas Barometer and is at the forefront of survey design and implementation in less-developed countries. **Elections New Brunswick** joined C-Dem as an official partner in fall 2020. We worked together to field questions on the New Brunswick Election Study. Finally, we were approached by a Canadian foundation, **GLOCAL**, about partnering (<https://glocalfoundation.ca>). GLOCAL runs www.youcount.ca, a website that provides information about representatives and electoral candidates to people across Canada. Although a small organization, it is enthusiastic about spreading the word about C-Dem's research findings and helping to collate and synthesize political information for Canadians.

Researchers

On the researcher front, **Matt Lebo** (Western) has joined us as a collaborator. He is interested in working with the C-Dem network to encourage students in underrepresented groups to study political behaviour and take part in C-Dem activities. Finally, although not officially, **Holly Ann Garnett** (Royal Military College) has joined us as the Institute on Intergovernmental Relations (Queen's University) representative. Dr. Garnett has recently taken over as the director of the Electoral Integrity Project.



Personnel

C-Dem currently has a program manager (Barbara Oram) and three postdoctoral fellows (Joanie Bouchard, Western; Laura French Bourgeois, UQAM; Amber Lee, Ryerson). Two of our postdoctoral fellows will be leaving us (the positions were designed to be 1 year commitments, renewable for 1 year). We will be advertising in the spring for postdoctoral fellows at UQAM and Western.

We have just advertised for a full-time Research Assistant (Data Collection) to assist the co-directors with the specific tasks associated with coordinating, programming and fielding surveys. This person will also be in charge of cleaning and preparing datasets for distribution as well as preparing codebooks.

Finally, we employ a number of research assistants across various institutions at all three levels of study. Research assistants are based at Western, UQAM, Ryerson, Toronto and at each of the institutions that fielded a provincial study in 2020 (SK, BC, NB).

Updates on Data Collection

Completed or Ongoing Studies

Since our last report in February 2020, C-Dem has been very busy gathering data. In March 2020 we completed the 4th wave of the 2019 Democracy Checkup. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first 4 wave dataset that includes a pre-campaign survey. We were pleasantly surprised to gather responses from 1,842 individuals in the final wave, a much higher return to sample than we expected (the initial size of the sample from wave 1 was just over 5,000).

We ran the 2020 Democracy Checkup in May 2020 (n=8,170). Through a partnership with CIFAR, we also ran a follow-up study with the DC respondents later that month (n=4,421).

We expected to run one provincial election study in 2020 (Saskatchewan), but instead did three. Both New Brunswick and British Columbia had minority governments that called elections in the fall of 2020.

Since 2019, C-Dem has collected almost **59,000** surveys. With recontacts, that's over **85,699**. At 20 minutes a piece, that's **28,500** hours of surveys.

PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL ELECTION STUDIES

New Brunswick - Lead Co-investigator: Joanna Everitt

August 31-September 13, N=1082; September 15-30, N=698, 65% RTS

British Columbia - Lead Co-investigator: Mark Pickup

October 9-23, N=1505; October 29-November 9, N=1290, 86% RTS

Saskatchewan - Lead Co-investigator: Loleen Berdahl

October 13-25, N=1003; October 29-November 12, N=685, 68% RTS

Newfoundland - Lead Co-investigators: Amanda Bittner and Scott Matthews

January 29-February 12, N=875; ?

Upcoming Studies

Provincial and Territorial Election Studies (PTES)

We are currently in the field in Newfoundland and Labrador, where an election was called due to a regulation related to the Premier stepping down as party leader. This is the fourth provincial study we have run in the past 6 months, which has meant we ramped up our PTES data collections far sooner than our original planning had called for. That being said, the core instrument was largely designed early in 2020 in consultation with provincial leads, and each subsequent election study only requires a small subset of adjustments.

We expect to have at least two PTES in 2021. The first will be of the Tłı̄cho Government, a community located in Northwest Territories. Their Grand Chief and the Community Governments of Behchokò, Whatì, Gamètì and Wekweètì will be elected at that time. Jerry Sabin (Carleton) is the lead co-investigator on this project. We are working with him and the Tłı̄cho Government (a C-Dem partner) and John Zoe (senior advisor to the Tłı̄cho Government and a C-Dem collaborator) to adapt the C-Dem core survey and develop the Research Ethics protocol. We will employ individuals in the Tłı̄cho community to conduct CATI surveys, utilizing the Qualtrics platform and our in-house programming. We will attempt to collect responses from the entire community (approximately 1000 persons). The surveys will be offered in English and Tłı̄cho. We are very excited about this project. We do not know of any other survey of an Indigenous government election in Canada and hope that it can be a model for future studies.

Nova Scotia is also expected to have an election in 2021, although there is no requirement that one be held until April 2022. Elections Nova Scotia has indicated that they are preparing to hold an election as of April 1, 2021, so we are aiming to be ready. Jason Roy (Wilfrid Laurier University) is the lead co-investigator on that study, and he has already begun working with a research assistant on the project.

2021 Democracy Checkup (DC)

We plan to run the 2021 Democracy Checkup in May 2021. We will again aim to collect around 8,000 interviews. The timing of that study is somewhat tentative given the (general) expectation of a spring federal election. Should that be called prior to May, we will run the 2021 DC six months after, possibly trying to recontact CES respondents. If there is a federal election after the DC, we will investigate the possibility of recontacting the DC respondents to have another multiple wave study with pre-campaign data.

Canadian Election Study (CES)

In anticipation of the next Canadian Election Study, we have commissioned three reports. The first is about the mode of the study. Alvaro Pereira, a graduate student at Western, is working on replicating the analyses of Breton et al. (2017) on the 2015 election.¹ Our preliminary results indicate that there is no clear benefit to conducting the CES with a telephone sample in terms of data quality. On several markers, the difference from a benchmark value is greater with the phone data. Further, as we noted in our previous report, the response rate was very low on the phone (5.6%). The report has yet to be finalized but will be posted on our website when it is ready.

The other two reports relate to survey question design. The first is being written by Quinn Albaugh, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Toronto. She is compiling a report about how to ask respondents about sex, gender and sexuality. Once completed, we will convene a panel of C-Dem researchers who work in that field (Amanda Bittner, Elisabeth Gidengil, Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant and Dietlind Stolle) to provide feedback.

The second report has to do with collecting data on respondent ethnicity. Asking about race, ethnic background, Indigeneity and visible minority status is a challenging part of running surveys in Canada. Traditionally the CES has asked about ethnic background with a multiple-answer format. In recent C-Dem surveys we have piloted a modified race question designed to address the Canadian reality, including options for Indigenous respondents. Amber Lee, a C-Dem postdoctoral fellow at Ryerson University, is working on this report.

Finally, we put out a call for expressions of interest in purchasing survey modules on the next CES in early January, with a deadline of February 15. We have received 20 different applications from around the world, including universities in the US, Belgium and France, and The Dignity Project. This practice was mutually beneficial in 2019, and we hope to be able to continue the practice, despite the challenges of designing and implementing a survey with a snap election call.

¹ Charles Breton, Fred Cutler, Sarah Lachance and Alex Mierke-Zatwarnicki (2017), "Telephone versus Online Survey Modes for Election Studies: Comparing Canadian Public Opinion and Vote Choice in the 2015 Federal Election," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 1005-1036.

Planned C-Dem Surveys			
	Democracy Checkup (N>8000)	Canadian Election Study	Provincial / Territorial Election Study (PTES) (N~1500)
2021	✓	?	Tłjcho Government, Nova Scotia
2022	✓	?	Ontario, Quebec
2023	✓	?	Manitoba, Alberta, PEI
2024	✓	?	
2025	✓	?	
2026	✓	?	

Novel Question Modules

Election Administration

We followed the practice of previous CES and included questions about election administration in the 2019 CES. We prepared a report on those questions and distributed it to our EMB partners after the election. Elections Ontario has been particularly keen to be involved in developing this question battery for future studies and prepared a report based upon a review of survey questions used by other EMBs overtime. We were happy to incorporate some of their suggestions into PTES surveys and plan to continue with those in future studies.

Examples of questions included are:

- Satisfaction with how EMB runs the election
- Opinions on voting by mail
- Knowledge of voting options
- Awareness of EMB advertising campaigns
- COVID safety precautions at polling stations
- Satisfaction with voting experience

COVID

We were in the fortunate position of having already planned to run surveys when the COVID-19 pandemic began. This allowed us to develop novel questions throughout 2020 and now into 2021. We also worked with our EMB partners to adjust our election administration module to incorporate questions about safety, comfort and mail voting.

Examples of the topics covered are:

- Satisfaction with government handling of pandemic
- Provincial performance compared to other provinces
- Vaccine hesitancy
- Individual risk level

A list of the COVID and election administration questions that we included on the various surveys is available.

Data Releases

We released the 2019 Canadian Election Study datasets in May 2020. Both the telephone and web studies are available on Harvard's Dataverse. The online survey data (n=37,822) and documentation can be accessed here: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/DUS88V> and the phone survey data (n=4021) and documentation here: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/8RHG1>.

We anticipate releasing the second version of the CES datasets in May 2021, with updated coding for occupation, urban residence and open-ended questions, including the most important campaign issue and political information questions. We are pleased that researchers in the larger Canadian community have been willing to provide their coding to us for both residence and occupation for inclusion in the next version of the dataset.

Survey Firms

We worked with Dynata on the 2019 DC and Qualtrics for the 2019 CES. Our experience with Dynata was much preferred so we worked with them again for the 2020 DC. However, we also sought out quotes from several other firms in preparation for the PTES and future CES (Narrative Research, Leger, Dynata, Abacus, VoxPopLabs, Social Sciences Research Laboratories at the University of Saskatchewan). These inquiries confirmed to us that it will be challenging to gather PTES surveys of 1500 in many of the Canadian provinces, which led us to revise our expectations accordingly.

We were fortunate to find Narrative Research (<https://narrativeresearch.ca>) to distribute the surveys in New Brunswick. We worked with Leger for the British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland studies (in both Saskatchewan and Newfoundland they worked with partners). We anticipate working with Narrative Research again for the Nova Scotia Election Study.

For the next Canadian Election Study, we have not yet decided upon a survey firm. Both Dynata and Leger have the capacity to conduct the study at a competitive price. One company we were impressed by (both in terms of panel design and cost) was Leger (<https://leger360.com/surveys/>), a long-standing Canadian company that is well-known for telephone surveys. One of the key features that appeals to us is that Leger has developed their web panel largely through their own probability survey work, and they actively maintain it. They are also willing to promise a higher RTS for the second wave of a study than other firms; RTS was a key disappointment of the 2019 CES.

Updates on Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic has left no aspect of the world untouched. C-Dem's activities are no different. We had anticipated quite a busy 2020 filled with various events, including a formal launch of C-Dem at Western during the Canadian Political Science Association meeting. Nonetheless, we were able to continue with a number of activities and found new opportunities as well.

Survey Modules

As we did in 2019 before the CES and as we plan to do annually, we ran a peer-reviewed module competition in 2020. There were two streams of the competition, one for researchers (faculty and post-doctoral fellows) and another for students. Members of our network served as adjudicators: Dassonneville (chair), Rubenson, and Soroka for the researchers and Harell (chair), Roy, and Bélanger for the students. We received 19 (12 faculty, 7 student) applications. The researcher winners were Edana Beavais (postdoctoral fellow at McGill, now faculty at Simon Fraser University) and Eric Merkley (postdoctoral fellow at Toronto) (tie) and the student winner was Colin Scott (McGill). Their modules were included on the 2020 Democracy Checkup.

We announced the 2021 competition in January 2021. We received 8 applications, four in each stream. The winners of this competition will have their modules included in the 2021 Democracy Checkup. Dassonneville (researcher stream) and Roy (student stream) will chair the two adjudication committees.

We included modules purchased by others on C-Dem surveys as well. The Mosaic Institute contracted with us to include a small battery of questions on the 2020 DC. CIFAR purchased survey space on the second wave of that study. Elections New Brunswick had a module on the election study in that province, and Elections BC contributed to the British Columbia Election Study in exchange for bespoke questions.

Public Events

There are three events that C-Dem contributed to in 2020. The first was a series of Early Career Researcher Roundtables (<https://www.genderandpoliticslab.com/covid-19>) that we organized with the Gender and Politics Lab (MUN) and CORA (Queen's). Our colleagues Amanda Bittner and Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant are the directors of those programs. In the midst of the concerns about early career faculty related to the pandemic, we thought this was an important opportunity to bring people together to discuss pressing concerns.

We have planned to take part in the Canadian Vote Summit in April 2020. Organized by Mike McGregor (Ryerson, a C-Dem collaborator) and John Beebe (Ryerson, a C-Dem collaborator) with the Democratic Engagement Exchange, the event was a retrospective of the 2019 Canadian Election. The event was reorganized as a series of sessions that took place from September 15 – October 21, 2020. Several C-Dem researchers were featured in various sessions (Laura Stephenson, Peter Loewen, Daniel Rubenson, Valérie-Anne Mahéo, and André Blais). Information can be found here: <https://www.engagedemocracy.ca/democracdialogues>.

We also were approached in 2020 by two scholars (Rohan Alexander and Paul Hodgetts, University of Toronto) who were developing a package for R to easily import the CES. We provided feedback and advertised the final package on social media. We then partnered with LISPOP at Wilfrid Laurier University to co-sponsor a workshop on the *cesR* package on January 15, 2021 (<http://lispop.ca/workshops>).

Network Events

We have hosted one network event, the C-Dem Partner Meeting (May 4, 2020). This was an opportunity for our partners to get updates on C-Dem as well as present information about their own activities. Nine partners were in attendance. Elections Canada, Samara, Apathy is Boring/Democracy X Change and Elections Ontario all made presentations.

Upcoming Events in 2021

In addition to a Researcher Meeting that was held on Feb. 1, 2021, where we updated co-investigators and collaborators on C-Dem activities, PTES data collection and gathered feedback as we prepare for the next CES, we also have a number of upcoming events. Our hope is that by November we will be able to have some events in person.

EMB Closed-Door Meeting (March)

Our partner Elections Ontario has taken the initiative to organize a meeting with other EMBs to discuss running COVID elections. C-Dem will present information gathered from four PTES.

Joint Event with Munk (TBA)

Peter Loewen is organizing an event about COVID elections around the world in cooperation with the Munk School at the University of Toronto. C-Dem will present research from our own recent data collections.

C-Dem Partner Forum (May)

Our third annual partner meeting will take place on May 10, 2021. Many partners have already confirmed their attendance. The agenda and list of speakers has yet to be developed.

Canadian Political Science Association 2021 (June)

This online event from June 7-10, 2021 is the largest opportunity for Canadian political scientists to gather and present their research. We have proposed 2 panels that showcase the research of our members as well as the winners of the 2019 and 2020 module competitions. We have also organized 2 roundtables, one on the recent provincial elections and the other on election administration (with the participation of Elections Canada and Elections Ontario). Finally, we have organized a training session roundtable to promote *Explorations*, a research methods textbook recently published by two of our co-investigators (Jason Roy and Loleen Berdahl). A key feature of this textbook is the use of Canadian Election Study examples. Oxford University Press Canada has agreed to make the companion methodological guides (using the CES in SPSS, Stata and R) publicly available on their website. This is a fantastic resource that will help students and research assistants and practitioners understand how to use the CES for their research needs.

Toronto Political Behaviour Workshop (November)

Daniel Rubenson and Peter Loewen will once again organize the Toronto Political Behaviour Workshop, scheduled for November 2021. C-Dem is a co-sponsor of this event.

C-Dem Forum and International Conference (Spring/Summer 2022)

With the hope of vaccines and the resumption of travel, we are tentatively planning a large event for 2022. We hope to combine our annual Forum, a partner meeting, a researcher meeting and an academic workshop. The goal will be to give all members of the C-Dem network an opportunity to meet, hear about each other's work, and engage in fruitful discussion. As this will be close to the mid-point of the project, it is also an opportunity to take stock of what has been accomplished and make more concrete plans for the second half of the project.

Mid-Term Review

C-Dem will submit a detailed midterm report to SSHRC by October 31, 2022. We will know the outcome of the midterm review in January 2023.

Research Output

Publications (*indicates peer-reviewed; † indicates paper outside network)

*Laura B. Stephenson, Allison Harell, Daniel Rubenson, and Peter John Loewen. 2021. "Measuring Preferences and Behaviours in the 2019 Canadian Election Study." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423920001006>.

*Laura French Bourgeois, Allison Harell and Laura B. Stephenson. 2020. "To follow or not to follow: Social norms and civic duty during a pandemic." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 53(2): 273-278.

Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant, Allison Harell and Laura Stephenson. "Women and racialized Canadians worry more about COVID-19 largely because they are more at risk. This may have future mental health implications." *Policy Options* May 21, 2020. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/may-2020/concern-about-pandemic-differs-across-gender-and-race-lines/>

* † Erl, C., 2021. The People and The Nation: The "Thick" and the "Thin" of Right-Wing Populism in Canada. *Social Science Quarterly*, 102(1), pp.107-124.

*Joanie Bouchard. Accepted. "I think Canadians look like all sorts of people": ethnicity, political leadership, and the case of Jagmeet Singh." *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*.

Reports

Samara Centre for Democracy, *Temperature Check: Canadian Democratic Attitudes in a Pandemic*. https://www.samaracanada.com/docs/default-source/reports/temperature-check-by-the-samara-centre-for-democracy.pdf?sfvrsn=60661e2f_4

John R. McAndrews, Aengus Bridgman, Peter John Loewen, Daniel Rubenson, Laura B. Stephenson, and Allison Harell. Evaluation of the 2019 Federal Leaders' Debates. Commissioned report for the Leaders' Debates Commission.

Presentations, Talks and Working Papers

Laura Stephenson, "Minority Groups in the 2019 Canadian Election: Preliminary Reflections from the CES", The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Gender in Contemporary Canadian Electoral Politics Workshop, Memorial University, February 24-25, 2020.

Laura Stephenson, Allison Harell, Daniel Rubenson and Peter John Loewen. "Motivated to Forgive? Partisan Scandals and Party Supporters." Presented at the American Political Science Association conference, virtual, September 9-13, 2020.

Allison Harell. "Sharing with Strangers: National Identity, Cross-Group Solidarity and Redistribution in Canada." University of Calgary Departmental Virtual Speaker Series, 15 Jan 2021.

Allison Harell. "Social Diversity, Partisan Identities and the 2019 Canadian Election." 2 Feb 2021. Canadian Studies Spring 2021 Colloquium, Berkeley.

Eric Merkley. 2020. "Polarization Eh? Ideological Divergence and Partisan Sorting in the Canadian Mass Public." Working paper, <https://osf.io/cnzer>

† Fred Cutler, Antony Hodgson and Alexandre Rivard. 2020. "Voter Preferences, Local Party Competitiveness, Turnout, and Strategic Voting: Deterrents to Voting are Unequally Distributed." <https://preprints.apsanet.org/engage/apsa/article-details/5fa32d5ecfc2cb001205dc82>

Research in Progress

Peter John Loewen, Daniel Rubenson, Rose de Geus, Mujahedul Islam, Allison Harell, Laura Stephenson. Winning and losing power: an analytical narrative of the 2015 and 2019 Canadian federal elections. [CPSA 2021]

Laura Stephenson, Allison Harell, Daniel Rubenson, Peter John Loewen and Amber Lee. Motivated to Forgive? Partisan Scandals and Party Supporters. [APSA 2020, under revision for submission]

Allison Harell, Laura Stephenson, Daniel Rubenson, Peter John Loewen. The Social Nature of Partisanship During an Election Campaign [ISPP 2021]

Joanie Bouchard, Allison Harell, Antoine Thériault and Laura Stephenson. Le vote populiste au Canada ? Une comparaison de l'offre et la demande. [under revision for submission]

Laura French Bourgeois, Allison Harell, Laura Stephenson. Social norms: the driving forces behind civic duty and participation. [under revision for submission]

Jordan Mansell, Laura Stephenson, Allison Harell. Who Are Affective Partisans Anyway? Using Random Forest Classification to Explain Affective Partisanship, an A-Theoretical Approach. [EJPR 2021]

New Methodological Paper Series

C-Dem is also organizing a new methodological working paper series that will focus on methodological issues in survey research. We have three working papers being prepared by

graduate students and postdoctoral researchers that we expect to be published on our website in 2021. The three themes planned for 2021 are:

- Quinn Albaugh (Toronto): Measuring Gender
- Alvaro Pereira (Western): Mode Comparison between 2019 Phone and Web Surveys
- Amber Lee (Ryerson): Ethnic and Racial Identity Measurement