



Your Voice on Digital Safety

Key Findings

OpenMedia's 2026 community survey

September 2026



OpenMedia is a grassroots community of 230,000 people in Canada that work together for an open, accessible and surveillance-free Internet. We work as a civic engagement platform that educates, engages, and empowers Internet users to advance democracy and digital rights across North America.

For more information, visit openmedia.org.

You can also find us on these social media platforms.

Bluesky | [@openmedia.org](https://bsky.app/@openmedia.org)

Mastodon | [@OpenMediaOrg](https://mastodon.social/@OpenMediaOrg)

Instagram | [@openmediaorg](https://www.instagram.com/openmediaorg)

LinkedIn | [OpenMedia.org](https://www.linkedin.com/company/OpenMedia.org)

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Background

In June 2026, Canada proposed new federal legislation [Bill C-34](#), the Safe Social Media Act, that would introduce age verification requirements for many online services, platform accountability measures for social media companies, and other rules themed around protecting young people online. The decisions made in this legislation will shape the online experiences of all Canadians for years to come.

Some Canadians see these measures as an important step toward a safer, better internet, while others have questions about how it could erode privacy, freedom of expression, and how these proposals would work in practice. Getting this legislation right will be tricky and that's exactly why we want to hear from you before lawmakers further consider Bill C-34 this fall.

To help inform this conversation, OpenMedia's [2026 Summer Fellows](#) worked together to develop a community survey exploring how Canadians think about online safety and the trade-offs that come with new digital policies.

The survey asked about measures currently being discussed through Bill C-34, including age verification, platform accountability, and other approaches to improving online safety. Rather than assuming there is one right answer, we want to better understand what Canadians like you value most, and why.

About the survey

From July 21st to August 2nd, **2,520 Canadians** responded to our [Your Voice on Digital Safety survey](#). The results show that respondents are concerned about online safety and want Canada to address concrete online harms, while also expressing serious concerns about approaches that require people to provide more personal information.

Respondents represented a range of age groups and experiences. 66.48% were adults between 18 and 64, while 30.6% were 65 or older. Nearly half (48.45%) also had some connection to children through parenting, their work, or being a young person themselves.

Across those responses, a bigger picture emerged. People aren't choosing between online safety and privacy. **They're asking why they should have to choose at all.**

Key Findings

1 People are worried about online harms.

- 80.75% identified scams and fraud as an important issue for Canada to address.
- Non-consensual intimate imagery and deepfakes followed closely, both identified by nearly three-quarters of respondents. A fabricated intimate image can devastate someone's life before they even know it exists.

"Harassment does not stop by banning teenagers from social media because that does not address the core part of human emotion which is being exploited by attention monopolizing algorithms."

– T. Zhang, British Columbia

2 Fix the platforms, not the people using them.

- Canadians strongly supported giving users more control, educating people about online safety, and making platforms more accountable for how their products are designed.
- 83.02% want platforms to disclose how they protect user data, while 73.73% want greater transparency about how their algorithms work.

"Transparency and accountability are key. Those who profit from these systems are the ones who need to bear the risks and consequences."

– G. Johnson, Alberta

3 Protect young people without surveilling everyone.

- Nearly half of our respondents had some connection to children through parenting, their work, or being a young person themselves, yet age restrictions received substantially less support than other proposed approaches.
- Only 22.78% selected age restrictions as something Canada should prioritize. Support for verifying people's ages on other online platforms, such as forums and file-sharing services, fell to 16.67%.

"Making it illegal for those under 16 to access social media won't stop them from doing so, they will just do it in an unsafe manner..."

– K. Mulhern, British Columbia

4 A false choice between safety and rights.

- 41.83%, said Canada should prioritize our privacy and civil liberties even if that makes some online harms harder to address.
- Only 13.49% were willing to prioritize stronger safety measures at the cost of some existing privacy or online freedoms.

"Canada should prioritize holding tech platforms accountable for the harms they cause, to adults and children alike."

– J. Penner, Ontario

For more information, you may visit our website to learn more about the [survey result](#) and our [campaign](#) on Bill C-34.

APPENDIX A: The Original Survey as Presented to Our Community

OpenMedia Survey: Your Voice on Digital Safety

OpenMedia is a community-based organization that safeguards the possibilities of the open Internet.



WHAT IS “SAFE” SOCIAL MEDIA?

TAKE OUR SURVEY

OpenMedia Survey: Your Voice on Digital Safety

Canada has just proposed new federal legislation Bill C-34, the Safe Social Media Act,¹ that would introduce age verification requirements, platform accountability measures, and other rules aimed at protecting young people online.² As Canada considers new digital safety laws, we want to understand what Canadians think about Canada’s approach.

This survey will take about 5 minutes. Your responses will help OpenMedia advocate for better online safety policies as Canada moves forward with Bill C-34 in the coming fall.

Take 5 minutes to complete the survey before Sunday, August 2, 2026.

Fill out the form below to get started.

 **Note: This form does not autosave.**

Note: Your last name, province, and open-ended comments may be quoted or referenced in our publications to support the survey findings. Your contact information is kept private and used only to send you progress updates. You can opt out of being quoted below.

First Name*

Last Name*

Your Email*

Province*

Alberta

 You must be 13 or older, or have permission from a parent or guardian, to continue. If you're 12 or under and don't have their permission right now, please come back later with a parent or guardian.

Which statement best describes you?*

I am 13 years old or above.

Q1. Which age group are you in?*

- select -

Q2. Do any of the following apply to you?*

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Parent/guardian
- ☐ Educator
- ☐ K-12 Student
- ☐ University Student
- ☐ Work in the technology sector
- ☐ Work in the public sector
- ☐ Work in the private sector
- ☐ Work with youth
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Submit your response

This campaign is hosted by OpenMedia. We will protect your privacy, and keep you informed about this campaign and others. Find OpenMedia's privacy policy [here](#).

Want to learn more?

If you're interested in what's included in Bill C-34 and the different approaches to improving online safety, we've put together an [explainer](#) to help you understand what's at stake.

Stay ahead of the changes.

Policy discussions move fast. Join our community to get the latest updates and ensure you won't miss a beat! [Sign up now.](#)

Sources

1. Bill C-34, the Safe Social Media Act – [Government of Canada](#)
2. The Safe Social Media Act needs major fixes – [OpenMedia](#)

[If you haven't taken action, click here.](#)

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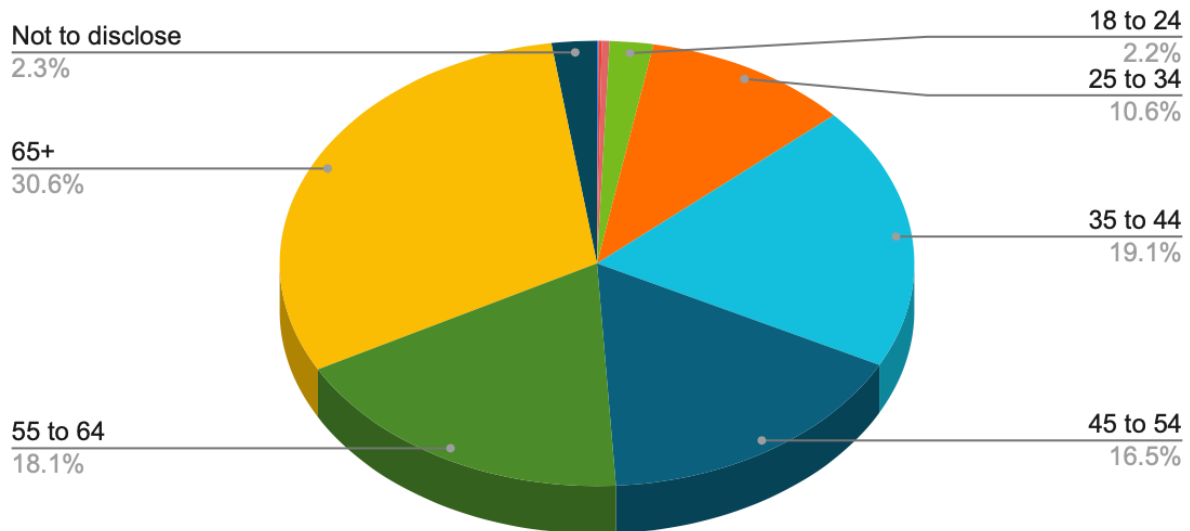
APPENDIX B: A Summary of the Survey Result

OpenMedia Survey: Your Voice on Digital Safety

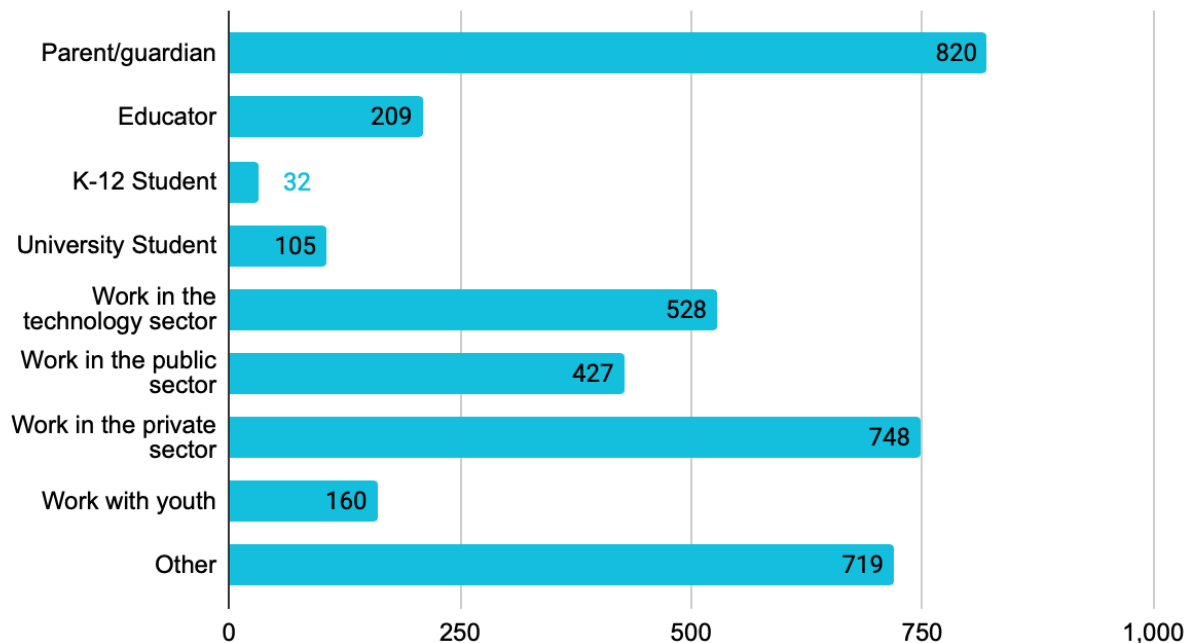
OpenMedia is a community-based organization that safeguards the possibilities of the open Internet.



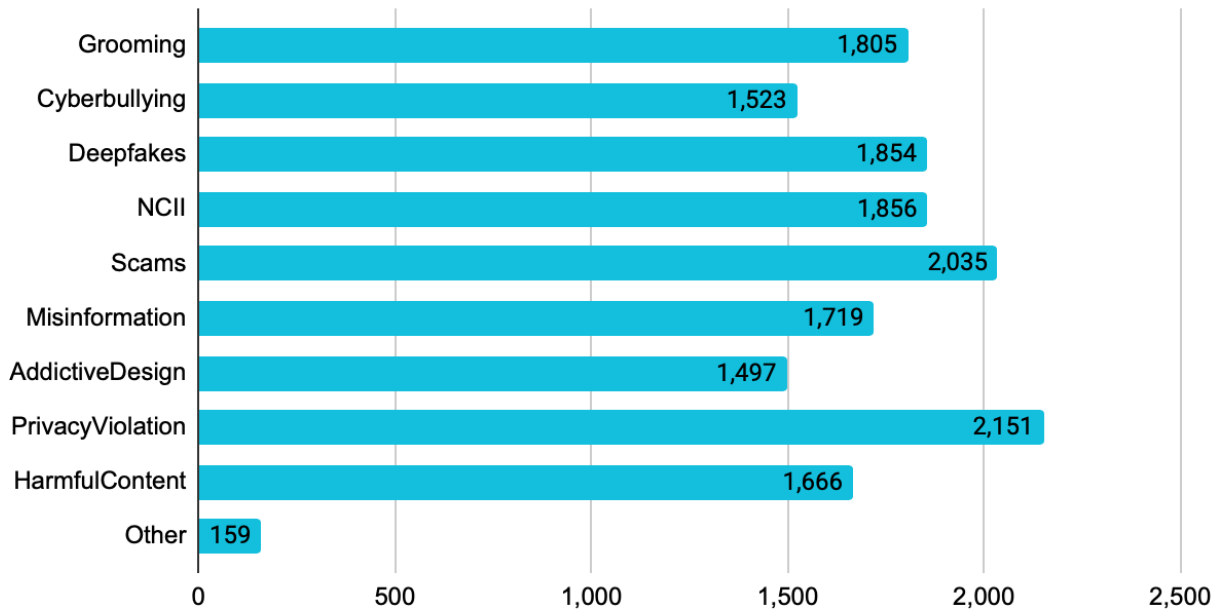
Q1. Which age group are you in?



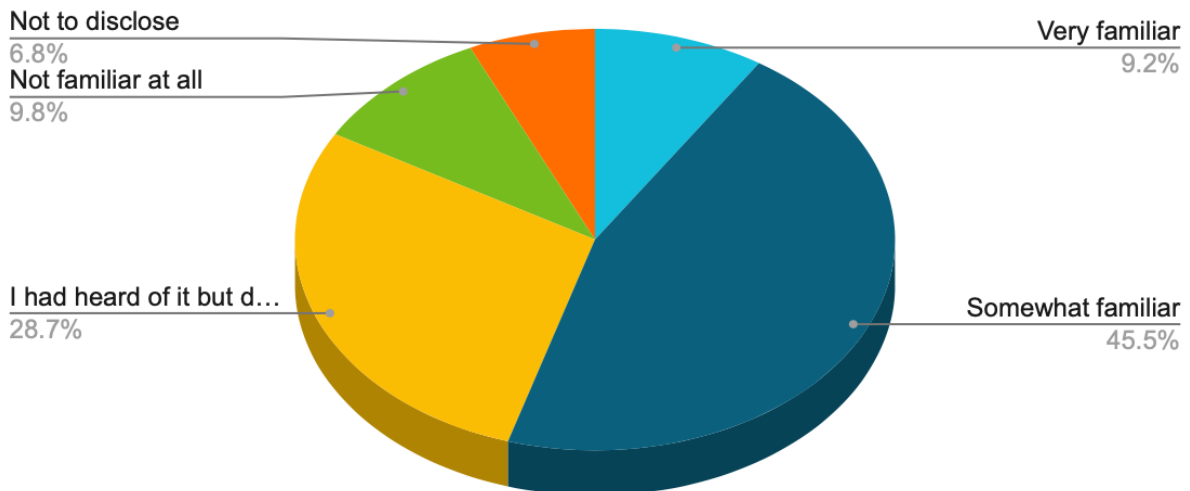
Q2. Do any of the following apply to you? (Select all that apply)



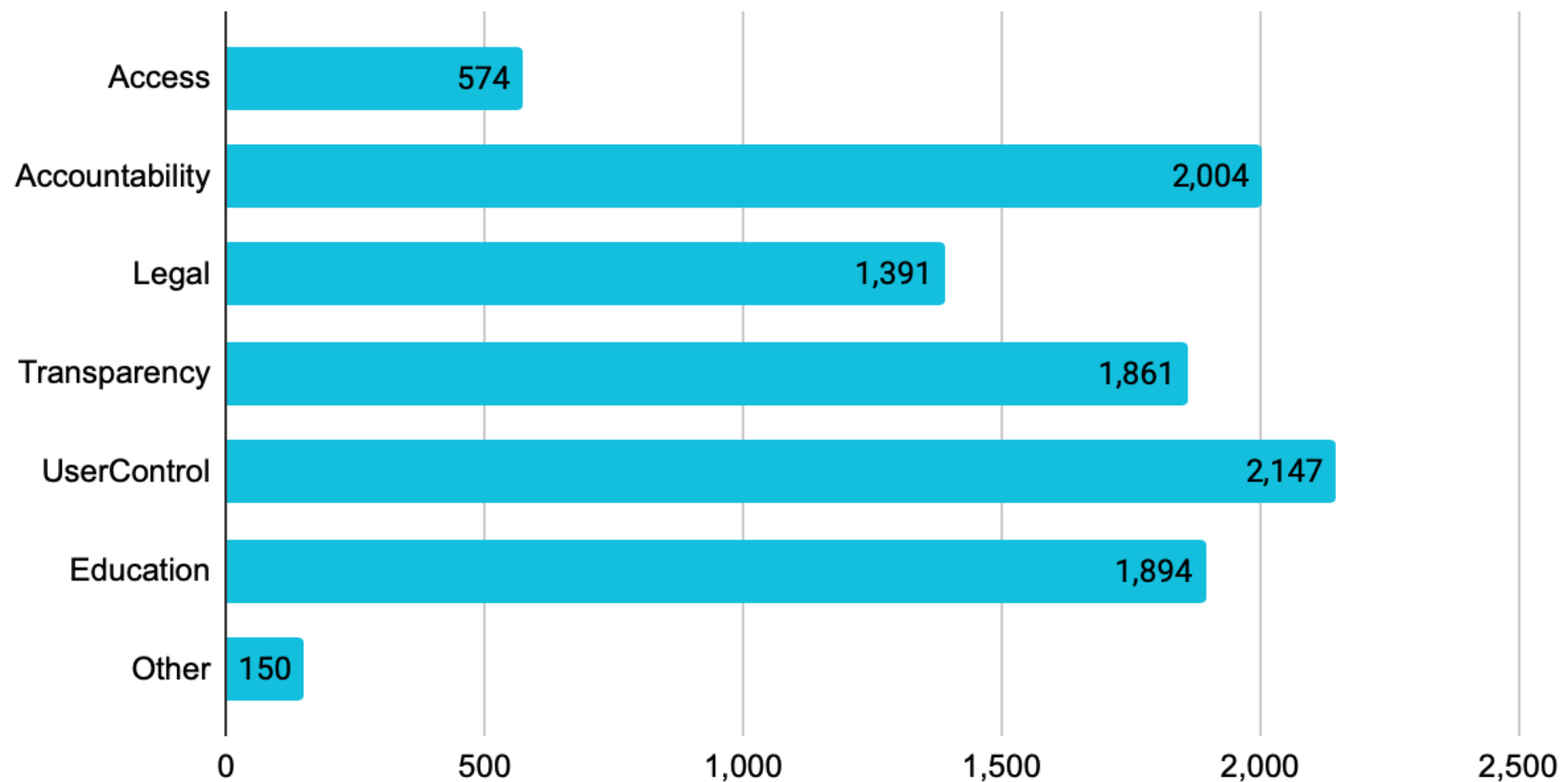
Q3. Which online safety issues do you think are the most important for Canada to address? (Select all that apply)



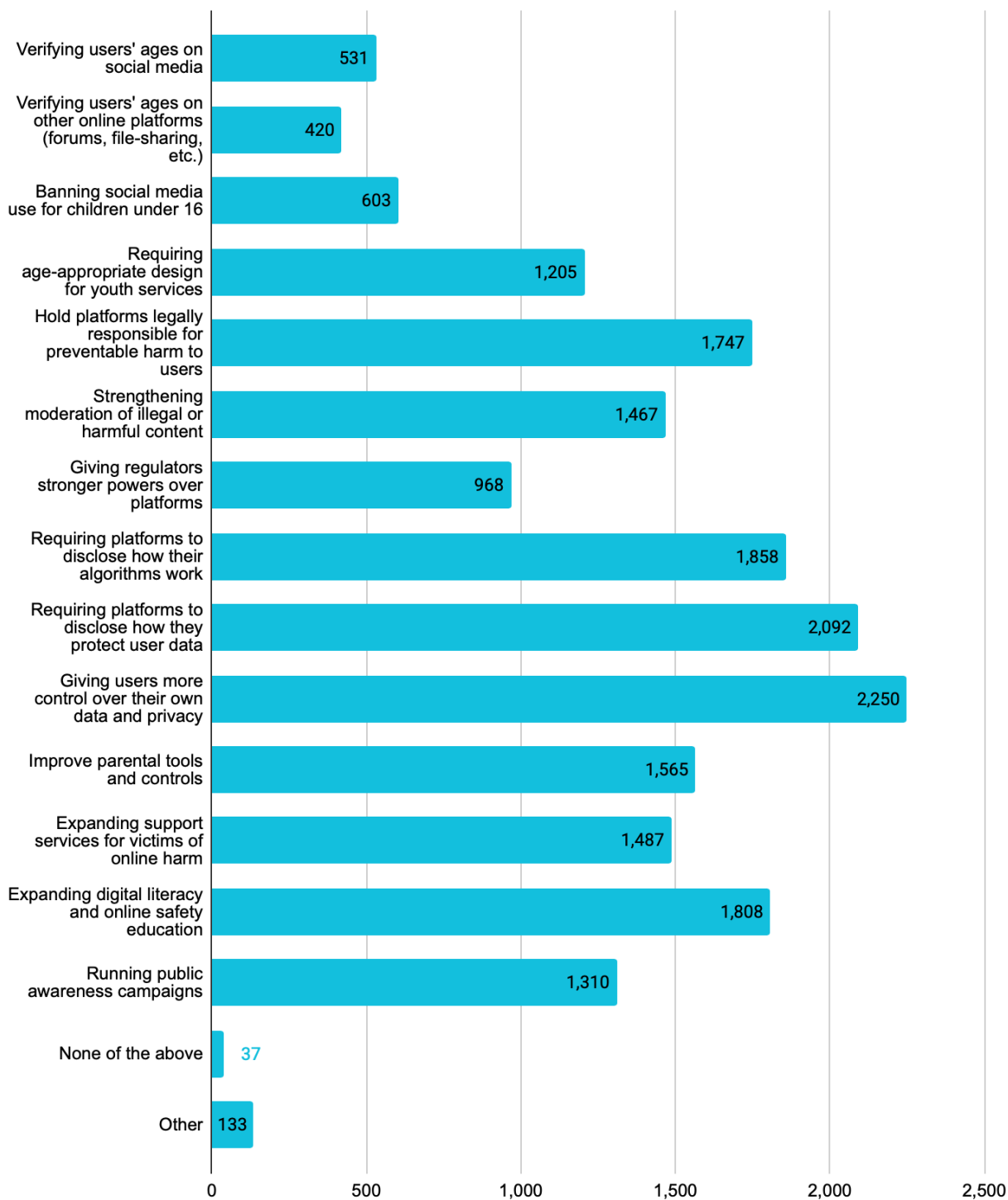
Q4. Before today, how familiar were you with Bill C-34, the Safe Social Media Act?



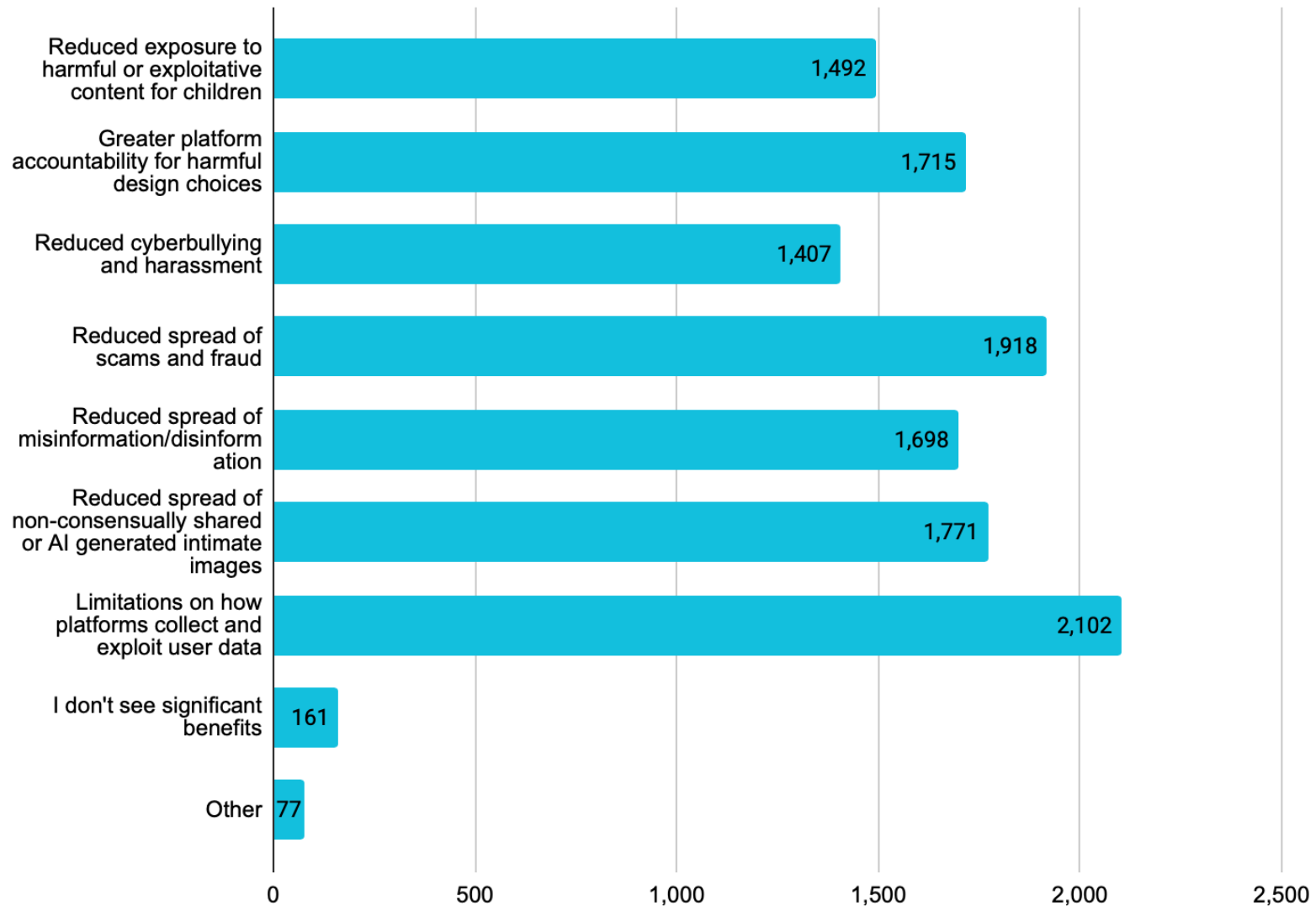
Q5. Which of the following approaches do you think Canada should prioritize in improving online safety? (Select all that apply)



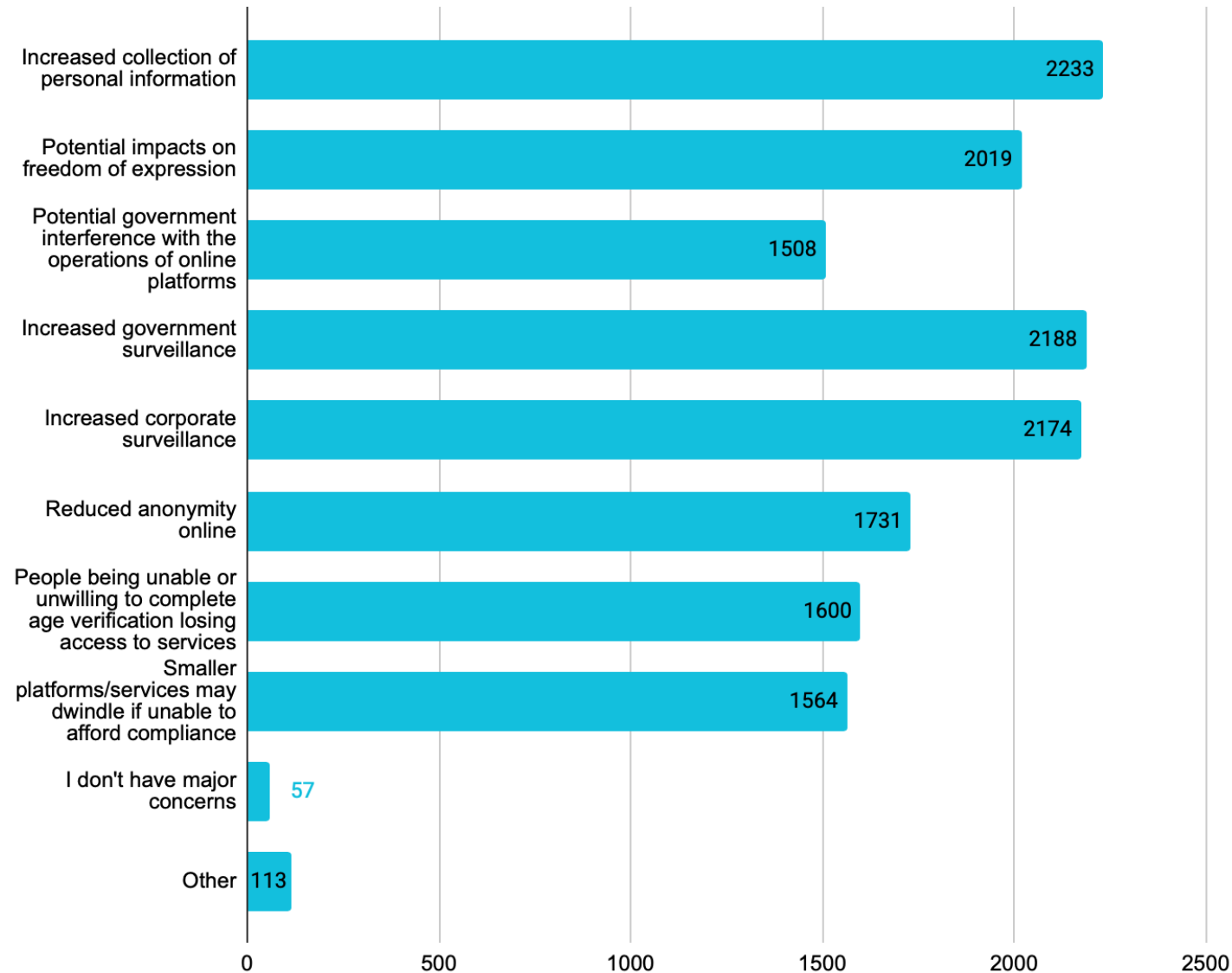
Q6. Which measures would you like to see as part of Canada's approach to online safety?
(Select all that apply)



Q7. Which potential benefits of stronger online safety laws are important to you? (Select all that apply)



Q8. Which potential downsides of stronger online safety laws concern you? (Select all that apply)



Q9. After considering these issues, which statement best reflects your current view about digital safety?

- Canada should prioritize stronger online safety measures, even at the cost of some of our current privacy or other online freedoms.
- Canada should prioritize protecting privacy and civil liberties even if it makes some online harms harder to address.
- Canada should pursue both goals equally and seek a balanced approach.
- Unsure
- Other

