



COUNTER DISINFORMATION PROGRAM FOCUSED ON THE 2020 ELECTIONS

ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT

Brasília
TSE
Superior Electoral Court
2022



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Aesi – Assessoria Especial de Segurança e Inteligência (Special Security and Intelligence Advisory Board)

Agel – Assessoria de Gestão Eleitoral (Electoral Management Advisory Board)

Ascom – Assessoria de Comunicação (Communication Advisory Board) (currently Secretaria de Comunicação e Multimídia – Secom (Communication and Multimedia Department))

Coalition – Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections

Covid-19 – Disease caused by Sars-Cov-2 virus

Disinformation about the Electoral Process – Fake and fraudulent contents affecting: (i) the different Electoral Process stages, from the registration of candidates to the certification of the elected candidates; (ii) the electronic voting machine operation and other aspects of the electronic voting process; (iii) the Electoral Justice System, its members, servants and other associates; (iv) health security of the Electoral Process during the Covid-19 pandemic; and (v) other acts related to the election organization and conduction of the elections.

Program – Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections

SGP – Secretaria de Gestão de Pessoas (Personnel Management Department)

SMG – Secretaria de Modernização, Gestão Estratégica e Socioambiental (Modernization, Strategic and Social Environmental Management Department)

STI – Secretaria de Tecnologia da Informação (Information Technology Department)

TRE – Tribunal Regional Eleitoral (Regional Electoral Court)

Court – Tribunal Regional Eleitoral (Superior Electoral Court)

TSE – Tribunal Superior Eleitoral (Superior Electoral Court)

1. Executive Summary

The Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections (Program) was launched by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) on August 30th, 2019, aiming at fighting against the negative effects provoked by disinformation on the image and credibility of the Electoral Justice System, to the conduction of the elections and to the players involved in it. The Program has been framed into six axes, each one of them including short, medium and long run actions: (i) internal organization; (ii) media and information literacy; (iii) disinformation containment; (iv) disinformation identification and checking; (v) enhancement of the legal system; and (v) enhancement of technological resources.

Based on this structure, the Program Strategic Plan, including its foundations, legal frameworks and theoretical frame of reference, information about program management and execution, partner institutions selection criteria, besides a comprehensive work plan, establishing actions and measures to be implemented during 2020 Elections, has been formalized. This report aims at presenting an assessment of the actions developed and the Program achievements, as well as reviewing the attainment of each goal set in the work plan.

In brief, aligned with the main legal frameworks, theoretical frame references and international obligations in terms of protection of freedom of speech, the Program is focused on non-regulatory and multi-sector strategies, and it is supported by three pillars. Firstly, *to fight against disinformation with information*, through the creation and spread of true, official and good quality information to the citizens, in order that they may advisedly exercise their right to vote. Secondly, *to fight against disinformation with capacity building* for Electoral Justice System civil servants in order that they may understand the phenomenon of disinformation, broaden their critical skills, recognize fake, fraudulent contents and have access to reliable information sources. Thirdly, *to fight against disinformation focusing on behavior control, and exceptionally, on content control*, mainly through monitoring disinformation cases and practices, as well as steering technological resources and preventive and repressive activities against inauthentic behaviors, use of computational propaganda and coordinated actions of disinformation spread.

The Program has been oriented to fighting against an especially harmful form of disinformation: the one turned against the integrity and credibility of the Electoral Process, i.e., false, fraudulent contents affecting: (i) the Electoral Process in its different stages, from candidate registration to the certification of the elected candidates; (ii) operation of the electronic voting machine; (iii) the Electoral Justice System, its members, servants and other associates; (iv) health security of the Electoral Process during the Covid-19 pandemic; and (v) other actions relating to the organization and conduction of the elections (disinformation about the Electoral Process).

The Program relied on the important contribution of more than 60 entities and organizations, willing to take specific actions and measures to minimize the impacts of disinformation on the Electoral Process, according to its respective area of institutional activity. Among those partnerships, those entered into with fact-checking institutions, social media platforms, phone companies, research institutions, civil society organizations, government bodies and media associations are highlighted.

Ten innovative initiatives

The multi-sector and systemic approach to disinformation has turned the Counter Disinformation Program, carried out in the 2020 Elections, into the greatest and most innovative project confronting fake news created by an electoral body. The main initiatives of the Program were as follows:

1. Creation of a Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections: a network composed of nine institutions to verify fake news related to the Electoral Process;
2. Creation of the *Fato ou Boato* (Fact or Rumor) webpage, on the Electoral Justice System website, to centralize all the checks of fake information published during the elections, allowing the access of all citizens to the webpage contents through zero-rating services provided by mobile phone companies;
3. Development of a chatbot on WhatsApp, allowing the access by the voters to the news checked and questions about the Electoral Process, with near 20 million messages exchanged;
4. Creation of a central of notifications in the Electoral Justice System apps, *e-Título* (E-voter card), *Mesário* (Poll Worker) and *Pardal* (Sparrow), allowing the direct communication between the Electoral Justice System and the more than 18 million users of such apps;
5. Formalization of partnerships with some of the main internet application service providers through entering into agreements setting forth specific measures for fighting against disinformation and ensuring a healthier informational environment during the elections;
6. Creation of a network of disseminators of quality content about the Electoral Process on social media, with the launching of the campaign *#EuVotoSemFake* (I vote without fake news), counting with the adherence of media associations, public and private entities and any citizen wishing to participate; and of the campaigns *#NãoTransmitaFakeNews* (Do not spread fake news) and *#PartiuVotar* (Let's go voting), with the participation of the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) and many national soccer clubs;
7. Launching of the media campaign titled *Se For Fake News, não Transmita* (If it is fake news, do not spread it) in order to inform voters about the phenomenon of disinformation and the dangers of spreading fake news, broadcast by television channels, radio stations and social media;
8. Creation of an out-of-court channel for reporting mass text messaging, together with WhatsApp, which has allowed the analysis of behavior by the platform and banning of accounts making mass text messaging during the elections;
9. Creation of a network to monitor practices of harmful disinformation about the Electoral Justice System, which, aided by tools for monitoring social media and strategic partners, was able to identify cases and practices of disinformation about the Electoral Justice System

and act, in association with the social media platforms, to confront structured networks for spreading disinformation and deterring inauthentic behaviors and misinformed contents;

10. Creation of a cyber intelligence committee to facilitate quick actions and communication in case of cybersecurity incidents during the elections.

The Counter Disinformation Program in figures

The Program

- **Adherence to the Program:** 66 entities have joined it
- **Specific agreements entered into with partners:** 29 agreements setting forth concrete actions and measures for fighting against disinformation in the 2020 Elections.
- **TSE team directly involved:** 29 civil servants and associates acting in the Program Executing Team, in the Strategic Committee, in the Database Committee and in the Communications Advisory Board (Ascom), not to mention dozens of other people, especially from STI, who have helped developing new software and functionalities and who have worked in the cyber intelligence team.
- **TRE teams directly involved:** 27 focal points for fighting against disinformation, not to mention members of local strategic committees and other civil servants involved.

Fighting Disinformation with Information

- **Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections:** 274 content-checked articles published by TSE and by the partner fact-checking institutions, with the participation of more than 100 people among journalists and Electoral Justice System civil servants.
- **WhatsApp chatbox:** 18,758,126 messages exchanged with 1,050,260 Brazilians.
- **Fato ou Boato (Fact or Rumor) webpage:** 13,042,934 views from October 27th to December 31st, 2020 and 400 million opinions about the banner on YouTube.
- **Notifications through Electoral Justice System apps:** 300 million informational notifications sent to more than 18 million users.
- **#EuVotoSemFake (I vote without fake news) Campaign:** more than 100 institutions have adhered to the campaign to form a network for the dissemination of reliable information about the elections, producing more than 23 thousand Twitter posts.
- **#NãoTransmitaFakeNews (Do Not Spread Fake News) Campaign:** 2,371 tweets published by 18 soccer clubs have reached 44,889,817 people.

- **#PartiuVotar (Let's Go Voting) Campaign:** 344 tweets published by the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) and soccer clubs have reached 37,202,793 people.

Fighting Disinformation with Capacity Building

- ***Se For Fake News, não Transmita (If it is fake news, do not spread it) TV and radio Campaign:*** about 130 million Brazilians reached and more than 10 billion single views during the placement period.
- ***Minuto da Checagem (Checking Minute) Program:*** 8 episodes aired on TV and YouTube, with 4.5 million views on YouTube only.
- ***O Caminho do Voto (Voting Path) Series:*** capacity building for citizens on the tallying and vote counting process with more than 700 thousand views on YouTube.
- **Live streaming event for fighting against disinformation in association with Google:** more than 150 thousand views.
- **Electoral Law Course for Journalists Focused on the 2020 Elections:** participation of more than one thousand journalists in a course on the security of the voting system and other topics.

Fighting Disinformation Focusing on the Control of Inauthentic Behaviors

- **Channel for reporting mass text messaging:** 5,229 reports received and 1,042 accounts banned because of mass text messaging related to the elections. Throughout Brazil, WhatsApp has banned more than 360 thousand accounts due to mass text or automatic messaging (abuse/spam).
- **Social media monitoring:** 752 reports of disinformation have been analyzed and dealt with aiming at minimizing their negative effects on the Electoral Process.

2. Actions and Achievements of the Program in the 2020 Elections

2.1 Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections

The Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections was launched by TSE in August 2019 in order to face the negative effects provoked by disinformation on the Electoral Justice System image and credibility, to the elections and the players involved, through short, medium and long run actions, based on numerous fields of knowledge. Designed during Justice Rosa Weber administration, the works in the scope of the Program proceeded and were broadened after Justice Luís Roberto Barroso took office as President of the Electoral Court.

Context

Fraudulent information that has spread through the social media and private messaging apps environment are popularly known as fake news and they are identified by experts as 'disinformation'. This phenomenon takes advantage from the horizontal information flow typical of the Internet, as well as from the building of 'bubbles' or 'echo chambers' by algorithms that regulate social media, in order to create an information environment based on distrust, apt to bring economic or political advantages to those willing to create and disseminate false information.

Such a dynamics represents a problem difficult to equate. This happens because disinformation has the capacity to go viral on the media and constantly evolves together with technology advancements. The understanding of such a phenomenon needs input from various fields of knowledge and needs constant updating and innovation, for instance, to face deep fakes, coordinated inauthentic behaviors, hate speech and conspiracy theories. Furthermore, extra caution is needed to avoid that the same means for facing disinformation cause disproportionate restrictions to freedom of speech.

Disinformation has great impact on civic engagements related to political and electoral processes. Not coincidentally, fake news rose to prominence in the context of the 2016 and 2020 USA elections and the Brexit, in the United Kingdom. Articulated networks for massive dissemination of disinformation acting on the Internet skew the public debate, which becomes 'flooded' by false information. Thus, obstacles to the access to true news and quality contents are created, affecting the right to information by the citizens. During the Electoral Process, it is even more necessary to guarantee that voters have access to true news and information about the Electoral Process, in order that they may exercise their right to vote in a conscious and informed way.

In Brazil, in the 2018 Elections, the integrity of the Electoral Process itself, as well as the Electoral Justice System's and its members, was a target of disinformation campaigns on social media. To deal with the challenge of fake news aiming at attacking the integrity of the elections, the Counter Disinformation Program has been created for 2020 elections. Through it, the promotion of a systemic fight against disinformation that questions the credibility and the integrity of the Electoral Process was sought, aiming at protecting the vote and the democracy.

Pillars

Aligned with the main normative framework, theoretical references and international obligations related to the protection of freedom of speech, the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections was centered on non-regulatory and multi-sector strategies. It has three pillars, as follows:

- 1. Informative plurality:** *to fight disinformation with information*, through the creation and dissemination of true official and quality information to the citizens, in order that they may exercise their right to vote in a conscious and informed way.
- 2. Educational action:** *to fight disinformation with capacity building*, through the investment in training of the Electoral Justice System civil servants and citizens, in order that they may understand the disinformation phenomenon, recognize fake, fraudulent contents, and have access to reliable information.
- 3. Focus on inauthentic behaviors:** *to fight disinformation focusing on behavior control, and exceptionally, on content control*, mainly through monitoring disinformation cases and practices, as well as steering of technological resources and preventive and repressive activities against inauthentic behaviors, use of computational propaganda and coordinated actions of disinformation spread.

Scope

The Program aims at fighting against a notably harmful type of disinformation, the one oriented against the integrity and the credibility of the Electoral Process, i.e., fake, fraudulent contents affecting: (i) the different Electoral Process stages, from the registration of candidates to the certification of the elected candidates; (ii) the electronic voting machine operation and other aspects of the electronic voting process; (iii) the Electoral Justice System, its members, civil servants and other associates; (iv) health security of the Electoral Process during the Covid-19 pandemic; and (v) other acts related to the elections organization and conduction of the elections (Disinformation about the Electoral Process).

Strategic partners

During the 2020 Elections, the Counter Disinformation Program was supported by 66 institutions willing to take concrete actions and measures aiming at minimizing the impacts of disinformation on the Electoral Process, according to respective institutional operation area (Schedule 1). Among such partnerships, those with fact-checking institutions, social media platforms, phone companies, research institutes and civil society organizations, government bodies and media associations must be highlighted.

Internal organization and team

The Program has been internally operated by the integration and coordination between diverse Electoral Justice System bodies and civil servants, Under the general coordination of TSE President, Justice Luís Roberto Barroso, the Program has been operated in the Court by the Executing Team and the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation – 2020 Elections, besides relying on various

civil servants and associates for specific actions. In the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts (TRE), the execution of the Program fell upon civil servants designated as focal points for fighting against disinformation and local strategic committees. Such integration has extended to partners, organized in specific theme groups, as the Fact-Checking Coalition – Elections 2020.

Previous steps for formulating the Program general guidelines were taken by the Program Managing Group, regulated by TSE Ordinance nº 664, of August 30th, 2019, still during Justice Rosa Weber presidency.

General Coordination of the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections

Justice Luís Roberto Barroso – TSE President
Aline Osorio – TSE Presidency Secretary-General

Executing Team for the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections

Aline Osorio – TSE Presidency Secretary-General
Júlia Barcelos – TSE Presidency Assistant
Marco Antonio Martin Vargas – TSE Presidency Assistant Judge
Mariana Oliveira – Communications Advisory Board Chief Advisor
Tainah Rodrigues – TSE Presidency Secretary-General Assistant
Thiago Rondon – Digital Coordinator for Fighting Disinformation

Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation – 2020 Elections

Aline Osorio, Julia Barcelos, Marco Antonio Martin Vargas, Pedro Alcântara and Tainah Rodrigues (Presidency)
Mariana Oliveira and Thiago Rondon – Communications Advisory Board (Ascom)
Thiago Fini – Electoral Management Advisory Assistant
Elmano Alves and Grace Mendonça – Information Technology Department (STI)
Sônia Camps – Modernization, Strategic and Social Environmental Management Department (SMG)
Disney Rossetti and Mara Barreto – Special Security and Intelligence Advisory Board (Aesi)

TSE Communications Advisory Board (Ascom/TSE) Team working on the production of contents for the Program

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Laura Gracindo – Press Coordinator
Tatiana Cochlar – Audiovisual Coordinator
Bruna Athayde, Cecília Malheiros, Flávia Parreira, Juliano Aquino, Junior Paz, Rakell Dimanski and Rodrigo Costa

Managing Group of the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections

Until May 2020:

Ricardo Fiorenze and Nicolau Konkell Junior – Assistant Judges; Rogério Augusto Viana Galloro – Special Assistant; and Ana Cristina Rosa – Ascom Chief Advisor (representing TSE Presidency)

Sandro Nunes Vieira (representing TSE Vice-Presidency)

Appellate Judge Jatahy Júnior – Chairperson of the College of Regional Electoral Court Presidents

Appellate Judge Luzia Nadja Guimarães – Chairperson of the College of Electoral Internal Affairs Officers

From May to December 2020:

Aline Osorio – Presidency Secretary-General; Júlia Barcelos – Assistant; Bruno Cezar Andrade de Souza – SMG Secretary; Mariana Oliveira – Ascom Chief Advisor (representing TSE Presidency)

Nicolau Konkell Junior – Assistant Judge (representing TSE Vice-Presidency)

Appellate Judge Jatahy Júnior – Chairperson of the College of Regional Electoral Court Presidents

Appellate Judge Luzia Nadja Guimarães – Acting President of the College of Electoral Internal Affairs Officers

Innovative aspect

The Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections is the greatest and most innovative project to fight against fake news created by an electoral body. It is inserted in the scope of the Electoral Justice System administrative jurisdiction related to the elections organization, operating in parallel with the jurisdictional power of judges and Electoral Courts.

For the Program to be successful, its performance was ruled by the following guidelines:

- **Decentralization and multi-sector approach:** comprehending various fields of knowledge, multiple action strategies and work of dozens of partners from different sectors;
- **Speediness:** with quick adoption of measures in response to the identification of disinformation incidents during the electoral period, aiming at reducing their negative impact and viral potential;
- **Innovative aspect and connectivity:** evidenced by the adoption of unprecedented and efficient digital solutions for fighting disinformation, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- **Efficiency in the internal and external communication:** with instant articulation with different areas of the Electoral Justice System and partners through instant messaging or targeted messaging, available 24h during the critical period, as well as with the implementation of a communication team dedicated to fighting against disinformation, liable for disseminating the much needed clarifications about fake news and other public interest information;

- **Adaptability:** with the quick implementation of new processes and measures in response to incidents and new trends of dissemination of disinformation during the Electoral Process, for instance by the creation of the cyber intelligence group after cybersecurity incidents spread during the first round of vote.

The innovations described in this report derive mainly from: (i) the combination of strategies of dissemination of information, capacity building and use of technology for Counter disinformation; (ii) formalization of broad and unprecedented partnerships for enlarging the scope and efficiency of the actions; and (iii) creation of technology solutions for reaching the Project goals.

2.2 Execution of the Program in light of non-regulatory and multi-sector strategies

In this section, the development and the achievements of the main actions taken based on the three pillars of the Program are reported.

2.2.1 Fighting disinformation with information

The Counter Disinformation Program has invested in various initiatives that assured information plurality. To do so, the goal was to enlarge and encourage the dissemination of truthful information about the Electoral Process through many channels, and to promote independent instances to check information and create trustful networks for the distribution of quality contents.

A. Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections

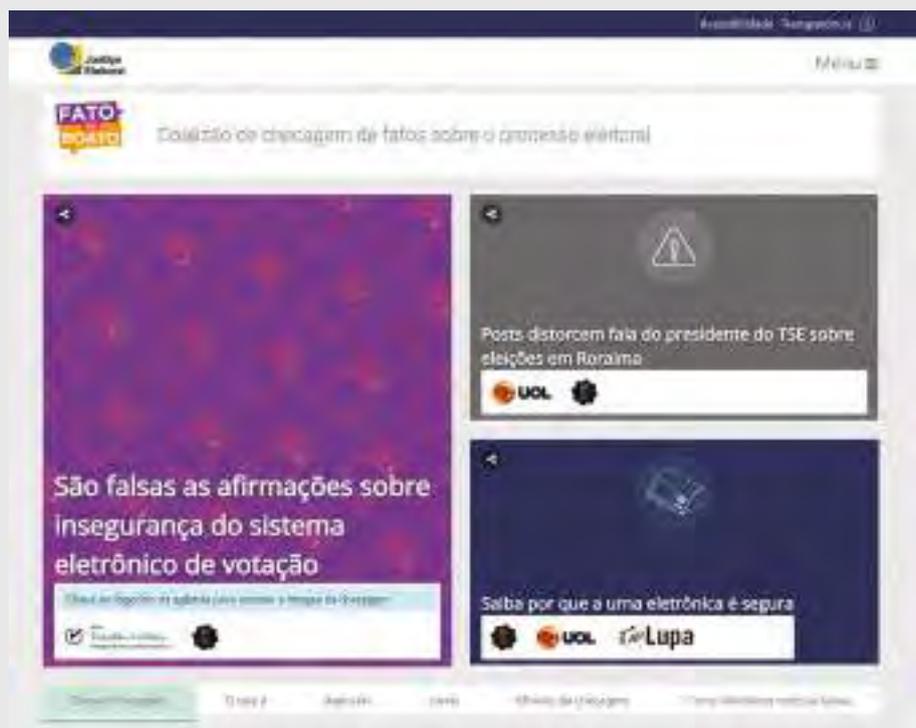
One of the main measures allowing to providing voters with truthful information about the Electoral Process and contradict fake contents disseminated through social media was the organization of a fact-checking network during the 2020 Elections, named Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections. Journalists from nine of the major fact-checking organizations in Brazil (AFP Checamos, Agência Lupa, Aos Fatos, Boatos.org, E-farsas, Estadão Verifica, Fato ou Fake, Projeto Comprova and Uol Confere) took part in the endeavor. In total, the Coalition counted on the direct participation of near 100 people, including journalists from fact-checking institutions, civil servants and associates from TSE and from the 27 Regional Electoral Courts.

In brief, in the scope of the Project, TSE, the Regional Electoral Courts, the other Project partners and the citizens could make the fact-checking organizations cognizant of the potential fake contents related to the Electoral Process for the purpose of verifying their accuracy. After the identification of cases of disinformation that could be checked, the Electoral Justice System gathered official information about the subject, if necessary, and the institutions made the investigation and verification of facts, according to their availability and interest.



Fato ou Boato (Fact or Rumor)

The Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections was aligned with the *Fato ou Boato* project, a webpage hosted by the Electoral Justice System website that started to collect all the outputs from the Coalition. The webpage conveys in a single space various contents produced to clarify and confront fake information about the Electoral Justice System. In case of checks, the *Fato ou Boato* webpage includes a brief explanation about the checking made, as well as links to the whole article produced by each fact-checking organization on the subject. In addition, the webpage includes checks about the 10 most disseminated fake news on the electronic voting machine, a series of videos named *Minuto da Checagem* (Checking Minute), presenting in a simple and educational way the steps to be taken by every citizen to verify contents and to become an disinformation fighting agent; and the feature *Como Identificar Notícias Falsas* (How to identify fake news), with 10 valuable tips to help the citizen to recognize misleading contents.



Zero rating – Access to checks without charging mobile data

Due to TSE partnership with Conexis Brasil (official representative of telecom companies in Brazil) and Brazilian mobile carriers, the *Fato ou Boato* webpage could be accessed by voters with zero rating. Therefore, all Brazilians, especially those having limited data cell phone plans, could verify current fake reports and have access to all information on www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br website on the cell phone free of charge for web browsing.

Web content: main fake narratives and content groups checked

Throughout the electoral period, many fake narratives attacking the Electoral Process were spread on the web, including some ‘recycled’ ones from previous years, which cast doubt on the security of the electronic voting machines and the reliability of the election results. In general, the fake contents checked may be grouped into three categories:

- Fake narratives related to alleged frauds or weaknesses in the electronic voting machine operation, and in the voting system;
- Fake narratives related to electoral rules, procedure changes, and health protocols adopted due to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Fake narratives related to vote counting delay and cyberattacks during the first round of vote.

Ten fake narratives in the 2020 Elections

- Fake narratives related to alleged frauds or weaknesses in the electronic voting machine operation, and in the voting system:
 1. It is not true that the electronic voting machine cannot be audited and do not allow vote recounting;
 2. It is not true that a stable proportion of mayoral candidates would have proved frauds in the 2020 elections;
 3. It is not true that Benford's Law has detected frauds in the electronic voting machines;
 4. It is not true that a video has evidenced a discrepancy between the Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin and the results disclosed by TSE.
- Fake narratives related to electoral rules, procedure changes, and health protocols adopted due to the Covid-19 pandemic:
 5. It is not true that TSE has announced an online voting system for the 2020 Elections;
 6. It is not true that TSE has determined that anyone infected with Covid-19 could not vote;
 7. It is not true that the emergency aid payment will be suspended for poll workers.
- Fake narratives related to vote counting delay and cyberattacks during the first round of vote:
 8. It is not true that a hacker attack to TSE system has violated the security of the electronic voting machines;
 9. It is not true that TSE supercomputer is a foreign cloud service that opens a breach for frauds;
 10. It is not true that the first round of vote has been annulled in various cities due to failure in the tallying system.



Deployment

The Coalition working flow has been deployed through two major tools: (i) WhatsApp group with fact-checking agencies, representatives of each TRE and TSE focal points; and (ii) recording spreadsheet managed by Ascom/TSE, including information about the work done.

Potential disinformation cases brought to the group by the Regional Electoral Courts, TSE or the agencies themselves were handled as follows:

- (i) Official information gathering and provision by TRE and TSE members in order to support fact-checking procedures, sometimes with issuance of an official note;
- (ii) Analysis by the fact-checking organizations about the convenience and opportunity to make the checking, by assessing, for instance, the scope of a content, in order to avoid potentializing its dissemination;
- (iii) Debate about the topic, with occasional suggestion for future monitoring or regional information-checking;
- (iv) Sharing by the fact-checking institutions of the checks made on their own websites;
- (v) Disclosure of the checks made on the WhatsApp group for knowledge and filling of the editable spreadsheet with information necessary for cataloging and control;
- (vi) Supplying the checking of the *Fato ou Boato* webpage for quick access free of charge by the citizens;
- (vii) Dissemination of the checks on TSE, Program partners and disseminating institutions social media, and replication on the Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat.

Achievements

From the beginning of the Project to December 09th, 2020, 274 articles written by fact-checking organizations and TSE were published, related to 73 checked and assessed content groups.

When separating articles and content groups checked by period, we have found the following:

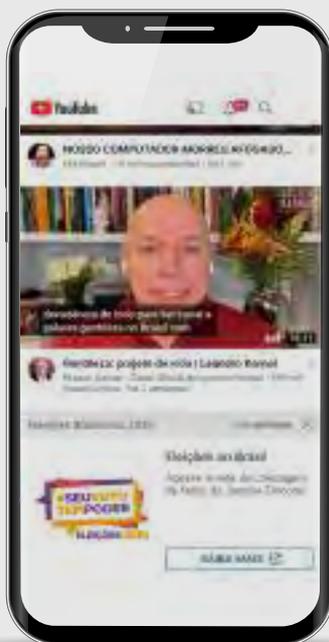
- From the beginning of the electoral period to the eve of the first round of vote (from September 29th to November 14th), 61 articles were published by fact-checking organizations and TSE, referring to 14 checked and assessed content groups;
- From the first round of vote to the eve of the second round of vote (from November 15th to November 28th), 152 articles were published by fact-checking organizations and TSE, referring to 43 checked and assessed content groups;
- From the second round of vote to the end of the first round of vote in Macapá (from November 29th to December 09th), 61 articles were published by fact-checking organizations and TSE, referring to 16 checked and assessed content groups.

Broadening of fact-checking dissemination: *Fato ou Boato*

From October 27th to December 31st, the *Fato ou Boato* webpage recorded 13,042,934 hits from which 3,718,264 were got on a single day – the first round day. On the second round day, the webpage recorded 604,126 hits.

Besides the access to fact-checking directly through the *Fato ou Boato* webpage, fact-checking made in the scope of the Coalition was disseminated by Program partner media associations. Additionally, voters could also receive on their cell phones, through the TSE Whatsapp chatbot, some clarifications on fake news checked by the Coalition.

After the second round end, the scope of checked information was potentialized through a banner made available on YouTube home page with a link to the *Fato ou Boato* webpage. The initiative developed in the scope of the partnership between YouTube and TSE free of charge for the Court aimed at facing the wave of disinformation started after the elections with adequate information. The banner has reached 400 million prints.



Banner on YouTube promoting the *Fato ou Boato* webpage.

Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections – Outcomes

1. During the 2020 Elections, 274 articles were published by fact-checking organizations and TSE, related to 73 checked and assessed content groups.
2. *Fato ou Boato* webpage has got 13,042,934 hits from October 27th to December 31st. In the first round of vote, it hit 3,718,264 views. In the second round of vote, it hit 604,126 views.
3. The banner on YouTube home page designed to promote the *Fato ou Boato* webpage has reached more than 400 million prints.

B. Chatbot – Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat

TSE has launched an Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat, a chatbot developed free of charge as a partnership between WhatsApp and Infobip, in order to make the access by the voter to relevant information about the 2020 municipal elections and fact-checking about fake news easier. It was the first case of a partnership between WhatsApp and an electoral authority worldwide to create a virtual assistant. Among its duties, the chatbot has represented the creation of one more reliable channel for direct communication from the electoral body to the voters.



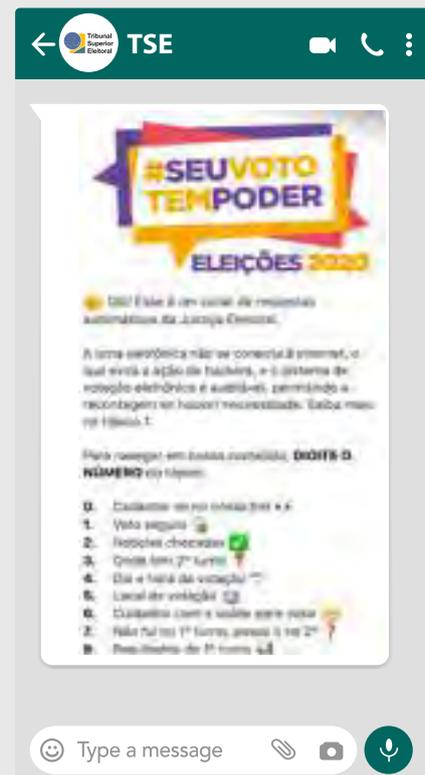
Content

TSE automatic channel has brought various subjects of interest to the voter, continually updated during the electoral process. Browsing was made through a menu with different options, allowing the voter to quickly get information.

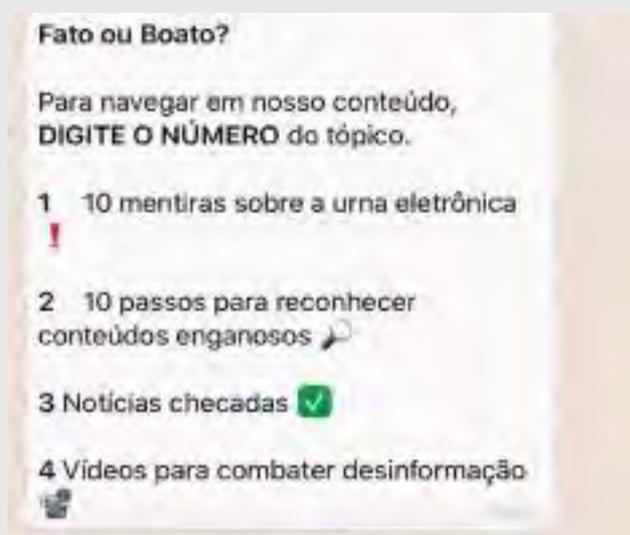
In the 2020 Elections, it was possible to refer information in the chatbot including but not limited about the day, hour and polling place, health precautions to vote, fact-checked news, security of the electronic voting machine, candidates' profiles, tips for poll workers, procedure to justify absence, answers to frequent asked questions received by the Electoral Justice System. Besides referrals, voters could give an opt-in consent to receive important messages from the Court about the elections.

Clarifications about fake news

One of the main functionalities of the virtual assistant is the service oriented to give clarifications about fake news involving



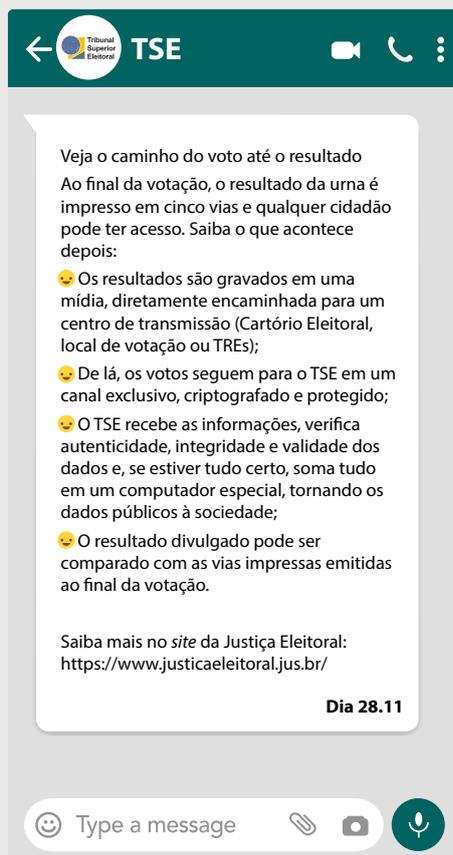
the Brazilian Electoral Process: the *Fato ou Boato*. When selecting the topic, the user may have access directly via WhatsApp to contents contradicted by the fact-finding organizations members of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, clarifications about the main rumors on the electronic voting machine and videos with tips on how to identify misleading contents disseminated on the Internet during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Notifications to registered users

In order to facilitate a quick communication with the voter, especially in case of great impact fake news against the Electoral Process, the chatbot has also offered a service of voter registration aiming at receiving active messages (notifications). One of the messages sent tried to promote voters' awareness about the 'voting path to the tallying', aiming at giving clarifications on fake news about the electronic voting process that were disseminated after the first round of the 2020 Elections. During the electoral period, four notifications were sent to registered users:

- On October 30th-31st, a message reinforcing the date and hour of the first round of vote, as well as the need to use face masks and the importance of previous checking of the polling places, was sent;
- On November 25th, a message about the second round of vote in 57 cities was sent;
- On November 28th, a message to make voters aware of the 'voting path to the tallying' was sent;
- On December 18th, the postponement of the elections in Macapá because of a power outage was sent to registered users who have informed their area state code in order to encourage people to vote.



Access to chatbot and disclosure

To chat with the Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat virtual assistant, suffice to add the phone +55 61 9637-1078 to the contact list or to click on the link wa.me/556196371078.

Many strategies to promote the chatbot were adopted during the electoral period. Institutional Electoral Justice System campaigns aired on TV, as well as TSE judgment sessions broadcast by TV Justiça channel and YouTube had a QR Code allowing the citizens to point their cell phone camera to it to start chatting with the virtual assistant. Besides, various government bodies disclosed a banner on their websites forwarding the Internet user to the Electoral Justice System WhatsApp chatbot. The institutions and civil society organizations taking part in the endeavor included but were not limited to the Federal Supreme Court (STF), the Superior Court of Justice (STJ), the Superior Labor Court (TST), the National Board of Justice (CNJ), the Federal Accounting Court (TCU), the Labor Prosecution Office (MPT), the National Association of Labor Prosecutors (ANPT), the National Association of Federal Prosecutors (ANPR), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (Mapa), the Ministry of Citizenship (MC), the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTIC), Office of the Federal Controller General (CGU), the Presidency of Brazil (PR), the Office of the General Counsel for the Federal Government (AGU) and the Office of the President's Chief of Staff, Pacto pela Democracia, Redes Cordiais, Ashoka Brasil, Politize! and the National Council of Christian Churches (Conic). Electoral Justice System apps were also employed to send notifications to their users giving instruction to use the Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat.



Deployment

The chatbot development and upgrading were carried out through a permanent communication between the team designated by the Court, including members of the Strategic Committee, the President's Office, the Communication Advisory Board (Ascom), the Information Technology Department (STI), and WhatsApp and Infobip focal points. Through weekly meetings and instant communication groups, it was possible to assure the quality of the service and the constant updating of the virtual assistant content, with functionalities oriented to defend the voter's interests and to promote a straightforward and live communication, suitable to the virtual environment. Ascom/TSE and the Program Executing Team, supported by STI/TSE, were held responsible for content production.

Achievements

From the end of September, when the service started to operate, to December 2020, the chatbot served 1,050,260 Brazilians (different phone numbers) and 18,758,126 messages were exchanged. November, when the first and the second rounds of the elections happened, was the month with most new users and greatest volume of answers. In this month only, the chatbot recorded 905,697 new users.

Service

First round of vote

On the day of the first round of vote, near 350 thousand answers were provided and 8 million messages were exchanged. The most accessed services were: (i) 'polling place'; (ii) 'how to justify absence' and (iii) 'Top 10 inquiries' (including clarifications of most frequent inquiries about the Electoral Process).

Second voting round

On the second voting day, near 137 thousand answers were provided and 1.5 million messages were exchanged. The three most used services were: (i) 'how to justify absence'; (ii) 'polling place' and (iii) 'find out if it's a fact or a rumor'.

Users registered for notifications

Furthermore, during the electoral period, 138 thousand people have registered to receive active messages from the Electoral Justice System via WhatsApp.

Chatbot – Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat – Achievements	
During the 2020 Elections period, the chatbot answered 1,050,260 Brazilians (different phone numbers) questions and exchanged 18,758,126 messages.	
New users per month	
September/2020: 1,092 new users	
October/2020: 108,722 new users	
November/2020: 905,697 new users	
December/2020: 34,749 new users	
Service on the voting days	
First round: near 350 thousand questions answered and 8,157,737 messages exchanged	
Second round: near 137 thousand questions answered and 1,474,243 messages exchanged	
Users registered for notifications	
138 thousand people have registered to receive active messages on the chatbot	
More accessed services	
First round:	Second round:
Polling place	How to justify absence
How to justify absence	Polling place
Top 10 inquiries	Find out if it's a fact or a rumor

C. Massive disclosure of true official information about the elections

Besides the virtual assistant on WhatsApp, the Counter Disinformation Program relied on a series of initiatives to assure and facilitate massive disclosure of true official information about the elections. The strategy aimed at creating a large network for the dissemination of reliable contents related to the Electoral Process, in order to reduce the impact of influence operations and avoid the formation of information voids that favor the dissemination of fake, fraudulent information. Considering that in Brazil the number of Brazilians consuming information exclusively by Internet and on social medias steadily grows, the Electoral Justice System has tried to guarantee that the digital world could also be flooded by useful information about the Electoral Process.

C.1 Association with application service providers to allow the access to reliable election contents on their own platforms

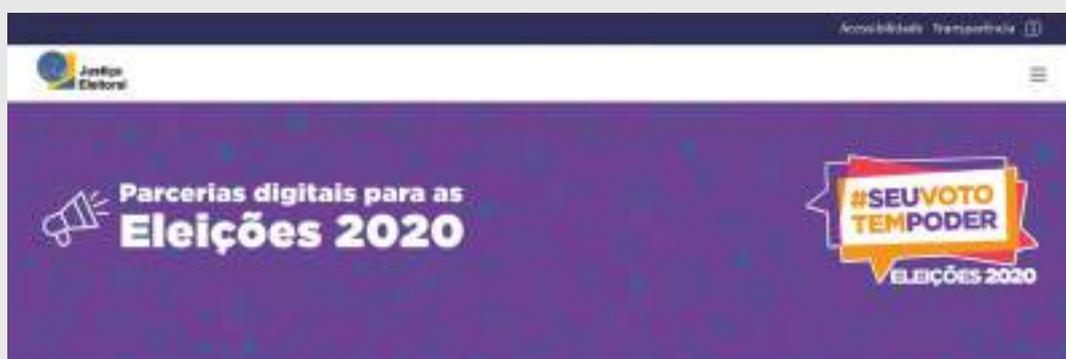
One of the main steps to allow massive disclosure of reliable election information was the development of associations with application service providers in order that they could enable the use of their own platforms and their different features to disseminate such contents. This was made possible by entering into agreements between TSE and the main application service providers in partnership with the Program, including Facebook/Instagram, WhatsApp, Google/YouTube, Twitter and TikTok. Innovatively, such agreements have anticipated specific actions that each platform committed to implement during the 2020 Elections period to fight against disinformation — and not only the generic commitment to work for this end.

Deployment: entering into agreements

After holding various meetings to get to know the initiatives from the providers for the 2020 Elections, as well as to identify possibilities for cooperation between them and TSE, the Court has entered into memoranda of understanding (MoU) with Facebook/Instagram, Google/YouTube, TikTok, Twitter and WhatsApp. Such memoranda aimed at defining concrete actions that would be adopted by the platforms for Counter disinformation during the 2020 Elections period. The commitments affirmed pursued the unity of efforts between the Electoral Justice System and the providers to assure that voters have access to true news and information about the Electoral Process, in order to conscientiously exercise their right to vote while being fully informed. The initiatives foreseen by each agreement included actions relating to each one of the Program’s pillars: dissemination of truthful information, capacity building and rallying platform features to fight against inauthentic behaviors and fake, fraudulent contents. After entering into the agreements, regular meetings between TSE and providers’ focal points were held to make the follow-up of the implementation of actions and continuous assessment of achievements.

The information about the associations for Counter disinformation were made available at the hot site on <https://www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br/parcerias-digitais-eleicoes/>, where all agreements entered into with each platform are made available in full.

Tools to allow the access to reliable electoral contents on social media



In relation to the ‘Fighting Disinformation with Information’ pillar, the memoranda entered into with the platforms have set forth that they would employ their technological resources to assure the access

by citizens to official public interest contents about the 2020 Elections, including public health protocols and fact-checking on the Electoral Process. Through the associations affirmed, the elections information was built into their own platforms by way of tools and links to the elections official webpage.

TSE-Facebook Partnership

Such partnership has assured the use of the *Megafone* (Megaphone) tool to disclosure messages to Brazilian users. Through it, TSE made available relevant messages relating to 2020 Elections organization on the top of Facebook users' timelines next to the voting days. This feature has also allowed the access to the elections portal, to the Electoral Justice System webpage with a brief of information more relevant to the voting process, highlighting the fake news fact-checking, giving tips for protection against Covid-19 and responding to inquiries on the voting procedure.



TSE-Instagram Partnership

Instagram created exclusive stickers to stress the importance of voting with mottos such as 'My Vote has Power', following the 2020 Elections slogan ('Your Vote has Power'), and 'Vote Safely'. The

stickers provided automatic redirection to TSE elections portal. In order to broaden users' engagement, the use of stickers activated a Stories ring allowing the view of Stories posted by other people also using the sticker.

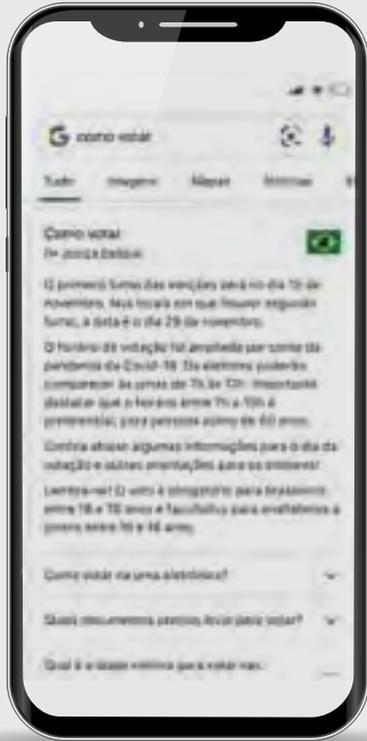


TSE-Google Partnership

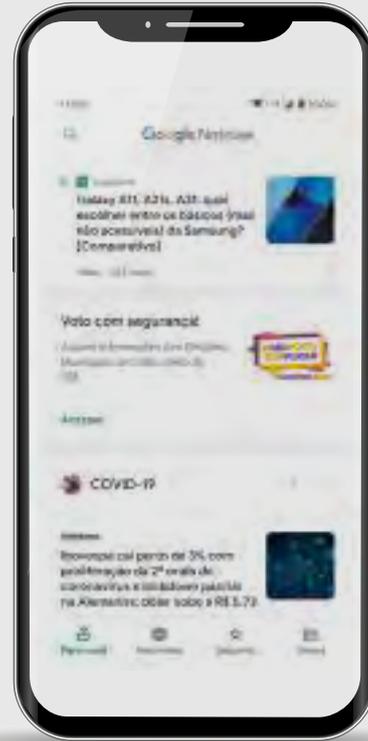
This partnership has provided the design of a panel on the search results page with official information supplied by TSE and answers to frequent asked questions by voters, highlighting such information on the search results page for terms related to the elections. The 'How to Vote' and 'Inquiries about the Voter Card' features were made available directly on Google search engine, something unprecedented worldwide during local elections. It is estimated that such tools have been viewed near nine million times during the electoral period.

For the first time, Google News has also presented a TSE post carousel, with recent contents checked by fact-checking organizations and an Electoral Justice System banner redirecting the user directly to the elections portal.

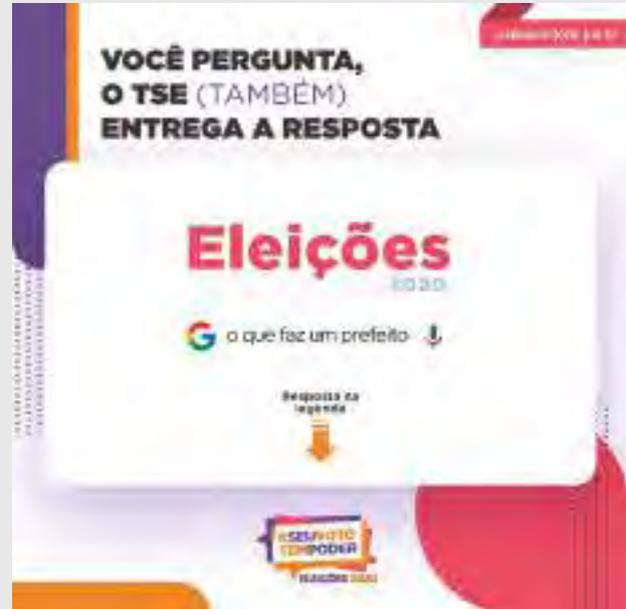
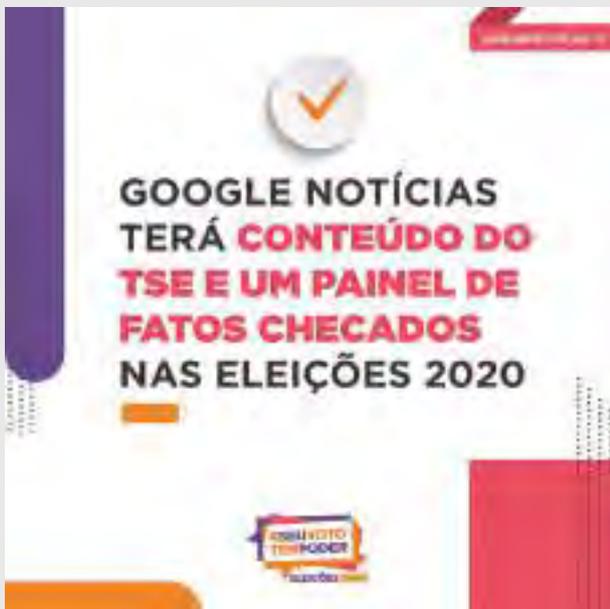
The platform has also created a Google Trends with the most searched terms about the 2020 Electoral Process orienting the 'You Ask, TSE (also) Delivers the Answer' campaign on the web. From this initiative, the Electoral Justice System could monitor the main Google searches in connection with the elections and give answers to the voters, available on Google Trends page.



'How to Vote' panel with TSE official information

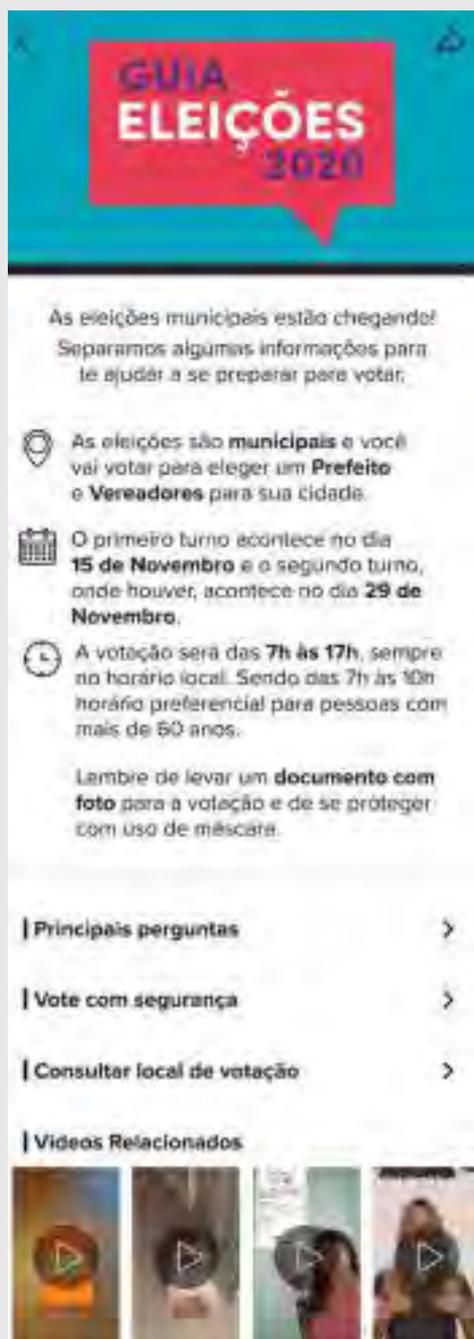


TSE banner on Google News redirecting to the elections portal



TSE-TikTok Partnership

TikTok has created a dedicated page to concentrate reliable educational information about the 2020 Electoral Process, which could be accessed throughout the electoral period through a banner on the 'Discover' page referring the 2020 Elections Guide. It brought information on dates, hours, health measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and it also facilitated the access to the main questions and videos on TSE official profile on the platform (@tsejus).



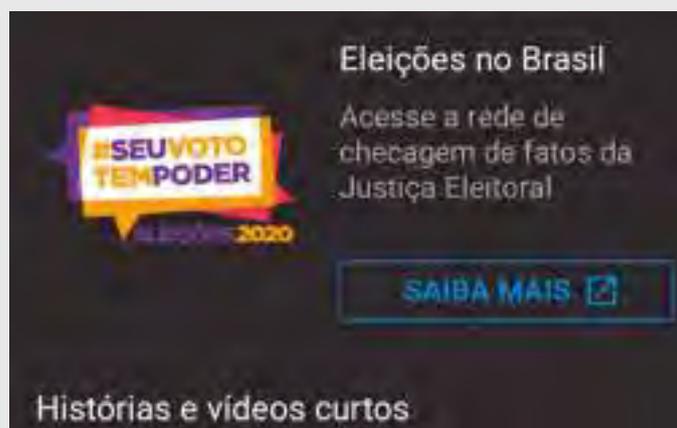
TSE-Twitter Partnership

In searches related to the 2020 Elections, Twitter has made available a prompt named 'Know the Facts' with a link to the elections official portal. In addition, it has given support to the broadcasting of live events made by TSE in key moments of the electoral period, especially the press conferences held by TSE President on the voting days, in order to contribute to the dissemination of Electoral Justice System contents. Also aiming at broadening the scope of the official information, the platform has enlarged the contents of voter's service through the TSE account (@tsejus) by the Twitter Brazil institutional account (@twitterbrasil). Still through this partnership, Twitter has linked special emojis to theme hashtags throughout the electoral period (#Eleições2020 and #SeuVotoTemPoder). At last, TSE account contents at Twitter have been reproduced on street furniture in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.



TSE-YouTube Partnership

YouTube has launched a banner on its home page to promote the *Fato ou Boato* website and fact-checking made in the scope of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, in order to contribute to broaden the dissemination of clarifications about rumors that challenged the integrity of the elections, as well as to strengthen the fact-checking ecosystem.



C.2 Notification Center for Electoral Justice System Apps

TSE has developed a Notification Center for Electoral Justice System apps through which it has changed *e-Título* (e-Voter Card), *Mesário* (Poll Worker) and *Pardal* (Sparrow) apps into channels allowing the Electoral Justice System to communicate directly with constituencies and poll workers, and disseminate useful information about the elections, including clarifications about fake news, in real time. The creation of this Electoral Court System digital communication infrastructure formed an original tool to enable massive dissemination of official messages throughout the electoral period.



e-Título



Mesário



Pardal

Content

Throughout the electoral period, more than 30 specific messages (anti-disinformation pills), according to the target audience of each app, were created and sent, in order to guarantee the dissemination of official information, raise voters' awareness of the risks of disinformation and to clear up fake news (such as myths about the electronic voting machine). The notifications sent conveyed short accessible clear messages including links allowing users to have access to more information on the topic.

e-Título

10 MENTIRAS SOBRE A URNA

Já teve todo tipo de notícia falsa sobre a urna, inclusive tem *fake* já desmentida que volta a circular em toda eleição. A verdade é que a urna eletrônica é usada no Brasil desde 1996 e, até hoje, nenhum caso de fraude foi identificado e comprovado. Quer saber quais as 10 maiores mentiras sobre as urnas? Acesse <https://www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br/fato-ou-boato/# e ajude a compartilhar fatos verdadeiros>.

Mesários

SE É BOATO, NÃO COMPARTILHE!

Recebeu uma notícia falsa no WhatsApp? Não compartilhe! Você pode fazer parte do movimento #EuVotoSemFake, compartilhando informações oficiais e verdadeiras sobre o Processo Eleitoral com a *hashtag*. Faça parte desse movimento! Jogue limpo e ajude a construir um ambiente digital mais saudável. Veja <https://www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br/fato-ou-boato/>

Pardal

DISPARO EM MASSA É ILEGAL: DENUNCIE!

Se receber uma mensagem sobre as eleições de um número desconhecido ou com texto genérico via SMS ou WhatsApp, ela pode ser uma propaganda eleitoral irregular. Tire foto ou *print* da tela da mensagem e abra uma nova denúncia pelo aplicativo. Se for no WhatsApp, você pode denunciar diretamente ao TSE neste formulário: <http://bit.ly/DenuncieAoWhatsApp>.

Deployment

The Notification Center has been designed, developed and operated by TSE itself, through the joint efforts of the Executing Team, STI/TSE, the Personnel Management Department (SGP/TSE) and Ascom/TSE. Besides the development of the digital communication infrastructure, the areas were held liable for conceiving the messages and operating the sending of notifications to app users.

Achievements

Throughout the 2020 Elections period, more than 300 million informative notifications were sent to more than 18 million users of such apps, assuring a swift direct conveyance of important information.

Number of users (on November 15th, 2020)

- *E-Título*: 18,049,293 users
- *Mesário*: 1,090,346 users
- *Pardal*: 125,035 users

Notifications sent – Anti-disinformation pills

- *E-Título*: 17 messages
- *Mesário*: 7 messages
- *Pardal*: 10 messages

C.3 #EuVotoSemFake Campaign



TSE has launched the campaign against disinformation named #EuVotoSemFake (I vote without fake news), aiming at boosting a movement on social media capable of changing public and private institutions and citizens into disseminators of true information on the Electoral Process. The idea behind the movement was to raise people's awareness of the role they have in the dissemination of authentic information and on how they can join the Electoral Justice System to fight against disinformation.

In the scope of the campaign, designed to be plural and collaborative, besides the adherence of institutions, any person or citizen could become an 'ambassador' of the movement simply by sharing postings with the hashtag. Therefore, the campaign has been disseminated on social media to allow users to promote and encourage the circulation of messages including guidelines and information on the Electoral Process. Therefore, the habit of sharing reliable information and creating a broad network of protection and integrity for the elections was encouraged.

Content

Ascom/TSE has produced various informative cards to boost the #EuVotoSemFake movement, including instructions on how to participate in the movement, tips for the safe sharing of messages on the Electoral Process on the web and important contents referring to the 2020 Elections. Besides, special

cards resembling WhatsApp messages have been created. Such cards have tried to clear up fake news frequently circulating on the electronic voting machine.



Many institutions that have adhered to the movement had access to materials produced by TSE to be disclosed on their own social media and could also create their own contents related to Counter disinformation.

Messages shared by the National Council of Justice related to the #EuVotoSemFake movement



Message shared by STJ for the #EuVotoSemFake movement



Achievements

More than one hundred institutions, including public entities and companies, have engaged with the #EuVotoSemFake campaign and have made efforts to share official contents about the elections and messages that aimed at helping to fight against disinformation. As an example, the National Board of Justice (CNJ), the Federal Supreme Court (STF), the Superior Court of Justice (STJ), the Federal Accounting Court (TCU), the Superior Labor Court (TST), the National Association of the Judges of the Labor Courts (Anamatra), the National Association of Labor Prosecutors (ANPT), the National

Association of Federal Prosecutors (ANPR), the National Council of Christian Churches (Conic), the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), Instituto Palavra Aberta, Pacto pela Democracia, Redes Cordiais, Politize!, Ashoka Brasil, the Brazilian Association of Radio and TV (Abratel) and Camp Brasil have engaged with the movement, through sharing of contents on their media.

According to a report by the Department of Public Policy Analysis of Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV/DAPP |), #EuVotoSemFake hashtag was the topic of 23.3 thousand posts on Twitter from September 25th to November 24th, 2020.

C.4 Campaigns in association with soccer clubs

Another innovative partnership for Counter disinformation, through the dissemination of truthful information to voters, was the one established with the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) and many soccer clubs from different divisions of the national championship. On the days before the voting dates, in the first and second rounds, #NãoTransmitaFakeNews (Do not spread fake news) and #PartiuVotar (Let's Go Voting) campaigns were created to discourage sharing fake news, to clear up rumors and lies about the Brazilian Electoral Process, through the analogy with VAR (Video Assistant Referee), and to encourage to voting.

Content

On the days before the first round, the main soccer clubs in the country have joined TSE in the #NãoTransmitaFakeNews campaign. The VAR-TSE and Brazilian Soccer United to Fighting against Disinformation series was created, with special cards copying the VAR format, bringing fact-checking of fake news against the Brazilian electronic voting machine system. Each soccer club posted a different message on their social media.

VAR Series Cards



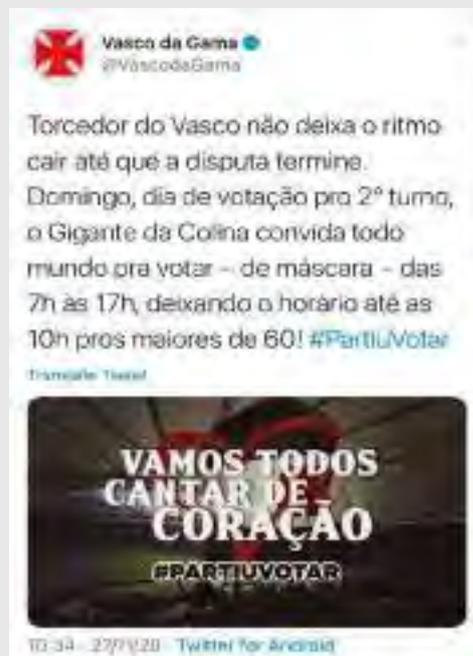
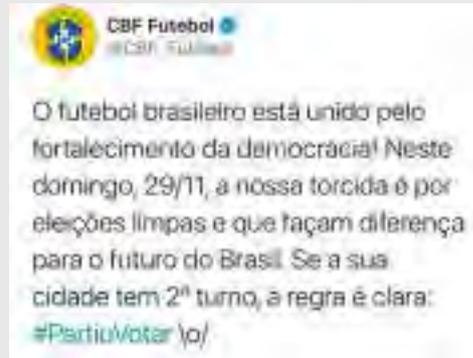
Examples of #NãoTransmitaFakeNews Campaign



In the second round, soccer clubs have engaged with the new campaign titled #PartiuVotar: *Futebol Brasileiro e TSE Juntos pela Democracia* (Let's Go Voting: Brazilian Football and TSE Together for Democracy) in order to encourage the attendance to polling places. The idea was to encourage voting in the Covid-19 pandemic context.



Examples of #PartiuVotar Campaign postings





Achievements

#NãoTransmitaFakeNews campaign on Twitter has reached 44,889,817 people through 2,371 tweets posted. The Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) and 18 soccer clubs participating in the Brazilian championship — Atlético Goianiense, Bahia, Botafogo, Bragatino, Ceará, Corinthians, Coritiba, Flamengo, Fluminense, Fortaleza, Grêmio, Internacional, Palmeiras, Santos, São Paulo and Vasco and also Botafogo-PB (Series C) and Pelotas (Series B) — took part in it. Additionally, #PartiuVotar campaign has reached 37,202,793 people through 344 tweets posted. The Brazilian Football Confederation and 12 soccer clubs participating in the Brazilian championship Series A — Atlético Goianiense, Atlético Paranaense, Ceará, Corinthians, Flamengo, Fluminense, Fortaleza, Goiás, Internacional, Santos, São Paulo and Vasco — took part in it.

C.5 Association with communication and media associations to create a disseminators' network

TSE has also entered into a partnership with communication and media associations to disclose to their members trusted information about the Electoral Process, including those arising from fact-checking.

To formalize the cooperation, the Court has entered into memoranda of understanding with eight media associations, partners of the Program — Brazilian Association of Radio and TV Broadcasters (Abert), Brazilian Internet Association (Abranet), Abratel, Brazilian Association of Internet and Telecom Providers (Abrint), Brazilian Association of Communication Agencies (Abracom), Brazilian Press Association (ABI), National Association of Magazine Publishers (Aner) and National Association of Newspapers (ANJ).



Content

The memoranda entered into have allowed that the associations become entities disseminating truthful content about the Electoral Process. Each one of them committed to publish and disclose through their channels, according to their availability, videos and contents posted on TSE social media, as well as information verified by the fact-checking organizations that have joined the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections.

The contents made available for disclosure by the media associations included:

- Useful information about the 2020 Elections, including dates, hours and covid-19 health protocols;
- Materials against disinformation and explanations of fake news about the electronic voting process;
- Security of the electronic voting machine;
- Encouragement to women and youth participation in politics.

Examples of contents for sharing



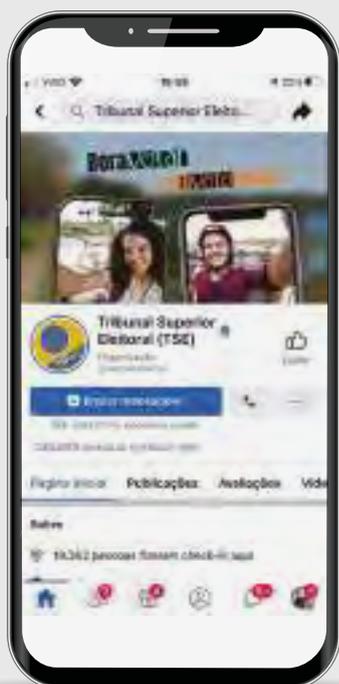
Deployment

The broadcasters' network has worked through a continuous exchange between the Court team and the media associations. To share materials and define actions, an instant communication group was created and a document was shared through Google Docs. Ascom/TSE was held responsible for content production.



C.6 TSE Channels and Social Media

The initiative to fight against disinformation with a massive disclosure of quality information also included a comprehensive strategy of increasing TSE presence on social media and other web channels. Aware of the needs to bring the Electoral Justice System closer to society and to communicate with distinct audiences, TSE has increased its social presence through official profiles on the major current digital platforms.

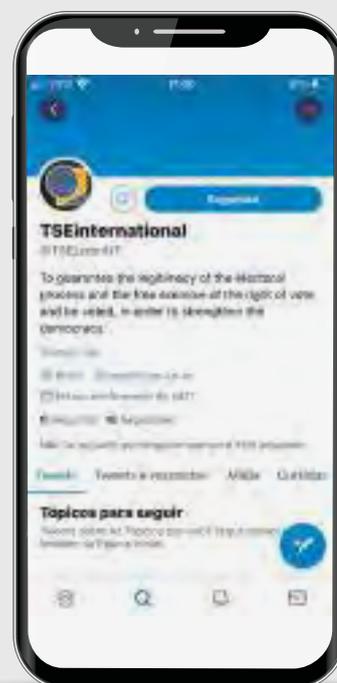


Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TSE.Jus/>)

TSE webpage on Facebook is also a very important means of dissemination of reliable information related to the Brazilian Electoral Process. The space is used to disclose useful contents to the voter and to promote actions to raise awareness about the Brazilian democracy, besides broadcasting trials and live streaming events made by the Court. By the end of 2020, the official account had hit 244 thousand likes and 255 thousand followers.

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/tsejusbr>)

Launched in 2009, TSE profile on Twitter offers useful information quickly and uncomplicatedly. By the end of 2020, the profile had hit 378.5 thousand followers who track on a daily basis the disclosure of materials made by the Court Communication team, advertisement campaigns, news on cases adjudicated by the justices, full court sessions, and live streaming of important events.



YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/justicaeeleitoral>)

Live streaming of trials, series of tips for the voter and reports on the Brazilian Electoral Process within reach of a click. This is the proposal of the Electoral Justice System channel on YouTube. From its launching, in 2010, to the end of 2020, the channel has conquered 187 thousand subscribers and has reached more than 38 million views. All the material is classified into playlists, making the browsing even more swift and intuitive. In the 2020 Elections, TSE has promoted the series titled *Diálogos Democráticos no YouTube* (Democratic Dialogues on YouTube), through live streaming events with TSE President and public persons to debate relevant topics, including disinformation and women and youngsters participation in politics.





TSE Internet Portals (<https://www.tse.jus.br> and <https://www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br>)

TSE has also invested in smoothing the communication with the voter through its websites. In addition to TSE website, a hotsite on the Electoral Justice System website called *Tudo sobre as Eleições* (All about the elections) (www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br/tudo-sobre-as-eleicoes/) was launched, with useful services and information about the local elections. The Court Communication team has created various special materials and diversified contents to draw the attention of the public to fact-checking of fake news about the Electoral Process and voting procedures.



Achievements

In the 2020 Elections, TSE has reached a record number of followers on its social media accounts and has notably broadened their engagement. During this period, more than 4 thousand posts were published on the Courts' social media.

Instagram
<p>Followers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2020: 78,846 followers December 2020: 206,876 followers
Increase: 128,030 followers
<p>Reach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 100 million people
Twitter
<p>Followers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2020: 308 thousand followers December 2020: 380 thousand followers
Increase: 72 thousand followers
<p>Reach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 45 million prints
Facebook
<p>Followers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2020: 212,548 followers December 2020: 250,447 followers
Increase: 37,899 followers
<p>Reach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 40 million people
YouTube
<p>Subscribers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase from 90 thousand to 188 million in 6 months
<p>Reach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5 million views in November 2020 only, representing a 335% increase of views of the channel January 2020: 5,632 views, 73.1 hours of viewing and 4.2 thousand subscribers

TikTok

- New account has conquered 18.4 followers from October to December 2020
- 71 videos posted from October to December 2020
- Record number: 1.2 million views of a single video

An exponential growth has been registered on the access to TSE and Electoral Justice System websites. In 2020, the website (www.tse.jus.br) had 278,808,073 views of pages, and approximately 100 million of them happened in the second semester. In November 2020 (the month of the elections) only, the website has registered 46.3 million accesses, a 122% increase when compared to 2016 elections. Additionally, the Electoral Justice System website (www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br) had 31,806,425 views in 2020, representing 30 times more views than in 2019.

TSE website audience

- 278,808,073 views of pages in 2020

When compared to:

- October (election month) – 20,814,691
- November (election month) – 46,360,760

Electoral Justice System website audience

- 31,806,425 views of pages in 2020

Massive dissemination of official truthful information about the Elections – Outcome brief

- Major social media created tools and features to allow the access to reliable electoral contents on social media in association with TSE: *Megafone* (Facebook), electoral stickers (Instagram), *How to Vote* feature on the search page (Google); 2020 Elections Guide (TikTok), *Know the Facts* prompt (Twitter), *Fato ou Boato* banner (YouTube);
- Creation of a Notification Center on the Electoral Justice System apps: 300 million informative notifications sent to more than 18 million users of *e-Título*, *Mesário* and *Pardal* apps;
- #EuVotoSemFake campaign: more than 100 organizations engaged with the campaign to create a network of dissemination of reliable information about the elections, having produced more than 23 thousand posts on Twitter;
- #NãoTransmitaFakeNews campaign: 2,371 tweets published by the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) and 18 soccer clubs reached 44,889,817 people;
- #PartiuVotar campaign: 344 tweets published by CBF and soccer clubs reached 37,202,793 people;
- Increase of TSE presence on social media:
 - » Content volume: more than 4 thousand posts published on Instagram; more than 40 million people on Facebook, more than 45 million prints on Twitter;
 - » Followers: by the end of 2020, TSE reached more than 206 thousand followers on Instagram, more than 308 thousand followers on Twitter, more than 250 thousand followers on Facebook and more than 180 thousand subscribers on YouTube;
 - » Good News: TSE profile on TikTok – 71 videos posted during the 2020 Elections, a record number of 1.2 million views of a single video.

D. Zero rating for the Electoral Justice System website

A relevant share of the Brazilian voters has Internet access via cell phone only, with limited data plan which means that it is oftentimes impracticable to search for evidence on the veracity of information received. In order to eliminate this obstacle to Brazilian citizens checking fake news received on their messaging apps, for the first time TSE has searched for associations with Brazilian mobile companies to get zero rating, i.e., to provide Internet access to information without financial cost. Therefore, the idea was to democratize the access to reliable official information about the elections, making it easier to fight against disinformation.

The partnership

After meetings and debates, TSE through Conexis Brasil Digital, aka Sinditele Brasil (official representative of telecom industry in Brazil) has entered into an agreement with mobile companies such as Claro, Oi, TimBrasil, Vivo and Algar Telecom, which provided users with access to Electoral Justice System contents and apps, without consuming data during the 2020 Elections. Sinditelebrasil/Conexis Brasil Digital has also joined the Counter Disinformation Program, enabling the entering into of new partnerships of this nature in future elections.

The executed memorandum of understanding in full is available on the hot site <https://www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br/parcerias-digitais-eleicoes>.

Content

By virtue of the partnership between TSE, Conexis Brasil and Brazilian mobile phone companies, all the Electoral Justice System website, especially the *Fato ou Boato* webpage, was zero-rated, allowing the access via mobile phone, with no financial cost for browsing. The zero consumption of data packages to access the Electoral Justice System contents was extended to all website pages, including but not limited to tips for protection against Covid-19 on the polling day, voters' frequent asked questions, fact-checking of news about the Electoral Process.

Deployment

TSE Information Technology Department acted to technically make the implementation of zero-rating policy on www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br domain and its subdomains viable.

2.2.2 Fighting disinformation with capacity building

The Counter Disinformation Program invested in initiatives to educate and build capacity both for the external public (journalists, voters and citizens in general) and the internal public (judges, civil servants and associates of the Electoral Justice System, including poll workers) on the phenomenon of disinformation and its negative impacts on the Electoral Justice System, as well as on the elections operation, notably the electronic voting process.

A. *Se For Fake News, não transmita* (If it is fake News, do not spread it) campaign – increasing awareness of disinformation

One of the most successful capacity-building initiatives, oriented to the external public, was the institutional campaign titled *Se For Fake News, não transmita* (If it is fake News, do not spread it), broadcast on TV and on the radio, and also posted on the Court’s social media. The campaign aimed at raise population’s awareness of disinformation, how fake news spread and their negative effects, as well as the importance of not passing fake news on.

Content

Starring the biologist and digital influencer Átila Iamarino, the campaign approached the dissemination of fake news of the day to day of society, emphasizing the negative impact of the phenomenon. Starting from the comparison of dissemination of fake news to a kind of virus, the campaign showcased the dangers of the spread of false and fraudulent fake news for democracy. One of the campaign videos has tried to help citizens to identify potential fake news, to fact-checking on reliable websites, to make the distinction between facts and opinions, and to take a time to reflect before sharing any message. Another video has warned that the dissemination of rumors and fake news is lethal to democracy and may destroy the reputation of competent people or hide the truth about mischievous candidates: ‘Any message you receive must be checked before spreading it. Please check sources and fact-checking organizations. Those who spread fake news do harm to other people, to themselves, and may be committing a crime. If it is fake news, do not spread it.’

The many campaign videos may be viewed on YouTube



The participation of the well-known biologist, youtuber and scientific disseminator has helped to give the campaign a broader reach. According to the ranking disclosed by *Revista SuperInteressante*, lamarino was one of the most influent celebrities on Twitter in 2020. He assigned his image to TSE and charged no fee to make the propaganda.

Disinformation and democracy

On a video disclosed on social media as part of *Se For Fake News, não transmita* campaign, TSE President, Justice Luís Roberto Barroso, has given more explanations on the phenomenon of disinformation and its effects. The video called on the voters to become liable for the contents they share, mainly on social media and text messaging apps: 'Do not spread fake news or whose authenticity is not assured. Do not take part in hate campaigns. Doing evil does harm even those who do wrong.' The video may be accessed on Youtube.



Achievements

It is estimated that *Se for Fake News, não transmita* campaign presented by biologist Átila lamarino and aired on TV and on the radio has reached near 130 million Brazilians. It got more than 10 billion views during its placement period.

B. Capacity building for the external public

Additionally to the institutional campaign on TV and on the radio, many other initiatives for capacity building oriented to the external public, including but not limited to webinars and virtual debates, news series, special videos, courses for journalists, and capacity building for poll workers. Such actions have prioritize education oriented to the knowledge and the understanding of disinformation, to the exercise of critical thinking in face of the information received, to the incentive to non-spreading of doubtful information, to the indication of fact-checking tools and features, and to the transmission of reliable information about the Electoral Process, especially as for the operation and security of electronic voting machines.

Webinars, live streaming, and virtual debates

Diálogos Democráticos Series

Diálogos Democráticos series has promoted virtual debates with public personalities about the most relevant topics for the 2020 Elections. In each one of the five editions, TSE has tried to

promote fundamental reflections by the constituency about the challenges that still have to be overcome in the Brazilian democracy. All the meetings were moderated by the Court President, Justice Luís Roberto Barroso.



One of the debates happened in June 2020 dealt specifically with the fake news phenomenon. Titled *Desinformação: o Desafio das Fake News* (Disinformation: the challenge of fake news), the event was live streamed with the participation of journalist Cristina Tardáguila, from International Fact-Checking Network, biologist and communicator Átila Iamarino and congressman Felipe Rigoni, co-author of the bill oriented to fighting against disinformation. The meeting approached topics such as: the difference between fake news, lack of information and dissemination of misinformation; the risks of disseminating fake messages; the importance of fact-checking; the strategy for fighting against fake news without jeopardizing the right to freedom of speech. More than 25 thousand people watched the live streaming event.

Live streaming in association with Google

Google, in association with TSE, has promoted a series of online events aimed at fighting against disinformation that, besides being carried on the Court's channels and social media, have been live streamed on YouTube and Google Brasil official channels.

- *Checagem de Informações* (Information Checking) – broadcast on October 28th, 2020, with Cristina Tardáguila (Agência Lupa) and Diogo Rais (Instituto Liberdade Digital) and moderated by Patricia Blanco (Palavra Aberta). The live streamed event is on YouTube and has had more than 50 thousand visualizations.

- *Desmistificando Lendas Eleitorais* (Demystifying Electoral Legends) – broadcast on November 04th, 2020, with Roberta Maia Gresta (TSE Presidency Special Assistant) and moderated by Patrícia Blanco (Palavra Aberta). The live streamed event is on YouTube and has had more than 58 thousand visualizations.
- *Eleições: Como Votar de Maneira Segura (protocolos sanitários e outras dicas)* (Elections: How to Vote Safely (health and safety protocols and other tips) – broadcast on November 09th, 2020 with Justice Luís Roberto Barroso (TSE President), Roberto Kalil (University of São Paulo), moderated by Patrícia Blanco (Palavra Aberta). The live streamed event is on YouTube and has had more than 63 thousand visualizations.



Other webinars

Throughout the electoral period, many other webinars have happened, including with the cooperation of scholars and civil society partners in order to instruct the external public on how to fight against disinformation and on the Electoral Process in general.

As an example, TSE and Instituto Palavra Aberta supported by Unesco and with the participation of Todos pela Educação, have promoted on August 07th, 2020 the webinar titled *Educação para a Cidadania* (Education for Citizenship) on the following topics: democracy, freedom of speech, media education, and Counter disinformation. The online meeting may be watched on the Electoral Justice System channel on YouTube.

News, videos and special posting series

O caminho do voto: o que acontece depois que você aperta o botão confirma (The voting path: what happens after you press the button to confirm) Series

Faced with fake narratives brought during the 2020 Elections first round after the delay in tallying of votes, TSE has created *O Caminho do Voto* series aiming at informing citizens of what happens to the vote after pressing the button to confirm on the electronic voting machine. The objective of the series was to show that after voting at the electronic voting machine, there are many phases to conclude the tallying process, involving information technology, the work of the poll workers and supervision of civil society organizations.

The series was advertised on the Court website, many postings on social media and a video published on TSE channel on YouTube, with near 700 thousand visualizations. The material has also been shared with the network of disseminating institutions' respective channels.



Desvendando a Urna: desmistificando o sistema eletrônico de votação (Unveiling the electronic voting machine: demystifying the electronic voting system) Series

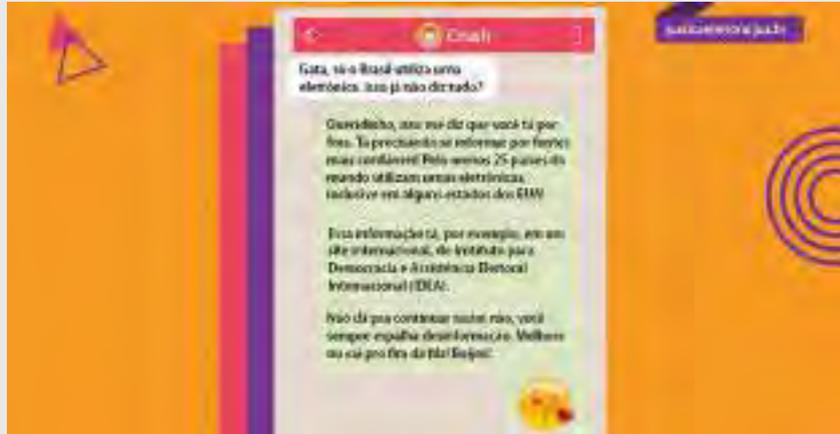
Throughout the 2020 Electoral Process, TSE has featured a series of special reports to clarify ten myths about the electronic voting machine. The initiative aimed at advising citizens about fake news on the electronic voting system and the Electoral Process spread on the Internet since the 2018 elections.

The series was composed of ten reports approaching the most common myths about the electronic voting machine, which are more frequently replicated on the Internet and are more prone to be repeated each electoral cycle. Through the reports, the citizen had the opportunity to get answers to his/her inquiries about the electronic voting machine project; the so-called vulnerabilities of the equipment and

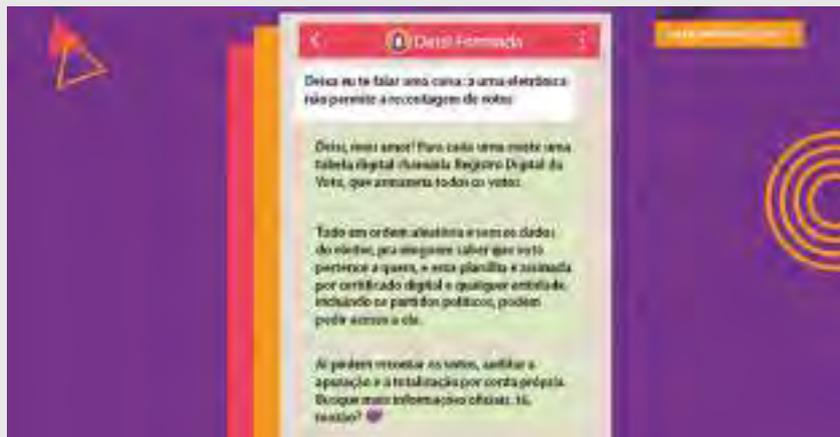
frauds; the chance of manipulation of the technology; auditing and recounting of votes and sharing of the technology with other countries, to name just a few topics.

The reports were conveyed on TSE website, on the Court channel on Youtube and on social media.

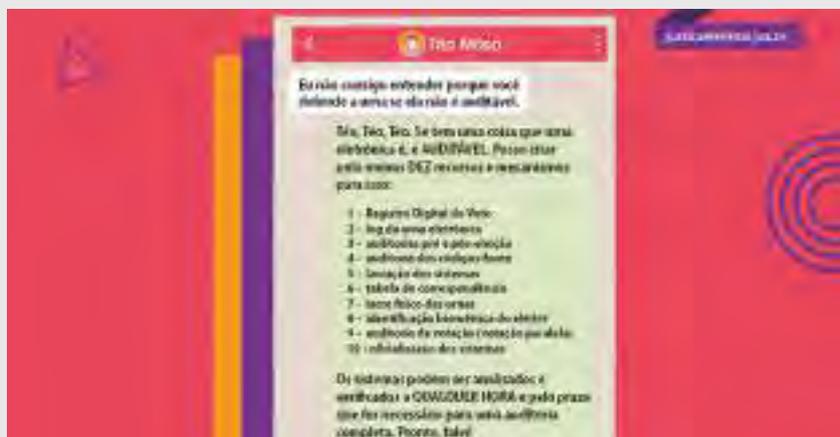
Desvendando a Urna series: Brazil is the only country using electronic voting machines?



Desvendando a Urna series: does the electronic voting system allow vote recounting?



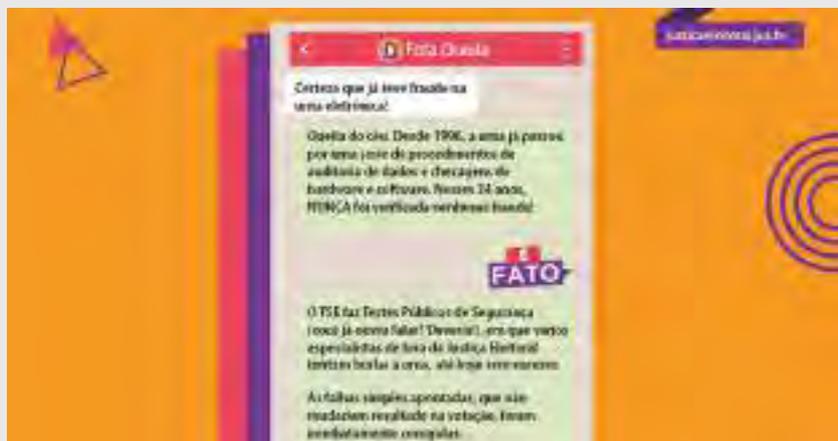
Desvendando a Urna series: the equipment is not auditable?



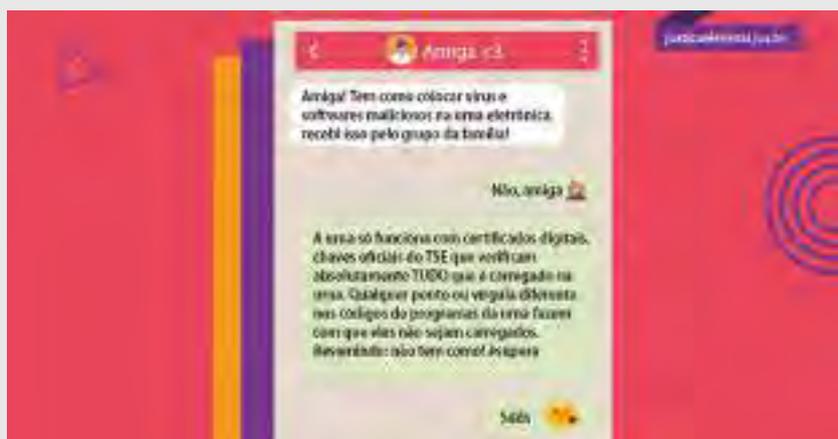
Desvendando a Urna series: voting software source code is not open to community?



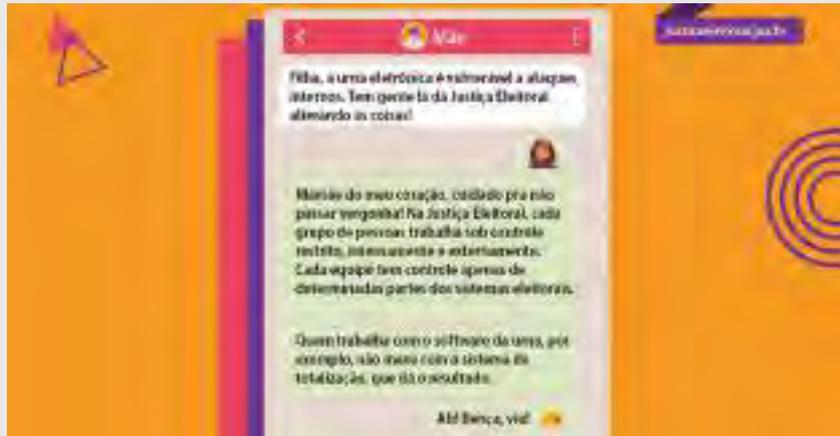
Desvendando a Urna series: frauds in the electronic voting machine have been proven?



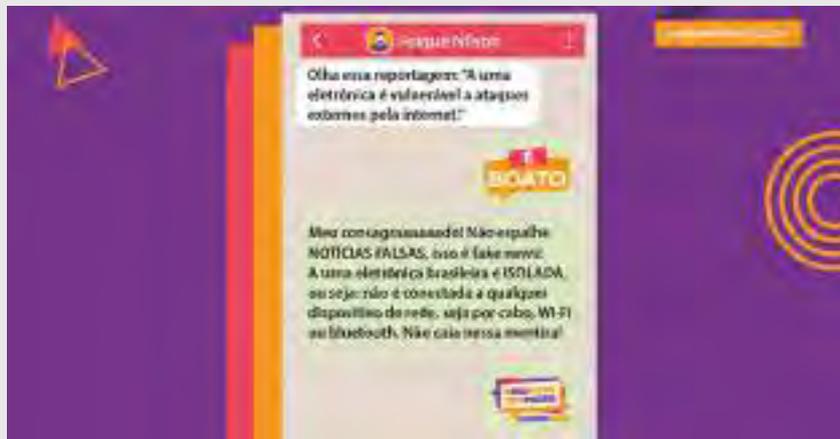
Desvendando a Urna series: malicious software may be inserted into the equipment?



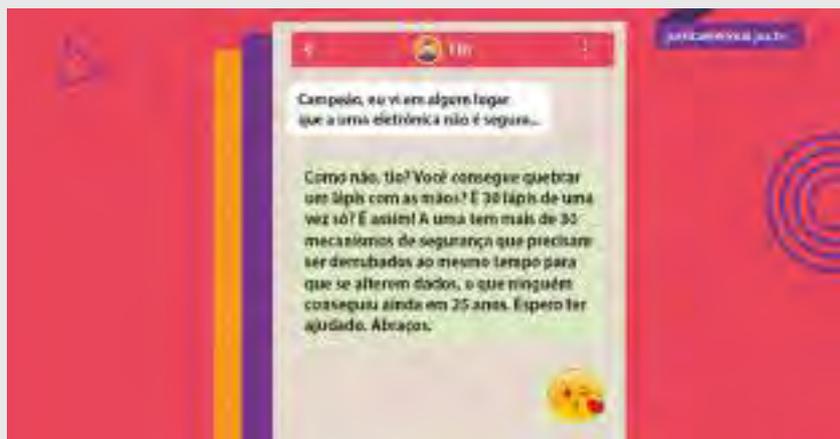
Desvendando a Urna series: the equipment is prone to internal attacks?



Desvendando a Urna series: the equipment is vulnerable to cyberattacks?



Desvendando a Urna series: the voting process is safe?



Desvendando a Urna series: the equipment is designed by private companies?



***Boletim de Urna* (Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin) series: the voter has the power to check votes**

TSE has also produced a series titled *Boletim de Urna*. By publishing a simple to understand informative material, the Court has tried to show that the voter her/himself may check the votes, even before the announcement of the results, through the Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin printed by each voting machine after the end of the voting process.

The content is hosted on the *Segurança da Urna* (Electronic Voting Machine Security) hot site, on the Electoral Justice System website, and disclosed on the Court social media through cards.

1 **Plataforma Eleitoral**
O poder de conferir os votos de sua seção eleitoral também é seu

2
Isso é possível com o Boletim de Urna, disponível em aplicativo e no site

3
Com essa ferramenta, você verifica os votos de seções eleitorais por partido, candidato, nulos, em branco e o nº de eleitores da seção

4
Encerrada a votação, os mesários emitem o Boletim e colam em local visível da seção eleitoral - você pode fotografar ou ler o QR Code com seu celular

5
Em até 3 dias após a eleição, a Justiça Eleitoral disponibiliza os boletins das urnas de todo o Brasil em <https://www.tse.jus.br/boletim>

6
E assim, qualquer eleitor pode comparar os dados e ser um fiscal das Eleições

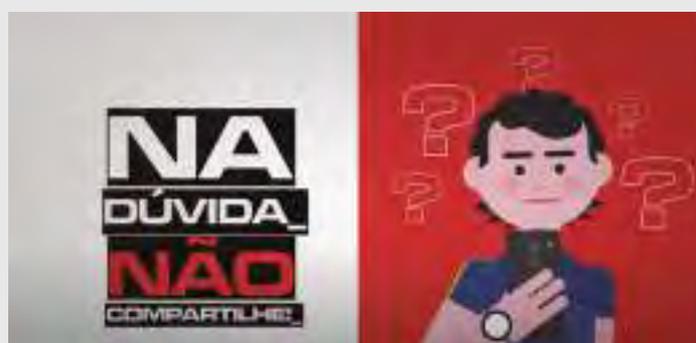
BRASIL

Minuto da Checagem (Checking Minute) Program

As soon as the Counter Disinformation Program focused on 2020 Elections was launched in October 2019, TSE created the *Minuto da Checagem* Program to advise the internet user of the importance of checking the veracity of contents received or accessed on social media, cell phone apps and websites before sharing them.

Produced by the Court's Communication Advisory Board (Ascom/TSE), the program had eight episodes of nearly one minute long. The first edition of the program has explained the importance of continually checking the veracity of the contents received before sharing them. In the second episode, the program has approached the topic of how the fake news writers have used eye-catching headlines to draw the attention of people and make them passing contents on without taking the time to check them. The third video has warned about the use of old information as if they were new. The fourth video of the program stressed that it is important to mistrust news that seem too good to be true. The fifth episode has explained what is deepfake. The sixth episode approached the dissemination of fake news by the time of the new coronavirus pandemic. The seventh edition deals with the importance to check the sources and reliability of websites and links to the information received. At last, the eight episode warns about the potential fake information to be featured as a crime.

The *Minuto da Checagem* Program was broadcast on the Electoral Justice System official channel on YouTube, at the time-outs on TV Justiça channel schedule and on the more than a thousand partner broadcasters that relayed the Ascom/TSE audiovisual content from May 15th to December 30th, 2020. The series videos are available on YouTube. In aggregate, they have had more than 4.5 million visualizations on YouTube only.



Capacity Building for Journalists

Electoral Law Course for Journalists – Focused on the 2020 Elections

TSE has promoted the Electoral Law Course for Journalists – Focused on the 2020 Elections. The course was composed of 11 modules, 2 hours long each, carried out online and taught in real time by two instructors for each meeting. This format has tried to guarantee the chance of participants to interact by chat and sending questions through a form made available on the platform.

The topics explored in the classes included but were not limited to: (i) the role of TSE in the elections organization; (ii) mechanisms of transparency and statistical tools available on the Electoral Process; (iii) security of the electronic voting system; and (iv) disinformation regarding the Electoral Process.

More than a thousand journalists from all over the country attended the course. The classes were recorded and are available on TSE channel on YouTube.

Course on the electronic voting system and main rumors on the electronic voting machines for members of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections

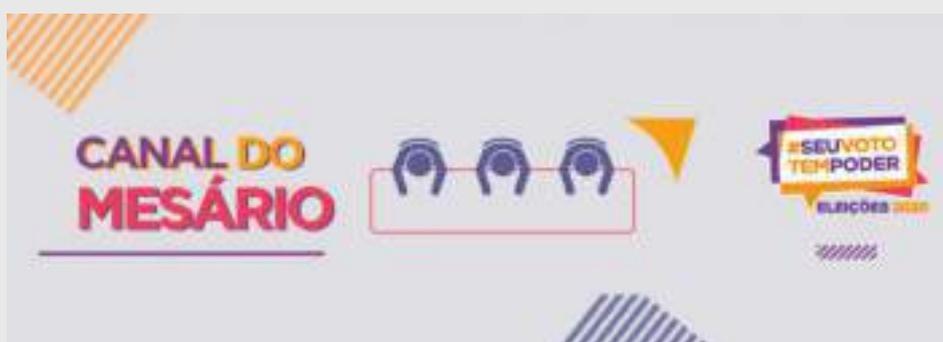
On September 22nd, 2020, during the electoral period, TSE has offered a course on the operation of the Brazilian electronic voting system, including mechanisms of security and auditing of the electronic voting machines and the electoral programs, to journalists from nine fact-checking organizations members of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections. The course also aimed at denying the main rumors about the Brazilian electronic voting process that circulate on the Internet.

The online training was provided by the then TSE Information Technology Secretary (STI/TSE), Giuseppe Janino, one of the members of the team that had designed the electronic voting system. The online training was taken by professionals from IFCN, Boatos.org, Agência Lupa, Estadão Verifica, France-Press Fact-Checking Agency (AFP), E-Farsas, Projeto Comprova, Uol Confere, Aos Fatos and G1 Fato ou Fake.



Capacity Building for Poll Workers

The Poll Workers Work Group (GT-Mesários), coordinated by the Personnel Management Department (SGP/TSE), has promoted capacity-building activities for poll workers in the Covid-19 pandemic scenario, through the *Mesário* (Poll Worker) app, Moodle platform for distance education, and other channels, such as videos on YouTube and TV Justiça shows. Near 1.3 million poll workers undergone the training.



During the training, offered on the TSE Distance Learning Website, as well as on a specific app, besides all major aspects of the electoral work, the following topic were approached: (i) tips for fighting disinformation; (ii) information on the Electoral Process and security of the electronic voting machine.

Additionally, the *Manual do Mesário – Eleições 2020* (Poll Worker Guide – 2020 Elections), produced and broadly distributed to poll workers, dealt with a specific matter, *Dicas para enfrentar a desinformação* (Tips to face disinformation). This guide section aimed at providing the workers with simple guidelines on how to identify fake information and has stressed the importance to the poll worker as a democracy agent to be aware of the veracity of information received and passed on. A QR Code directing to the *Fato ou Boato* webpage was included with the purpose of facilitating the checking of doubtful news on the Electoral Process.

C. Capacity-Building for the Internal Public

The Program has also promoted capacity-building initiatives oriented to the internal public. Such oriented actions have prioritized learning aiming at understanding the disinformation phenomenon and the capacity-building to deal with it, as well as operation of platforms and social media.

Capacity-building for TRE civil servants on the structuring of Counter disinformation in their venues

In the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts, the coordination of actions for fighting against disinformation during the 2020 Elections befell on a representative appointed by the Court as a ‘focal point’ to fighting against disinformation in respective TRE, in order to allow a swift clear communication as members of the TSE Strategic Committee, including with the purpose of reporting disinformation cases. Additionally, each TRE was expected to implement strategic committees internally with TSE cooperation through the exchange of information, strategies and guidelines.

Aiming at building capacity of the focal points for fighting against disinformation at TSE and allow the creation of local strategic committees, the Program Executing Team has held three online meetings on October 2nd, October 20th and November 12th, 2020, with TRE representatives. On such occasions, in addition to presenting the TSE Program and some of the strategies for Counter disinformation, general guidelines to implement the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation were given and questions on this subject were answered.

Additionally, focal points for fighting against disinformation in the Regional Electoral Courts had identified the chance to build capacity through specific training with the Program Executing Team, comprehending information on how to act in the scope of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections (for example, for sharing identified fake news and for providing the checking officers with official information) and on how to disseminate the checks made in the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts.

Capacity-building for the Electoral Justice System civil servants by Internet application service providers

The Program partner Internet application service providers have promoted many events and training sessions for judges, civil servants and associates from TSE and TRE on the operation of their platforms

and actions related to Counter disinformation in each one of them. Some of those initiatives are listed below. The objective of such actions was to build capacity of the Electoral Justice System members to understand and face the issue of disinformation in different platforms.

Capacity-building offered by FaceBook, Instagram and WhatsApp

Facebook Brazil representatives, also trained by WhatsApp Inc., have promoted training sessions for TRE and electoral district civil servants with explanations on the platform operation, measures for fighting against disinformation adopted by them, practical aspects of electoral litigation and measures being adopted for preparing the 2020 Elections, opening a Q&A session at the end. Training sessions were held on September 08th and 18th, 2020, and have involved the Regional Electoral Courts of the 27 government units.

Capacity-building offered by Google

Google Brazil offered training sessions aiming at building capacity of TSE and TRE civil servants in two different ways: (i) qualification for the communication teams to help the fact-checking and dissemination of information during the electoral period; and (ii) qualification for judges and civil servants with information on the operation of Google and YouTube platforms, policies and operation of reporting channels, in order to guarantee a more efficient work in the electoral period. Training sessions were held on September 21st and 25th, 2020.

Capacity-building offered by Twitter

Twitter has also offered training sessions to TSE and TRE communication teams on Twitter best practices, as well as training sessions to TRE judges and civil servants, giving explanations on the platform, community practices and practical aspects of the electoral litigation. Training sessions were held on September 23rd and 30th, 2020.

Capacity-building offered by TikTok

TikTok has offered training sessions and support to TSE Communication team on the operation of the platform, with instructions to help video production and, therefore, insuring the dissemination of official information. Training session was held on September 25th, 2020.

Capacity-building for the Electoral Justice System civil servants on strategies for Counter disinformation

Workshop offered by DFRLab

The team involved in fighting against disinformation in TSE, as well as the focal points for fighting against disinformation in the Regional Electoral Courts, participated in the workshop hosted by researcher Luiza Bandeira, member of DFRLAB (Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab), an American forensic lab partner of the Program. The workshop has allowed the capacity-building of the Electoral Justice System civil servants to identify and fight against disinformation, notably as regards to coordinated networks, inauthentic behavior and Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) techniques for network investigation.

Disinformation and Automation in the Electoral Context course offered by ITS Rio

Instituto de Tecnologia e Sociedade do Rio de Janeiro (ITS Rio), a partner of the Program, has offered TSE and TRE civil servants the Disinformation and Automation in the Electoral Context course. This course was designed to be taught in two classes, split in two parts each one. In the capacity-building activities, major topics regarding disinformation were approached, including history, challenges, technical issues related to automated behavior and solutions being used. Pegabot, a solution developed by ITS Rio in association with Instituto de Tecnologia e Equidade (ITE), to identify automated behavior on social media, and that may be applied to the electoral context, was also presented. The course had 250 registered students. One of the developments of the course was the creation of a support network for answering technical questions from the people trained.

Dentro do Processo Eleitoral (Inside the Electoral Process) Distance Learning Course

In May and October, 2020, as part of the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections, two editions of *Dentro do Processo Eleitoral* distance learning course for the Electoral Justice System civil servants were held. The course, produced by SGP/TSE, with the follow-up of the Program managing group is split in four modules on the following topics: Elections Overview, Security of the Electoral Process; Transparency and Supervision; and Counter Disinformation. The objective is to provide the participants with the understanding of the Electoral Process to be able to act in the fight against disinformation. It is noteworthy that the Program managing team has attended the course four modules.

The *Dentro do Processo Eleitoral* course has become mandatory for progressing the civil servants' career, as a way of stressing the importance of the contents and to encourage the participation of the Electoral Justice System members. The class in May had 54 participants, and the class in October had 161 participants, including TSE and TRE civil servants.

2.2.3 Fighting disinformation focusing on inauthentic behavior control

During the 2020 Elections, TSE has adopted concrete measures to detect, discourage and stop disinformation practices through the use of technological resources and preventive and repressing activities against inauthentic behaviors, use of computational propaganda, use of false identity, massive text messaging and other frauds in the access of information by citizens, as well as through other types of coordinated actions and spread of disinformation. In this pillar, the purpose was to prioritize the control of inauthentic behaviors and exceptionally control fraudulent and fake contents against the Electoral Process, through monitoring disinformation and interaction with various partners, including platforms, the Electoral Prosecution Office (MPE) and the Federal Police.

A. Reporting channel for massive text messaging in association with WhatsApp

TSE and WhatsApp Inc. have innovatively set an out-of-court communication channel to receive reports on suspicious accounts making massive text messaging during the 2020 Elections.

Massive text messaging is a prohibited practice both under the electoral laws (Law nº 9.504/1997, article 57-J coupled with TSE Resolution nº 23.610/2019, article 28, IV, items a and b, and article 34) and WhatsApp terms of use. This kind of abusive behavior consists of automated or manual sending of the same content to a huge number of users.

The channel created has allowed that any citizen receiving suspicious massive text messages could report it to TSE. The valid reports were then forwarded to WhatsApp for an internal investigation. If the violation of other terms of service and the app policies regarding massive text messaging and automated message services were confirmed, WhatsApp banned the account in question, therefore avoiding such wrongful practice to spread. The message content was not assessed by the platform.



Deployment

To put into operation this partnership, TSE has created an e-form for voters, electoral districts and Regional Electoral Courts to formally report of WhatsApp accounts suspect making massive text messaging of content related to the elections.

The form, available on TSE website, requested the citizen to fill in with the phone number that sent the message suspect to make massive text messaging, in addition to other information, in order to help to identify inauthentic behavior related to the elections. The form itself helped the complainant to recognize evidence that the message could be part of a massive messaging, such as message sent by an unknown phone number, a generic message text not specifically directed to the user, same message received in various groups, and message with suspect, scaremongering and accusatory links and contents.

Recebeu uma mensagem pelo WhatsApp que parece disparo em massa? Denuncie aqui

O que é disparo em massa?

Quando uma pessoa envia mensagens em massa para vários grupos de pessoas ou para muitas pessoas ao mesmo tempo, isso pode ser considerado uma violação dos termos de uso do WhatsApp. Se você recebeu uma mensagem assim, informe-nos para que possamos investigar.

Informações para contato

Nome *

Código de país * Telefone *

Email *

Informações sobre a denúncia

Data de recebimento da mensagem *

Código de país * Origem da mensagem *

Por que essa mensagem parece suspeita? *

- A mensagem tem conteúdo eleitoral e está sendo enviada em massa.
- Recebi de um número de telefone desconhecido.
- O texto da mensagem é genérico, não é direcionado a mim.
- Recebi a mesma mensagem em vários grupos.

Tela mais sobre este contato: *

Tem um print ou uma foto que deseja compartilhar?

Remova arquivos selecionados

Atenção: a TSE recebe a denúncia através do formulário. As informações enviadas são usadas para a investigação de denúncias.

Outcomes

During the electoral period, from September 27th, when the collection of reports started, to the end of December, 5,229 reports of accounts suspect of massive text messaging have been received through the form. From these, 207 were dismissed because they were not related to the elections, according to the reports sent by the complainants. After this first screening, TSE sent 5,022 records to WhatsApp to check potential violations of the app terms of use. After a preliminary review to remove duplicate or invalid numbers, WhatsApp has identified 3,527 valid accounts and banned 1,042 accounts because of massive text messaging relating to the elections (29.5%).

Considering that the reports sent by TSE to WhatsApp indicated potential evidence of electoral wrongful acts, and that it is necessary to allow the investigation by competent authorities, the Court requested the preservation of data related to the accounts reported and banned by WhatsApp due to violation of the terms of service, including phone numbers, IP logs and eventual registration data kept by

the app. In response to the request, WhatsApp committed to preserve such data up to February 2023. The Electoral Prosecution Office was informed of the preservation of data for the purpose of a future investigation.

In addition to the association with TSE, WhatsApp integrity system has informed that it had banned more than 360 thousand accounts in Brazil for massive text messaging or automated message sending (abuse/spam) from September to November 2020.

Channel for denunciation of massive text messaging – Outcomes

During the 2020 Electoral Period, TSE has received 5,229 reports of massive text messaging and WhatsApp has banned 1,042 accounts for massive text messaging related to the elections.

B. Creation of a network for monitoring practices of disinformation about the Electoral Process and engagement of digital platforms for fighting against disinformation structured networks and preventing inauthentic behaviors

TSE has established a network for monitoring disinformation practices harmful to the Electoral Process operated on the web. The purpose of the network is to identify and expose practices and contents of disinformation about the Electoral Process, as well as to forward these matters, if necessary, to avoid the dissemination and reduce its negative effects on the elections.

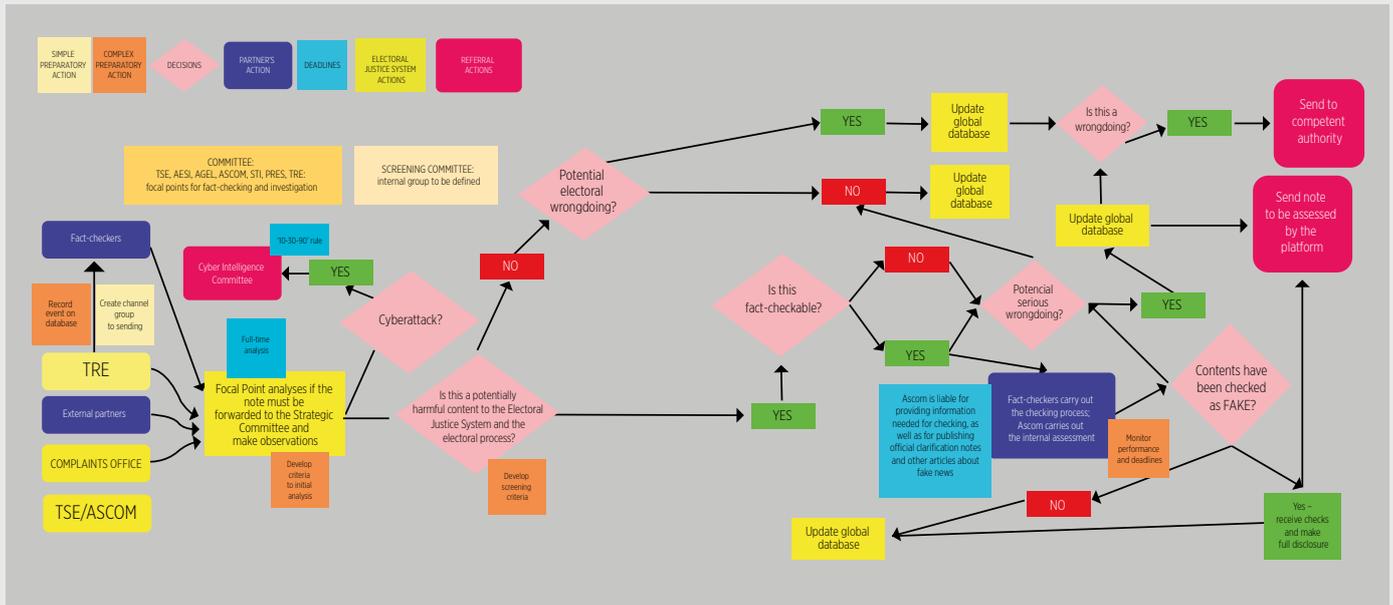
Deployment

The monitoring and intelligence network has been structured as a support to TSE and TRE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation, civil servants and associates of the Electoral Justice System and Program partners, besides relying on two tools for monitoring social media.

As for the Program partners, TSE entered into terms of adherence and memoranda of understanding with Safernet Brasil, ITS Rio, FGV/DAPP and DRFLab (Atlantic Council), for the purpose of sharing information, knowledge and notes on potential cases and practices of disinformation about the Electoral Process. The fact-checking agencies members of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections also sent notes. Additionally, TSE has continually and proactively used the BuzzSumo tool as well as Knewin Monitoring, which use was assigned by Rondônia State Regional Electoral Court to monitoring social media during the electoral period and identify cases and trends of disinformation.

Briefly, contents potentially harmful to the Electoral Process – named *apontamentos* (notes) – were identified through a monitoring network, registered on a database and reviewed by the Database Committee, a sub section of TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation. The Database Committee composed of eight TSE members, was responsible for indicating the forwarding to be done to each note, including, as the case may be, the notification to the platform involved, sending to review by the Coalition, forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office, to the Federal Police or dismissal. The Database Committee work on each registered note was guided by a work flow (Schedule 2) and pre-established criteria (Schedule 3).

Database Committee – Work flow and criteria



The Database Committee work process, illustrated on Figure 1, was framed based on the following criteria (see Schedule 3):

Who can report?

Anyone aware of a message, posting or news including disinformation about the Electoral Process could send notes. Such notes were mainly forwarded by Program partner entities such as FGV Dapp, DFR Lab, Safernet Brasil and by the fact-checking institutions members of the Coalition, as well as by the Regional Electoral Courts, through their focal points for fighting against disinformation. Citizens in general could also forward reports, through a TSE Complaints Office form. In addition, the notes were identified by the use of BuzzSumo and Knewin monitoring tools.

What is the scope of the assessment?

It was established that the notes to be reviewed would be those related to disinformation about the Electoral Process only. This was understood as the Electoral Process in its different stages, from the registration of candidates to the certification of the elected candidates; the operation of the electronic voting machine and other aspects of the electronic voting process; the Electoral Court System, its members, civil servants and other associates; the health security of the Electoral Process in the Covid-19 pandemic context; and other acts related to the organization and conduction of the elections. Therefore, contents including disinformation related to candidates, coalitions and political parties were excluded from the scope of the investigation, considering the Program objectives (especially oriented to the protection of the electoral integrity), the existence of other adequate ways to Counter this kind of disinformation and the special caution by the Program to not interfere in the political game.

Contents representing legitimate exercise of the right to criticism – even if bruising and forceful – against the Electoral Process or in any way under the protection to freedom of speech, information and press, were also excluded from the Program scope or defined as non-fact-checkable.

What measures could be taken?

The notes recorded were reviewed by the Database Committee, which could suggest one or more referrals in case of identification of contents including disinformation on the Electoral Process.

a. Drafting of official explanatory notes: when the disinformation referred to an action, program or procedure TSE was liable for, the Communication Advisory Board (Ascom/ TSE) promptly sent an official explanatory note on the fact after referring to respective technical unit and person responsible for the subject.

- In order to assess the need, convenience and appropriateness of drafting an official explanatory note, the following points were considered: (i) number of platforms (social media and text messaging apps) on which the note was spread; (ii) engagement (number of sharings, views and comments); and (iii) gravity of the note.
- In case an official note was needed, the information collected through monitoring of content including disinformation was considered for drafting.
- This kind of forwarding aimed at fighting against disinformation with official, truthful and quality information, and mitigate potential harmful effects of the engagement as a content including disinformation.

b. Forwarding to the Fact-Checking Coalition – Elections 2020: if the content of the note was fact-checkable, the disinformation was forwarded to the Coalition, in order that the fact-checking institutions willing to do so could proceed to the information checking.

- To assess the need, convenience and appropriateness of forwarding the note to the Coalition, the following criteria and points were considered: (i) existence of fact-checking of same content in the 2020 Elections context; (ii) previous issuance of TSE official note; (iii) number of platforms (social media and text messaging apps) on which the note was spread; (iv) engagement (number of sharings, views and comments); and (v) gravity of the note.
- When necessary, TSE and Regional Electoral Courts provided support to future use in the fact-checking process, including the referral of official note, whenever issued.
- Once the information was checked, TSE published on its *Fato ou Boato* website and other TSE channels, links for fact-checking, to broaden the access.
- This kind of forward aimed at fighting against disinformation with the circulation of reliable information produced by independent, credible and qualified sources. Besides allowing the comparison with the content including disinformation object of the note,

the forwarding to the Coalition aimed at acting in the sense of reducing the acceptance of such content, reducing the potential of the note to going viral and the engagement to the note, protecting citizens against other similar contents including disinformation and improving the public debate.

- c. Forwarding to the Program partner platforms:** to guarantee efficient responses to the identified practices of disinformation, as well as to allowing the fight against disinformation structured networks and to deter inauthentic behaviors, the notes could also be sent to the Program partner Internet application service providers, including WhatsApp, Facebook/Instagram, Google/YouTube, Twitter and TikTok. All such providers have policies of use that, when violated, could lead, depending on the platform, including but not limited, to the reduction of the posting reach; tagging the content as violating policies against disinformation; insertion of tags related to fact-checking; issuance of alerts at the moment of sharing; demonetization; removal of content; suspension or banning of the user's account.
- To assess the need, convenience and appropriateness of forwarding the note to respective platforms, the following criteria and points were considered: (i) existence of fact-checking of same content or issuance of an official note on the subject in the 2020 Elections context; (ii) prevision of a measure on the note in the policies of the platform in question; (iii) engagement (number of sharings, views and comments); and (iv) gravity of the note.
 - For forwarding relevant notes to each platform, the reporting mechanisms set forth by the platforms themselves to the Program have been used;
 - On behalf of freedom of speech, and recognizing the risks inherent to the assignment to any entity of the role of moderator of the public debate, the Database Committee has tried to privilege measures less invasive than the removal of the content, capable of broadening the information flow. For this purpose, it was resolved that the requirement of removal of content would only be made in extreme situations representing: (i) risk to health security of the voting process; (ii) incentive to absenteeism or other information aiming at obstructing the vote or at causing confusion to the elections conduction; (iii) encouragement to violent acts, especially, against civil servants, members and associates to the Electoral Justice System and poll workers; (iv) hate speeches; (v) evidence of inauthentic behavior; (vi) evidence of irregular financing; (vii) distortion of the source through undue use of official symbols of the Electoral Justice System; and (viii) other exceptional cases involving crimes and severe circumstances capable of negatively impact the Electoral Process.
 - In case of notes referring to evidence of coordinated inauthentic behavior and reports on companies that provided the service of massive text messaging, forwarding it to respective platform was foreseen.
- d. Forwarding to the Prosecution Office:** forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office aimed at guaranteeing the investigation of wrongful acts related to the production and

dissemination of disinformation in the elections, including for the purpose of eventual criminal liability. This is due to the fact that the Electoral Prosecution Office is competent to investigate the reports on electoral matters. The Database Committee suggested or forwarded the report to the Electoral Prosecution Office under some circumstances, including but not limited to:

- In case of disinformation not related to the Electoral Process that could constitute a wrongful electoral act, especially disinformation about a candidate, political party or coalition, the Database Committee informed the complainant of the different channels available, including the forms for reporting to the Electoral Prosecution Office, the use of the Electoral Justice System *Pardal* app and occasionally the action of the electoral court exercising the powers of police. The reports received in these cases were not recorded as notes on the database;
 - In case of disinformation about the Electoral Process subject to be understood as an electoral crime practice, like the cases of slander or defamation against members of the Electoral Justice System, forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office after communication to the attacked party was foreseen. In this process, the guarantee of freedom of speech, opinion and criticism was always privileged;
 - In case of disinformation about the Electoral Process subject to be judged as offense under articles 296 and 297 of the Electoral Code, namely ‘to promote disorders that may jeopardize the electoral work’ and ‘to hinder or obstruct the exercise of the vote, or even threat, damage to the ballot box, and other more severe wrongful acts’, forwarding the note directly to the Electoral Prosecution Office representatives in the Strategic Committees for Fighting against Disinformation or electoral prosecutor in charge was foreseen;
 - In case of notes and reports referring to companies providing services of massive text messaging, forwarding to the Public Prosecution Office was foreseen.
- e. Forwarding to the Federal Police:** in case of disinformation about the Electoral Process subject to be judged as a crime, especially the offenses under articles 296 and 297 of the Electoral Code, forwarding to the representative of the Federal Police in the Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation was foreseen.
- f. Forwarding to the Integrated Center of National Command and Control (CICCN) of the Ministry of Justice and the Federal Police:** in case of disinformation about the Electoral Process subject to be judged as a crime and notes referring to evidence of coordinated inauthentic behavior, the issue could be also forwarded to CICCN.
- g. Response to Complainant:** in case the note received through the Complaints Office was about a topic already checked or an official note, a response with existing explanations and adopted measures was sent to the voter.

- h. Notice to TRE for verification:** on the election date, whenever the note included audiovisual material where it was possible to identify the polling station or polling place of the incident, a communication to respective TRE for verification on site by the head of the section in charge was foreseen.
- i. Dismissal:** in case the note on the content including disinformation was not framed in the scope of the Program, or was subject to fact-checking or any other referral (for instance, by lack of engagement and repercussion), dismissal was foreseen.

Use of monitoring tools

The Database Committee used the following social media and Internet monitoring tools:

- a. **BuzzSumo:** a tool enabling to identifying and monitoring trends in digital communication on websites considered popular on the web (according to criteria of the platform itself), on YouTube and Twitter. Based on search by key word, the tool captures and organizes public data available on the Internet. In this sense, it enables to: (i) efficiently watch in real time how disinformation spreads on the Internet; (ii) make comparisons between different time periods; (iii) understand how official stands by TSE and Coalition partners are being shared; (iv) monitor the audience of official websites; and (v) search for the topics that are making more buzz at the moment; notably those referring to the 2020 Elections. One of the features frequently used by the Database Committee was the search for public data on YouTube, one of the main platforms used by Brazilian voters to consume contents about the Electoral Process; and
- b. **Knewin:** a tool enabling to monitoring in real time the terms of interest available on open sources, comprehending the following channels: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Google, forums and websites. The use of the tool for identifying trends and strategies of disinformation about the Electoral Process was possible based on the association with TRE/RO.

The use of both tools by the Database Committee was based on making searches by key words, referring to the most frequent terms in messages including disinformation about the Electoral Process. The key words were selected based on the experience gained with the fact-checking made by the Coalition and the operation of the TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation. As an example, the following key words were used: TSE; Electoral Justice System; electronic voting machine; fraud in the elections; Smartmatic; voting on the cell phone; voting without using masks; printed ballot; Venezuelan ballot box.

BuzzSumo and Knewin apps were also used for monitoring the repercussion of the notes for the purpose of reviewing potential referrals. To this end, Google Trends public access tool was also adopted. It allowed observing the interest of users in certain subjects, based on a regional and time cut.

Registration and long-lasting continuation of contents

The notes recorded on the database that had a URL (web address) were also registered in blockchain through the HashCool tool, in order to guarantee the perennial existence of a copy of the notes, even if the originals happened to be excluded.

HashCool consists of ‘a platform for recording digital contents, understood as digital ou digitized documents and files, as well as information available on certain URL, therefore guaranteeing due data privacy of users and their copyright.’¹ Based on blockchain technology, HashCool is used to ‘provide a long-lasting recording of digital or digitized data, aiming at assuring their existence in a given moment’ and making ‘the proof of existence of a registered electronic content possible, as well as its immutability and authenticity.’²

This tool was used by TSE for free, under a partnership with BlueTrix Tecnologia. When allowing the registration and the long-lasting keeping of any digital or digitized content, the risk that the content including disinformation gets lost or happens to be excluded is avoided, which could make an occasional investigation by competent authorities.

Outcomes

Number of notes

From the beginning of the Database Committee operation, on October 03rd, 2020, to the end of the electoral year, on December 31st, 2020, 752 notes related to contents including disinformation were reviewed and handled in order to minimize its negative effects on the Electoral Process.

Notes by period and main subjects

When segregating the number of notes by period, we have:

- **From the beginning of committee operation to the eve of the 2020 Elections first round (from November 03rd to November 14th):** 115 notes were registered.

* In this period, the main subjects and topics of the notes including disinformation were as follows: fraud in the first round of the 2018 presidential elections; electronic voting machines made in China; use of electronic voting machines only in Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela; provision of the code of voting machines to Venezuelans; impossibility to make auditing of the voting machines; voting hours for people 60 years of age or older; use of masks on the voting day.

- **On the day of the 2020 Elections first round (November 15th):** 27 notes were registered.

* In this period, the main subjects and topics of the notes including disinformation were as follows: incentive to absenteeism, boycott to the electronic voting machine and in favor of the printed ballot; data leakage due to hacker attack; distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) cyberattack; *e-Titulo* instability; hacker attack; delay in tallying of votes; centralization of tallying of votes by TSE; instability in the percentage number of votes for candidates to mayor of the city of São Paulo; decrease of votes for candidates in Tocantins;

- **From the day after of the first round to the eve of the 2020 Elections second round (from November 16th to November 28th):** 357 notes were registered.

¹ Please see <https://hash.cool/validate-legal>

² Id.

* In this period, the main subjects and topics of the notes including disinformation were as follows: data leakage due to hacker attack; distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) cyberattack; *e-Título* instability; hacker attack; delay in tallying of votes; centralization of tallying of votes by TSE; impossibility to audit the voting machines; in favor of the printed ballot; attacks to TSE President; videos on the so-called vulnerability of voting machines with prototypes created by citizens; allegations of fraud in Tocantins; Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo; annulment of the elections; acquisition of a supercomputer;

- **On the day of the second round of the 2020 Elections (November 29th):** 64 notes were registered.

* In this period, the main subjects and topics of the notes including disinformation were as follows: repercussion of the incidents in the first round; in favor of the printed ballot; attacks to TSE justices;

- **On the day after the second round to the end of the electoral year (after the elections in Macapá/AP) (from November 30th to December 31st):** 189 notes were registered.

* In this period, the main subjects and topics of the notes including disinformation were as follows: repercussion of the incidents in the first round; in favor of the printed ballot; attacks to TSE justices.

Referrals

According to pre-established criteria (see Schedule 3), the Database Committee has checks the following referrals:

- **Drafting of an official explanatory note:** 17 notes;
- **Forwarding to the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections:** 10 notes;
- **Forwarding to the platforms (or providers of the websites where the note was spread):** 210 notes;
- **Forwarding to the Public Prosecution Office:** 7 notes;
- **Forwarding to the Integrated Center of National Command and Control (Ministry of Justice and Federal Police):** 5 notes;
- **Forwarding to the complainant:** 7 notes;
- **Dismissal:** out of 506 notes, 272 had a non-fact-checkable content, 90 were out of the scope of the Program, and 144 lacked repercussion (engagement).

We must stress that the number of dismissals is related for the most part to the option for the privilege to freedom of speech in the construction of the framing or not of a certain note as including disinformation, therefore contents understood as an exercise of the right to criticism have been dismissed as being excluded from the scope of the Program or defined as non-fact-checkable.

It is noteworthy that in case of notes without repercussion and engagement identified as including disinformation, the decision to dismiss was not an immediate definition by the Database Committee. These contents were at first tagged for *measurement of repercussion*. For this assessment, both engagement and disinformation content as well as the potential of going viral and gravity of such content were taken into consideration, in order to assure the possibility to adopt measures (for example, communication to the platforms) before a wider repercussion of the content took place with a potential to negatively impact the Electoral Process.

In case of lack of repercussion, verified during the period of measurement and monitoring, the option for the dismissal was justified in order to avoid that the referrals adopted could produce an undesirable effect on encouraging disinformation. This was an especially important concern for the definition of the contents to be handled by the Coalition, as verifications of contents without repercussion have the potential to increase the dissemination of contents including disinformation.

The number of notes sent to the Coalition from the Database Committee was also impacted by the repetition of topics and contents including disinformation. When the note has already been checked or forwarded to the Coalition by other means, the referral was found unnecessary.

Analysis of trends of fake narratives against the Electoral Process

The registration of notes has allowed noticing some trends on narratives and contents including disinformation against the Electoral Process that have circulated during the 2020 municipal elections.

At first, from the beginning of the electoral period to the date of the first round of vote (November 15th), the disinformation about the Electoral Process strongly relied upon old fake narratives or disinformation zombies, i.e., false or fraudulent allegations about the voting process that had circulated during previous voting periods que that had been *recycled*, coming around again. These narratives tried to challenge the security of the electronic voting process and the credibility of the elections based on allegations on: (i) a so-called fraud in the first round of the 2018 presidential elections; (ii) a so-called Chinese origin of the electronic voting machines; (iii) a so-called use of electronic voting machines by Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela only; (iv) a so-called delivery of the source code of the electronic voting machines to the Venezuelans; and (v) a so-called impossibility to audit the Brazilian voting machines.

During this period, new disinformation contents were related especially to health instructions and protocols adopted because of the covid-19 pandemic. Disinformation narratives that have circulated about this topic could potentially suppress votes, i.e., to discourage, complicate or prevent the exercise of the right to vote. False allegations related to the pandemic included but were not limited to the following: (i) it would be possible to vote online (by cell phone or computer); (ii) voters below 60 years old would not be allowed to vote during the preferential (and not exclusive) voting hours for those above 60 years old; and (iii) people contaminated with covid-9 would not be allowed to vote.

Two other episodes influenced the spread of fake news against the Electoral Process: the hacker attack to systems pertaining to other Superior Court, the Superior Court of Justice (STJ), and the allegations of fraud aroused during the USA presidential elections, including by then-president of such country. Although having no connection with the Electoral Justice System, the cyberattack to STJ information

technology network, disclosed on November 03rd, 2020, was used to feed narratives about the frailty of the electronic voting process. Similarly, accusations of electoral frauds during the 2020 USA presidential elections – also occurred on November 03rd, 2020 – were employed to bolster disinformation speeches and contents about alleged frauds in the Brazilian elections. This has occurred despite the fact that the two countries have adopted different voting and tallying systems (in almost all American states, the ballot voting system or a mixed system is adopted, with the use of ballots and some kind of electronic equipment recording) and that allegations of fraud in USA are associated to a great extent to voting by mail – which is not adopted in Brazil. Both events provoked the resurgence and amplification of the topic of the adoption of the ballot voting on social media. A growing disinformation about the relation between Smartmatic company and the Brazilian electronic voting machines, as well as about their operation, was also noted.

From the first round of vote on November 15th, a new wave of disinformation narratives, based on technical failures and cyber incidents occurred or disclosed on this date, was noted. Briefly, on the voting day, some incidents happened on the same November 15th evening: the *e-Título* app presented some instability during the voting period; a hacker group has disclosed TSE administrative data leakage; an attempted DDoS attack was identified, but neutralized in minutes by TSE; the tallying process presented slowness above prevision, provoking a delay of approximately two hours and thirty minutes to disclose the results. TSE rapidly elucidated that none of these cyber incidents or technical failures had potentially affected the electronic voting machines, the tallying system and the election results. Nevertheless, these events have potentialized the attacks to voting machines and to the reliability of the system on social media. In this context, in a few days, the number of note recordings tripled.

After the second round, no new narrative appeared, but false allegations of frauds in the electronic voting system, discourses in defense of the ballot system and attacks to TSE justices have continued.

	<p>Saiba mais sobre o tema: A FGV DAPP, parceira do Programa que também forneceu apontamentos analisados pelo Comitê Banco de Dados, produziu pesquisa sobre os fluxos de conteúdos e eixos narrativos que apoiam a desconfiança no sistema eleitoral brasileiro nas eleições de 2020. Acesse em: https://democraciadigital.dapp.fgv.br/estudos/o-ecossistema-digital-nas-eleicoes-municipais-de-2020-no-brasil/.</p> <p>Ruediger, Marco Aurélio; Grassi, Amaro (Coord.). O ecossistema digital nas eleições municipais de 2020 no Brasil: o buzz da desconfiança no sistema eleitoral no Facebook, YouTube e Twitter. Policy paper. Rio de Janeiro: FGV DAPP, 2020.</p>
<p>Sobre comportamento inautêntico e uso de robôs nas Eleições 2020, confira: O ITS Rio, parceiro do Programa, em conjunto com os Departamentos de Informática e de Comunicação da PUC-Rio, o Instituto Nacional de Ciência e Tecnologia em Democracia Digital (INCT. DD) e o Laboratório Nacional de Computação Científica (LNCC), publicou o artigo Das Milícias Digitais ao Comportamento Coordenado: Métodos Interdisciplinares de Análise e Identificação de Bots nas Eleições Brasileiras. Acesse em: https://itsrio.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/16138-553-12848-1-10-20210709.pdf.</p> <p>SANTOS, João Guilherme Bastos dos <i>et al.</i> Das Milícias Digitais ao Comportamento Coordenado: Métodos Interdisciplinares de Análise e Identificação de Bots nas Eleições Brasileiras. <i>In:</i> BRASNAM, 10, 2021, Evento Online. Porto Alegre: Sociedade Brasileira de Computação, 2021, p. 187-192.</p>	

Engagement of digital platforms Counter fake narratives against the Electoral Process

The referral of notes to the digital platforms has evidenced their engagement in Counter disinformation about the Electoral Process, although in different degrees. Generally, the Counter Disinformation Program has relied upon a permanent dialogue and the cooperation of the digital platform partners throughout the electoral period.

The notes forwarded by the Database Committee to the platforms were analyzed in the light of respective community policies, content and behavior moderation rules and terms of use of services. One first important observation, derived from the 2020 Elections work, was that not all social media had at the time specific policies applicable to the Electoral Process. We have also identified that in some cases, even when such policies and rules did exist, they were not available in Portuguese, were not easily accessible or still were not clearly and precisely written. When it comes to the enforcement of policies and rules, we could not always understand the functioning of some platforms based on their own policies and, in some circumstances, the resources offered by the platform in order to mitigate the negative potential of disinformation contents (such as the insertion of fact-checking tagging) presented failures or were not available, which may mean to some extent an inconsistent application of such policies and rules. At last, when forwarding the notes, it was noted that one of the platform partners only had channels for requests of content suppression. However, the platforms have many mechanisms to face disinformation, including but not limited to ranking change or downranking, insertion of fact-checking tagging, demonetization, application of friction to hinder or reduce content sharing, post suppression, account suspension or ban. In this case, the notes forwarded by the Database Committee to the platform were followed by a written note that, if possible, different measures less heavy than suppression should be privileged in the light of the commitment to the preservation of freedom of speech.

Ten emblematic cases

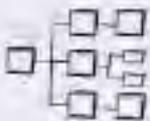
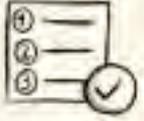
To illustrate the operation of the network for monitoring practices of disinformation about the Electoral Process, some cases analyzed and handled by the Database Committee, with their respective unfolding, are shown as follows.

The action methodology used may be described in five steps:

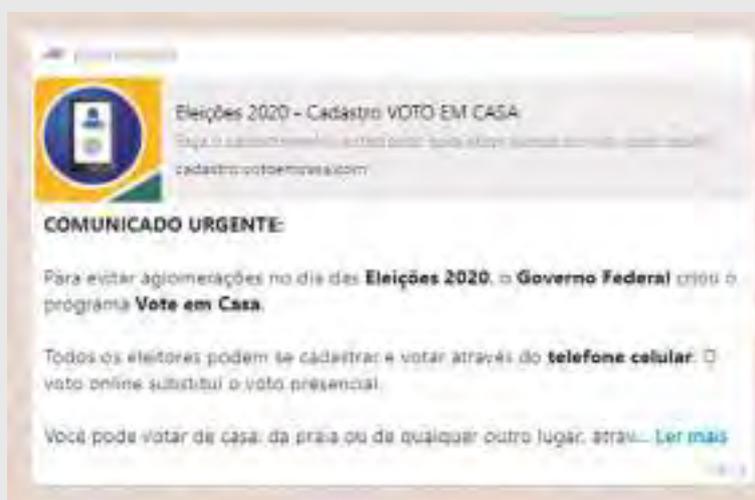
1. **Note:** *identification of potential case of disinformation about the Electoral Process.* At this stage, the Database Committee made the note to be registered, with the identification of the source (as the note has been submitted to the committee) and cataloguing. Besides, the content was eternized;
2. **Breaking down the problem:** *analysis of the note.* At this stage, the Database Committee examined the note in order to allow its understanding and classification, and defined, for instance, if the case was related to disinformation or a mere opinion and criticism; if it was a case of wrongdoing or not; if there was repercussion and engagement. With this *breakdown* of the problem, the intention was to identify eventual wrongdoings and potential negative effects on the Electoral Process;

3. **Addressing the problem:** *indication of the action to be adopted for solving the problem.* At this stage, the Database Committee indicated how to best address the note, based on pre-established criteria, allowing an action, as the case may be, to restrain the spread of the content, reducing its negative effects on the elections, ceasing the wrongdoing and promoting the investigation of the wrongdoing for eventual determination of accountability;
4. **Outcome:** *identification of the impact of the referrals given to the note.* At this stage, there was the description of concrete actions adopted as a consequence of the referral given to the note and the outcomes arising from such actions;
5. **New practice:** *occasional lessons learned from the action.* At this stage, the Database Committee reflected on the lessons learned from the process of analysis of the note, wondering if there was any practice or action that could reduce the type of incident or avoid similar situations to arise or gain repercussion.

Actions taken – real-life cases

Notes	Breaking down the problem	Referral	Outcome	New practice
				
What is the source of the note? Eternization of the note	Disinformation, cyber event, opinion, wrongdoing? Is there a significant repercussion?	Defining the referral according to the flow and based on the registered filing.	What are the concrete records and outcomes of the action? What was the communication strategy adopted?	Is there any practice that could avoid or smooth out this kind of incident?

Case 1: Voting at Home Program – Phishing



1. **Note:** text message sent by WhatsApp including a fake notice on the creation by the Federal Government of the Voting at Home program, to avoid agglomerations by the time of the 2020 Elections, allowing vote by cell phone in lieu of in-person voting. The note was reported by more than one Regional Electoral Court.
2. **Breaking down the problem:** the message was ranked as disinformation about the Electoral Process, constituting a potential electoral wrongdoing and it was identified as a case of phishing (i.e., a cybercrime where the attackers aim at tricking Internet users to reveal sensitive details and information). The reception of the note by various Regional Electoral Courts indicated that the fraudulent content was circulating in many federation states, showing a repercussion that justified the action.
3. **Referrals:**
 - Forwarding to Ascom/TSE to write an official clarification note;
 - Forwarding to the Coalition to check the content by the fact-checking agencies;
 - Forwarding to the hosting provider to take the content off the air;
 - Forwarding to (i) the Center of Studies, Response and Handling of Security Incidents in Brazil (CERT.BR), Response to Security Incidents of National Liability Group (CSIRT), supported by the Point BR-NIC Information and Coordination Unit (NIC.br), Internet Managing Committee in Brazil (CGI.br); (ii) the Center for Prevention, Handling and Response to Cyber Incidents of the Government (CTIR Gov), pertaining to the Department of Information Security (DSI) of the Office of Institutional Security of the Presidency of Brazil (GSI/PR), and (iii) the Federal Service of Data Processing (Serpro), a state-owned information technology company, to handle the incident;
 - Forwarding to the Federal Police, to investigate the wrongdoing.
4. **Outcomes:**
 - The website <https://cadastro.votoemcasa.com.br/2020> was taken off the air;
 - Issuance of an official clarification note by TSE: <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Novembro/nota-de-esclarecimento-sobre-comunicado-falso-de-cadastro-para-voto-em-casa>;
 - Disclosure of fact-checking by the agencies taking part in the Coalition: E-Farsas, Boatos.org, Fato ou Fake, AFP and UOL Confere;
 - Disclosure of links for checks on the web page *Fato ou Boato* of the Electoral Justice System: the federal government has not created the Voting at Home program; the sign-up is fake and may pose risks;
 - Investigation by the Federal Police.

- 5. New practice:** definition of a protocol to forwarding the cases of phishing through disinformation about the Electoral Process.

Case 2: Sale of personal details for mass text messaging during the elections period



- 1. Note:** advertisement of sale of database including voters' WhatsApp phone numbers to candidates and electoral campaigns, for mass text messaging. The note was reported in an article published in *Folha de São Paulo* newspaper at <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2020/10/empresas-burlam-regras-e-mantem-disparos-em-massa-de-mensagens-eleitorais.shtml>.
- 2. Breaking down the problem:** the ad was ranked as a potential electoral wrongdoing (violation of the prohibition of sale of email addresses and prohibition of mass text messaging).
- 3. Referrals:**
 - Forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office (MPE) to investigate the wrongdoing;
 - Forwarding to WhatsApp.
- 4. Outcomes:**
 - Opening of investigation by MPE and issuance of recommendation to the political parties on the subject (<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2020/10/ministerio-publico-abre-investigacao-sobre-disparos-em-massa-na-eleicao-municipal.shtml>);
 - Issuance of out-of-court notice by WhatsApp to the company asking for the interruption of the activity violating the app terms of use (<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2020/10/empresas-burlam-regras-e-mantem-disparos-em-massa-de-mensagens-eleitorais.shtml>).
- 5. New practice:** the program partners were warned about the incident and the need to draw attention to the subject.

Case 3: Non-Authorized App to make mass text messaging via WhatsApp



- 1. Note:** identification of the app for mass text messaging via WhatsApp (GBWhatsApp), non-authorized by WhatsApp Inc., and irregularly offered outside the app play stores. The note was reported by a citizen to STI/TSE.
- 2. Breaking down the problem:** the app was ranked as an instrument for mass text messaging and, therefore, as a potential practice of electoral wrongdoing (violation of the prohibition of mass text messaging).
- 3. Referrals:**
 - Forwarding to WhatsApp to take measures against inadequate use of the app;
 - Forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office.
- 4. Outcomes:**
 - It was impossible to detect the operation of the app during the Electoral Process;
 - The Electoral Prosecution Office of the 1st Electoral District of São Paulo opened an investigation that lead to the company retiring from providing services.
- 5. New practice:** reporting spurious programs or unofficial apps to the platforms to allow them to adopt measures against the violation of their established terms of use.

Case 4: Video disseminating recycled disinformation posted by a digital influencer



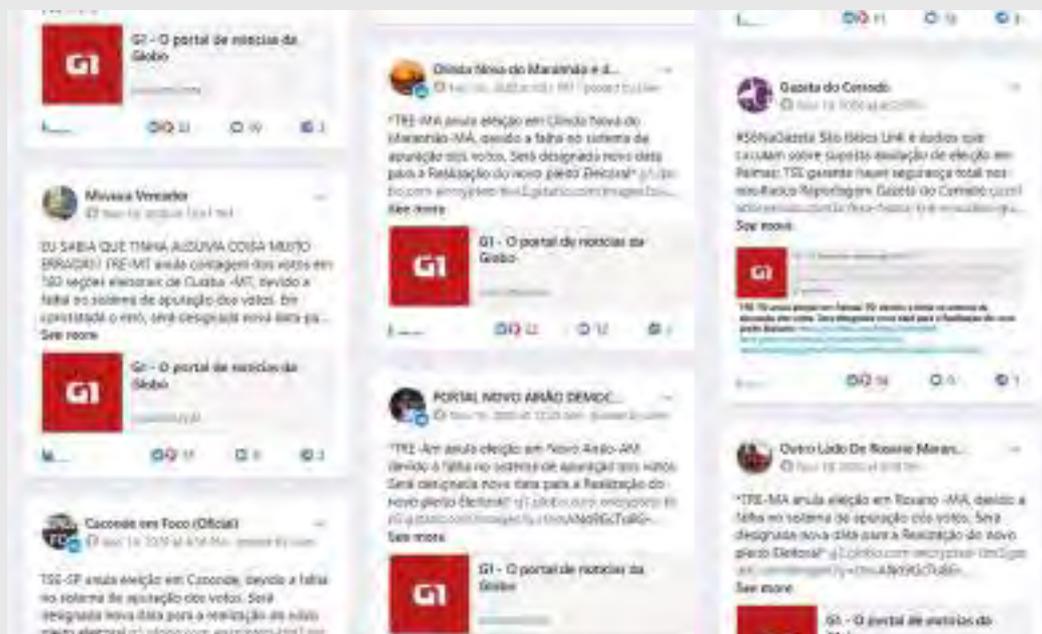
1. **Note:** a businessman and digital influencer with great number of followers has posted a video on Twitter where two policemen from the Federal District reported alleged irregularities in electronic voting machines. The note was reported to TRE/RJ.
2. **Breaking down the problem:** it was verified that the video included old disinformation, recycled from the 2018 Elections, which has already been checked and investigated by the Public Prosecution Office. The investigation led to the conviction of the people involved for crime of hindrance of electoral work, considering that the actions made by the policemen reinforced fake news related to electoral fraud. The fake news has already been clarified by TSE in 2018: <https://www.tse.jus.br/hotsites/esclarecimentos-informacoes-falsas-eleicoes-2018/policiais-militares-divulgam-irregularidades-urnas-eletronicas-df.html>. It was verified that the video was circulating again on WhatsApp.
3. **Referrals:**
 - Forwarding to Ascom/TSE to issue an official clarification note;
 - Forwarding to the Coalition;
 - Forwarding to Twitter.
4. **Outcomes:**
 - The post was tagged by the platform as follows: 'this claim of fraud has been defended';

- Twitter has created a Moments, including posts with the checks made by the fact-checking agencies, as well as clarifications provided by TSE about the security of the voting process. See at <https://twitter.com/i/events/1318688256586739712?s=12>;



- After Ascom/TSE has got in contact, the profile that has made the posting has recanted with a new tweet;
 - Announcement of the news with an official clarification note by TSE: <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Outubro/nota-de-esclarecimento-sobre-2018fakes2019-de-2018-envolvendo-urnas-que-voltaram-a-circular-nos-ultimos-dias>;
 - Sharing of fact-checking by agencies taking part in the Coalition: Aos Fatos, Boatos.org, Lupa, Fato ou Fake, AFP and Estadão Verifica;
 - Sharing of links for fact-checking on the *Fato ou Boato* webpage of the Electoral Justice System: Fake news posted in 2018 about voting machines are circulating again on the media, but have already been denied.
5. **New practice:** a new possibility for addressing the problem has been created in case of posts of disinformation contents, namely, the direct contact with influencers or media outlets responsible for the message, in order to convey correct information and clarifications.

Case 5: Posts containing false information on cancellation of the elections due to alleged tallying system failure

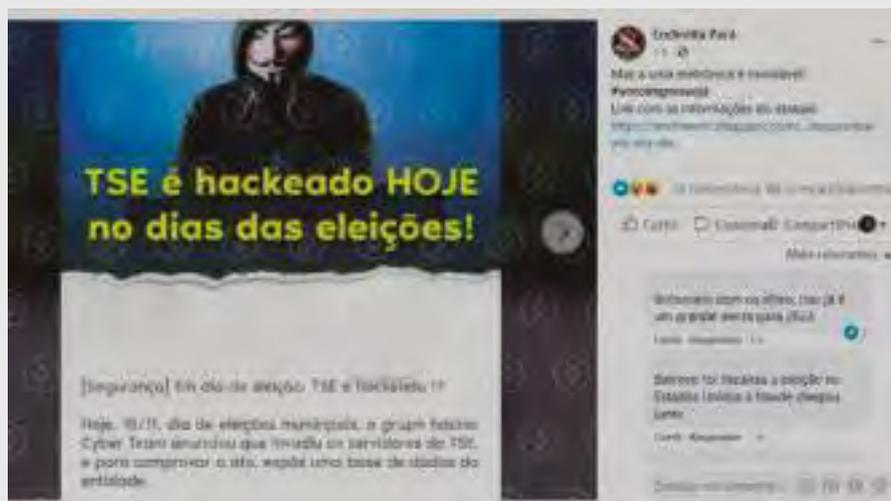


1. **Note:** various posts published on Facebook have wrongly claimed that TSE had cancelled or annulled the voting process in the first round of the 2020 Elections in numerous cities, due to a tallying system failure. Similar messages related to different cities and states (including Amazonas, Bahia, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Maranhão, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco e Paraná) have been identified. The message had a fake link to a well-known news portal, which warned the person clicking on the link that it was a lie.
2. **Breaking down the problem:** it was verified that the posts included disinformation with a potential effect on vote suppression.
3. **Referrals:**
 - Forwarding to Ascom/TSE to issue an official clarification note;
 - Forwarding to the Coalition;
 - Forwarding to Facebook.
4. **Outcomes:**
 - Facebook has made available the *Megafone* tool on the platform to remember its users of the date of the second round of vote;
 - Issuance of an official clarification note by TSE: <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Novembro/nota-de-esclarecimento-sobre-noticias-falsas-a-respeito-de-anulacao-de-eleicoes>;
 - Disclosure of fact-checking made by the agencies taking part in the Coalition: Boatos.org, Fato ou Fake and Lupa;

- Sharing of links to fact-checking on the *Fato ou Boato* webpage of the Electoral Court System: Elections throughout the country have not been annulled by fraud in the electronic voting system or in the tallying system.

5. **New practice:** potential adoption by the platforms of immediate counter-information technological solutions of a greater reach.

Case 6: Post on cyberattack followed by administrative data leakage



1. **Note:** post made on the day of the first round of the 2020 Elections by a hacker group, which reported a cyber incident followed TSE administrative data leakage, as well as other posts spreading the event.
2. **Breaking down the problem:** it was verified that the cyberattack and the administrative data leakage were criminal wrongdoings. Besides, it was identified that the alleged invasion to the Court administrative systems has occurred previously the election day, so the post included disinformation about the moment of the attack, aiming at affecting the credibility of the electronic voting system and bringing prejudice to the 2020 Elections.

3. Referrals:

- Forwarding to the Federal Police to investigate the facts and identify authorship;
- Forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office;
- Forwarding to Ascom/TSE to write an official clarification note;
- Forwarding to the Coalition;
- Forwarding to the platforms in question (Twitter and Facebook);
- Forwarding to Safernet, a Program partner, which is a reference in facing crimes and violations of human rights on the web, to follow-up the unfolding on social media.

4. Outcomes:

- Twitter suspended the account of the group claiming the attack due to violation of the platform policies;
- Press conference called upon by TSE President to explain that the attempts of cyberattacks did not have the potential to interfere with the elections results and were not able to reach the electronic voting machines;
- Disclosure by TSE of a technical note about the cause of the incident of delay in the tallying process: <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Novembro/tse-divulga-nota-tecnica-sobre-o-atraso-da-totalizacao-dos-votos-no-primeiro-turno>;
- Disclosure of fact-checking by agencies taking part in the Coalition: Comprova; Aos Fatos; Estadão Verifica; Boatos.org, Lupa, Fato ou Fake and AFP;
- Sharing of links for the fact-checking on the *Fato ou Boato* webpage of the Electoral Justice System: Attempt of hacker attack to TSE does not violate the security of the voting machines;
- Institution of a police investigation by the Federal Police;
- Creation of the Cybersecurity Commission of the Electoral Superior Court by TSE Ordinance nº 829/2020, to follow-up the Federal Police investigation about cyberattacks on the day of the first round of the 2020 municipal elections (November 15th) and to monitor threats of cyberattacks to TSE and the Electoral Justice System;
- Before the second round day, the Federal Police triggered an operation to dismantle the crime group that would have promoted the invasion of TSE administrative systems, disclosed in the 2020 Elections first round period, leading to the enforcement, in Brazil, of three search warrants and three provisional remedies prohibiting the contact between the investigated people, and, in Portugal, of an arrest warrant and a search warrant.

5. **New practice:** to cope with cyber threats and false fraudulent narratives arising from incidents of this kind, the TSE Cyber Intelligence Committee, mentioned herein below, was structured.

Case 7: Post encouraging absenteeism through attempt to bypass the requirements for electoral justifications on the *e-Título* app



1. **Note:** disclosure of video that would allegedly teach how to bypass the requirements of being outside the electoral circumscription, necessary for the justification of absence in the polling places through the *e-Título* app. The tutorial tried to teach how to alter localization by georeferencing with the help of an app called Fake GP location.
2. **Breaking down the problem:** a case of disinformation with encouragement to absenteeism and vote suppression was identified.
3. **Referral:** forwarding to the platform in question (YouTube).
4. **Outcome:** the video was taken off the air by YouTube due to violation of the platform policies;
5. **New practice:** the need to stress the institutional campaigns for the encouragement to vote and discouragement of absenteeism.

Case 8: Video claiming false divergence between the Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin and TSE results



- 1. Note:** video showing alleged divergence when comparing the votes taken by a candidate, in the city of Rio Branco, State of Acre, to the printed Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin showing the result disclosed by TSE app, claiming fraud and the need to take measures. The video has circulated on difference social media, including FaceBook, Instagram and Twitter.
- 2. Breaking down the problem:** a case of disinformation with false allegation of fraud was identified, because the video compares results obtained by the candidate in different polling stations. On TSE app, shown on a cell phone, the polling station reported was station number 9, but the Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin showed data from station number 1, which justified the information divergence.
- 3. Referrals:**
 - Forwarding to TRE/AC to investigate the issue and give explanations;
 - Forwarding to Ascom/TSE to write an official clarification note;
 - Forwarding to the Coalition;
 - Forwarding to the platforms in question (FaceBook, Instagram and Twitter).
- 4. Outcome:**
 - Issuance of an official clarification note by TSE: <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Novembro/nota-de-esclarecimento-sobre-video-que-compara-dados-de-boletim-de-urna-e-aplicativo-do-tse>;
 - Disclosure of fact-checking by agencies taking part in the Coalition: E-Farsas, Lupa, aos Fatos, AFP and Fato ou Fake;

- Sharing of links to fact-checking on the *Fato ou Boato* webpage of the Electoral Justice System: Video showing divergence between an Electronic Voting Machine Bulletin and TSE system is deceitful;
- Some of the contents were removed from the platforms, some of them had a warning of fake content included and some others remained.

5. **New practice:** no new practice.

Case 9: Profile with wrongful use of TSE logo to make a survey

1. **Note:** profile on Instagram with 2020 Elections and TSE logos with link to a survey about councilors of municipalities in the State of Piauí. The wrongdoing was reported by TRE/PI.

2. **Breaking the problem:** a case of disinformation through wrongful use of TSE logo/identity to encourage users to answer to a poll potentially featuring fake profile and electoral wrongdoing was identified.

3. **Referrals:**

- Forwarding to the platform in question (Instagram);
- Exchange of information with TRE/PI to take actions.

4. **Outcome:**

- Instagram took the page/profile off the air;
- TRE/PI forwarded the case to the Electoral Prosecution Office to investigation.

5. **New practice:** no new practice.

Case 10: Video allegedly showing the possibility of fraud in an electronic voting machine by the use of a homemade prototype



1. **Note:** video circulating on social media and text-message apps showing a homemade prototype of an electronic voting machine in order to claim allegedly ease to fraud electronic

voting machines and change the destination of votes. The video had been posted on YouTube and replicated by various users, including on private text messaging apps and other platforms, such as FaceBook.

2. Breaking down the problem: a case of disinformation based on the use of a prototype was identified. Such prototype had nothing in common with the real voting machine used by the Electoral Justice System and did not have the same security features. It was used to create a narrative of frailty of the voting machines and ease to frauds. A potential of repercussion of content was identified, as it had more than 15 thousand sharings on FaceBook.

3. Referrals:

- Forwarding to Ascom/TSE to write an official clarification note;
- Forwarding to the Coalition;
- Forwarding to the platforms in question (YouTube, Instagram and Facebook).

4. Outcome:

- Facebook inserted in different postings of the video the tag ‘decontextualized’, warning that ‘this information was checked by independent fact-checkers in other posting’, and showing a link to fact-checking and explaining that ‘independent fact-checkers state that this information is decontextualized and may deceive people’. See an example of the labeling on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/924175858008818/permalink/1060526411040428/>;
- YouTube has not adopted measures related to various postings of the video in its platform, as it considered that the video content did not violate its policies;
- Issuance of an official clarification note by TSE: <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Novembro/nota-de-esclarecimento-sobre-video-com-suposto-sistema-para-fraudar-urna-eletronica>;
- Disclosure of fact-checking by agencies taking part in the Coalition: Boato.org, Aos Fatos, Lupa, Fato ou Fake and Comprova;
- Sharing of links for fact-checking on the *Fato ou Boato* webpage of the Electoral Justice System: The video does not prove that the voting machine system may be defrauded;
- The youtuber who has published the original post has deleted the video from his channel and posted a new one where he stated that the previous post did not refer to a real voting machine, that he did not alleged the existence of fraud in the voting machines and that his video had been maliciously edited, removing parts, in order to suggest a proof of a real potential of fraud.

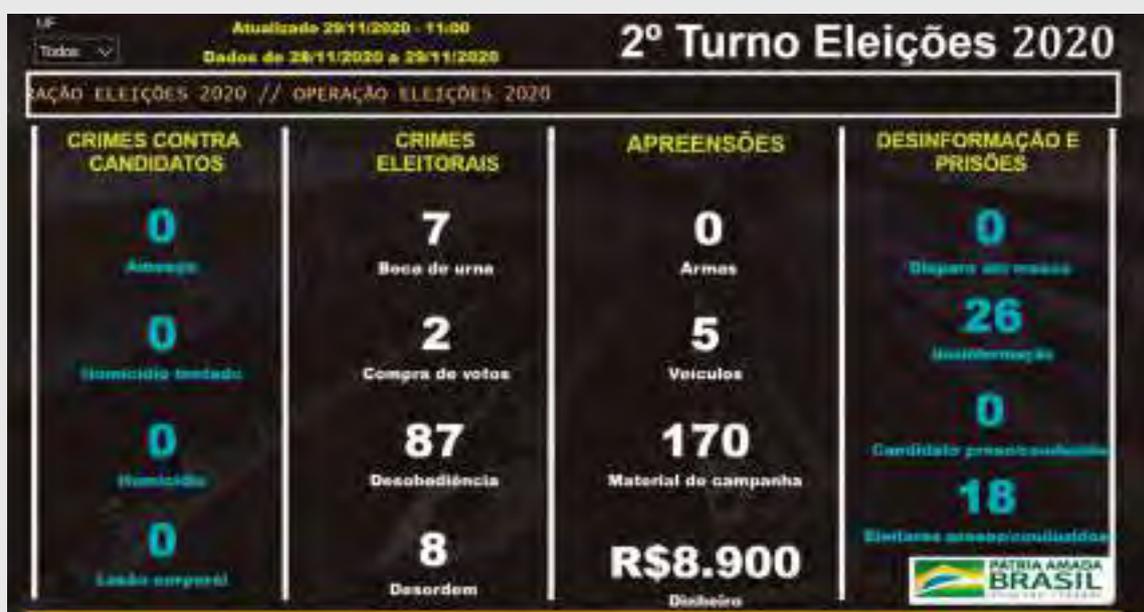
5. **New practice:** no new practice.

Network for monitoring practices of disinformation about the Electoral Process – Outcomes

752 notes related to disinformation contents and handled in order to minimize their effects on the Electoral Process were analyzed.

C. Partnership with the Integrated Center of National Command and Control (CICCN) of the Ministry of Justice and cooperation with the Federal Police

TSE has established a partnership with the Integrated Center of National Command and Control (CICN), under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice, in order to monitor, identify and restrain the disinformation practice on the Web. Based on the interaction with TSE and the Counter Disinformation Program, the monitoring panel of the Integrated Center of National Command and Control established a specific rate related to disinformation in 2020.



Throughout the weekends of the first and the second rounds of vote, the Court reported to the Integrated Center of National Command and Control the number of notes potentially including disinformation about the Electoral Process, received both by the Database Committee and the Coalition. On the election days, TSE forwarded four interim reports from 10 am to 8 pm including updated data to be taken into account in the disinformation rates.

Deployment

On October 16th, 2020, the Integrated Center of National Command and Control for the 2020 Elections was established by entering into a cooperation agreement between the Federal Police and the Integrated Operations Department of the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety. The agreement was executed during an event that hosted TSE President, Justice Luís Roberto Barroso, the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety, André Mendonça, and the Director General of the Federal Police, Rolando de Souza. At

this time, the creation of a rate for specific monitoring related to electoral disinformation, as well as the tools and systems to fight against fake news, was debated.

Throughout the electoral period, TSE has acted in the scope of CICCEN – 2020 Elections by way of cooperation, with follow-up by the members of TSE Special Security and Intelligence Advisory Board (which also took part in the Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation), and monitoring of eventual incidents made in real time by the Center.

Besides CICCEN – 2020 Elections work, TSE has invited the Federal Public Prosecution Office and the Federal Police to participate in actions in the scope of the Program in the 2020 municipal elections, through cooperation in the scope of the TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation and the creation of an instant communication group with union representatives, in order to allow a more swiftly identification of the situations arising from disinformation practices against the Electoral Process, as well as the adoption of measures to mitigate their negative effects.

Partnership between TSE and 2020 Elections Integrated Center of National Command and Control – Outcomes

Insertion of specific rates related to disinformation in CICCEN – 2020 Elections monitoring panel

2.3 New strategies for Counter disinformation in response to 2020 Elections challenges

During the 2020 Elections, TSE had to adopt new strategies for Counter disinformation not anticipated at first in the strategic plan of the Counter Disinformation Program, aiming at responding to concrete incidents checked. The comprehensive multidisciplinary nature of the disinformation phenomenon asks for solutions and measures for coping with it that may be rapidly adapted, in order to allow effective responses to new challenges and different ways of spreading disinformation narratives and contents.

In particular, the challenges faced by the cyber security industry and the instability identified in some TSE online services and apps, during the first round of the 2020 municipal elections, gave rise to a wave of fake narratives about the security of the electronic voting process and potential electoral fraud. After these incidents, the Managing Group identified the need to embed in the Program strategies of communication and response to cyber incidents and non-availability (scheduled or not) of TSE online systems, apps and services.

2.3.1 Cyber Intelligence Committee

As early as in the second round of the 2020 Elections, TSE Counter Disinformation Program started to count on a Cyber Intelligence Committee. Such committee was created immediately after the first round of vote aiming at assuring the formulation of quick responses to any potential cyber incidents during the Electoral Process, including through a swift and accurate institutional communication about such events. It was noted that hacker attacks of different kinds (such as data leakage, denial-of-service attacks and ransomware attacks) may be one of the components of influence operations against the integrity of the Electoral Process, through attempts to create disinformation campaigns and narratives

about alleged lack of reliability of the voting and tallying systems. In these circumstances, disinformation may be potentialized by the lack or delay in disclosing specific information on the event, causing information/data voids. Thus the significance of structuring a committee, with pre-established flows, to make a swift analysis of the situation viable and support the decision-making process and the disclosure of clear accurate press releases and reports to the public in general.

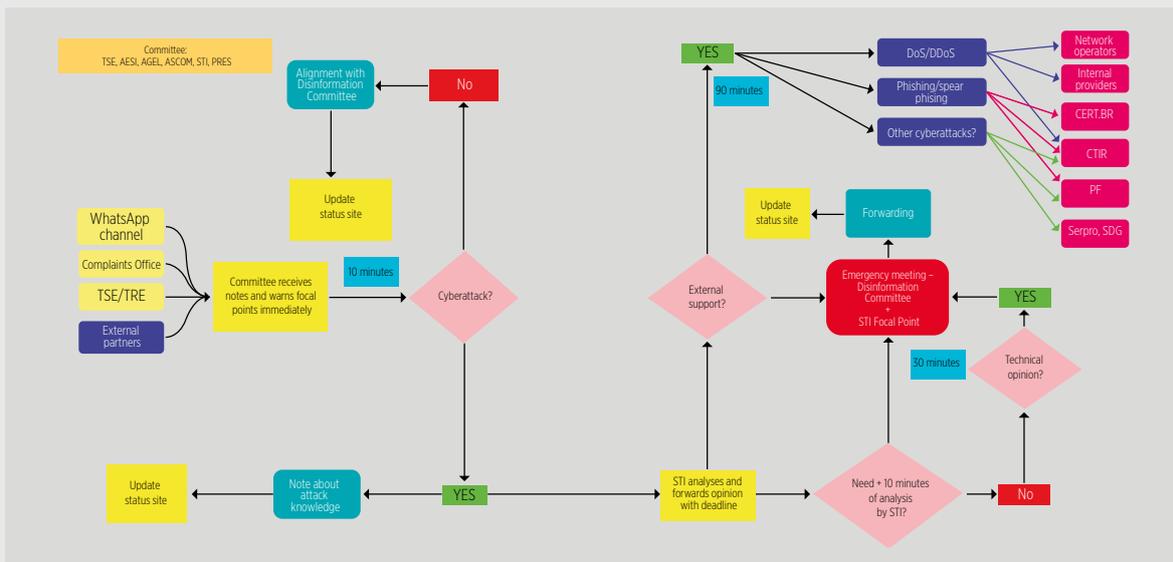
Deployment

The Cyber Intelligence Committee is composed of members of the Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation, the Program Managing Group, TSE Presidency, Ascom/TSE, STI/TSE, the Electoral Management Advisory Board, and the Office of the Director General of the Court. The committee work has followed a pre-established work flow.

During the committee structuring period, a network composed of TSE partners and service providers able to cooperate with the Court to respond to eventual cyber incidents was formed. The committee partners included but were not limited to Serpro, Federal Police, CTIR, CERT.br, Nupef, SaferNet, DFR Lab, ITS Rio, FGV DAPP, Instituto Igarapé. Major TSE technology and infrastructure service providers, such as Oracle, Oi and Akamai, have also worked with the committee.

The committee, through the coordinated work and continuous dialogue with partners and service providers, aimed at monitoring and gathering data, developing expertise and intelligence that allowed the Court to make more rapidly decisions about security and information, and transforming reactive actions into proactive ones.

Cyber Intelligence Committee – Work flow



The committee has established an action flow for the identification of any cyber event or incident. A time period of no more than ten minutes was set for STI/TSE to identify the incident and give preliminary information to the Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation, the Court Presidency, Ascom/TSE, and to the Regional Electoral Courts, making communication actions related to the event viable.

If the event required more than ten minutes to be coped with, an emergency meeting for coping with TSE incidents within thirty minutes was convened, in order to respond with accurate information on the incident. If external support to respond to the incident was needed, a time period of ninety minutes was defined for mobilization and actions by partners, and follow-up by the Strategic Committee for Fighting against Disinformation.

In order to make a quick response viable, other improvements in communication were implemented and disclosed to the Regional Electoral Courts. As an example, by order of TSE Presidency, the Information Technology Department (STI/TSE) appointed a spokesperson to monitoring all the department's business and replicate information in real time to the Presidency, Ascom/TSE and Regional Electoral Courts.

Outcomes

The Cyber Intelligence Committee has operated from the second round of vote to the end of the electoral period, but no cyber incident requesting its attention was verified in this period.

2.3.2 Service status page

In order to check the transparency and to allow a quick access to information on potential instability of the systems and apps of the Electoral Justice System, after the first round of the 2020 Elections, TSE has created an online service performance and status page for the Court and the Electoral Justice System, which has been steadily updated until the end of the electoral period. The page has allowed voters, Regional Electoral Courts, press and citizens in general to get information on eventual instability and non-availability, as well as scheduled suspensions of services.

The status page was created after incidents of non-availability of services during the first round of vote. Failures and oscillations in the *e-Título* app and other online services, provoked by access overload, were also used to the creation of fake narratives about the security of the electronic voting process.

The status page may be found at <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Novembro/veja-aqui-o-status-sobre-a-disponibilidade-dos-servicos-durante-o-2o-turno-das-eleicoes-2020>.

Deployment

The status page of digital service availability and performance was created by STI/TSE, supported by Ascom/TSE, from a request of the Program Managing Group. Due to the short time to set up the page, a solution needing manual data feeding was adopted.

The page allowed the follow-up in real time of the status and performance of all online services provided by TSE and the Electoral Justice System. It has been framed to assure the identification of eventual cases of services with scheduled suspension, instability ou non-availability. The page also provided information on the channels available to receive reports of eventual problems.

3. Performance status of work plan goals

The Strategic Plan of the Counter Disinformation Program has provided a work plan composed of general actions and specific goals to be met in each of the 6 axes of the Program. In aggregate, 16 general actions, broken down in 52 specific goals, have been established.

During the implementation of the Program, oriented by a work plan, it was verified that the goals set had been satisfactorily achieved during the 2020 Elections.

Next, the performance status of each of the goals and actions set in the work plan, included in the Program Strategic Plan, will be broken down.

3.1 Axis 1 – Internal organization

This axis aims at integrating and coordinating the levels and areas composing the Electoral Justice System, and also defining respective competencies in order to assure that the work is in tune with the objective of Counter disinformation.

Action 1: Creation of the position of digital coordinator for fighting disinformation

Objective: To appoint a technology expert as digital coordinator for fighting disinformation.

Goal 1: *To appoint a technology expert as digital coordinator for fighting disinformation.*

In September 2020, the Program started to rely upon the work of Thiago Rondon, a technology expert, with large experience as developer of civic technologies and participant in government open data projects and applications promoting the participation in the democratic process. In the scope of the Program, he started to work as Digital Coordinator for Fighting Disinformation.

Such coordinator had as main tasks the design of digital strategic actions in the 2020 Elections to fight against intentional disinformation about the Electoral Process. The digital strategies designed included but were not limited to: (i) the creation of a network of disseminators of reliable information on the Electoral Process (#EuVotoSemFake campaign); (ii) the creation of a pool for sending notices about the Electoral Process through the Electoral Justice System apps; (iii) the creation of a network monitoring disinformation practices harmful to the Electoral Process; (iv) the production of knowledge and articles about the Program for dissemination on TSE website and on other media outlets; and (v) the implementation of a work methodology in order to assure a more speedy communication among the internal units and partners.

Goal 2: *To produce documents summing up the actions, lessons learned and proposals to enhance the Counter disinformation work to be disclosed after the Elections.*

This report includes a summary of the actions developed in 2020 with the participation of the digital coordinator for fighting disinformation, as well as lessons learned to enhance the



Counter disinformation work. Additionally, in the second semester 2021, the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan shall be published. Such publication shall include the guidelines of the Permanent Counter Disinformation Program in the Electoral Process and the proposals and actions to be implemented focused on the 2022 Elections.

Action 2: Establishment of the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation

Objective: To create the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation in the scope of TSE, as well as to encourage the establishment of similar committees in the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts.

Goal 1: *To request and obtain from each Regional Electoral Court the appointment of one representative (focal point) to take part in the TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation by way of official letters to the Regional Electoral Courts.*

Through the Official Letter GAB/SPR n° 355/2020, the Regional Electoral Courts have been requested to appoint a representative to act as a focal point for fighting against disinformation in respective Electoral Regional Board. In response to the Official Letter, all Regionals Courts effectively appointed representatives. The focal points for fighting against disinformation in the Regional Electoral Courts became members of an instant communication group together with the members of TSE Executing Committee, and participated in an orientation meeting. During all the electoral period, a continuous dialogue was held with the focal points.



Goal 2: *To create and frame the TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation, through the definition of a work flow, representatives' tasks, scope of performance and deadlines for the assessment of the situation and dissemination of occasional counter-information, considering the gravity and the urgency of different scenarios.*

The following representatives were appointed to take part in the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation: (i) from the Presidency Office; (ii) from the Communication Advisory Board (Ascom/TSE); (iii) from the Information Technology Department (STI/TSE); (iv) from the Special Security and Intelligence Advisory Board Aesi/TSE); (v) from the Electoral Management Advisory Board (Agel/TSE); and (vi) from the Modernization, Strategic and Social Environmental Management Department (SMG). All representatives became members of the instant communication group to provide opinions or immediate forwarding within the scope of tasks of each sector. The Committee also had a division oriented to registration and proposal of referrals of notes and reporting of disinformation, called Database Committee. This Committee was composed of eight TSE participants. To guide its operation, a work flow (Schedule 2) was created and pre-established criteria were defined (Schedule 3) to guide its actions and how to address each registered note.



Goal 3: *To define and invite additional members of TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation able to contribute to reach its purposes.*



TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation have been created at first with (i) four representatives from the Presidency Office; (ii) two representatives from the Communication Advisory Board (Ascom/TSE); (iii) one representative from the Information Technology Department (STI/TSE); (iv) one representative from Special Security and Intelligence Advisory Board (Aesi/TSE); (v) one representative from the Electoral Management Advisory Board (Agel/TSE); and (vi) one representative from the Modernization, Strategic and Social Environmental Management Department (SMG). In September and October 2020, meetings were held with the members of the Strategic Committee. During the electoral period, due to the heavy workload and the cybersecurity challenges, other civil servants from Aesi, Agel, Ascom and STI, both in the Database Committee and the Cyber Intelligence Committee, as well as assistants from the Advisory Board Supporting Substitute Justices and from the Court Secretary Office, joined the Strategic Committee.

Goal 4: *To provide information, guidelines and strategies to the Regional Electoral Courts in order that they could implement strategic committees internally, with TSE cooperation.*



On October 02nd, October 20th and November 12th, 2020, online meetings were held where the main guidelines were presented and doubts from the Regional Electoral Courts interested in implement the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation in their venues were dispelled. During all the electoral period, a continuous dialogue between TSE Committee and the local Committees was held within the instant communication group that had been created (Strategic Committee Group). At the end, on December 16th, a meeting for the assessment and perspectives for 2021 was held.

Goal 5: *To create virtual communication groups allowing a quick interaction between TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation with the focal points for fighting against disinformation in the Regional Electoral Courts, as well as the fact-checking agencies and other Program strategic partners.*



Many instant interaction groups in text messaging apps were created, providing promptness and efficiency to the work. Some examples were as follows: (i) Disinformation Group – Executing Team, composed of the members of the Program Executing Team for strategic decisions; (ii) Coalition for Fact-Checking Group, composed of TSE representatives, focal points from the Regional Electoral Courts and representatives from fact-checking organizations; (iii) TSE/TRE Strategic Committee Group, composed of representatives from TSE and the Regional Electoral Courts; (iv) TSE Strategic Committee Group; (v) Database Committee Group; (vi) Civil Society Group, with partners from academia and civil society; (vii) group with representatives from government institutions, including the Federal Police and the Electoral Prosecution Office (MPE); and (viii) Cyber Intelligence Group, with TSE civil servants.

3.2 Axis 2 – Media and Information Literacy

This axis aims at raising awareness about the operation and impact of the disinformation phenomenon, as well as capacity building, in order to identify and check disinformation and to understand the Electoral Process, notably the electronic voting process. The actions oriented to the internal public have prioritized the lessons learned when understanding the disinformation phenomenon and the capacity building to deal with it. The actions oriented to the external public have prioritized the lessons learned

when understanding the disinformation; encouragement to the exercise of critical thinking in face of the information received; encouragement to not disseminate doubtful information; recommendation of tools and resources to check information; awareness raising of the importance of personal details; and information on the Electoral Process, especially when it comes to the operation and security of the electronic voting machines.

Action 1: Capacity building for the internal public on disinformation

Objective: To empower justices, civil servants and associates of the Electoral Justice System to understand and face the disinformation problem.

Goal 1: *To attend the workshops at Stages 2 and 3 of the Project of Systemic Fighting against Disinformation in the 2020 Elections, implementing the suggestions developed by TSE Work Groups to the axes of checking and improvement.*

The Project of Systemic Fighting against Disinformation in the 2020 Elections, promoted by the Movement for Fighting against Electoral Corruption (MCCE) and the Instituto Tecnologia e Equidade (IT&E), both partners of the Program, has been developed online, to build capacity of the Electoral Justice System and MPE civil servants on systemic thinking, with support to the development of action plans for the systemic fighting against disinformation in the 2020 Elections. Representatives of the Program Executing Team and from TSE Strategic Committee have attended the workshops, in which the TSE Work Group has presented plans for: (i) structuring the elections watching program through capacity building, proactive disclosure and production of counter-information; and (ii) entering into partnerships with platforms. The short-term suggestions were considered both in the design of the strategic plan and its execution. The medium- and long-term proposals shall be embodied into the 2021/2022 strategic plan.



Goal 2: *To promote, together with the digital platforms partners of the Program, events for the Regional Electoral Courts civil servants and judges, in order that they could learn the operation of each one of them and get to better identify disinformation in their scope and to promote actions to prevent its dissemination, as well as to report violations of their terms of use.*

The digital platforms partners of the Program have promoted many events and training sessions to TSE and Regional Electoral Courts civil servants on the operation of their platforms and actions related to fighting against disinformation in each one of them. As an example, some of their initiatives are listed below.



Facebook/Instagram/WhatsApp. Representatives of Facebook Brasil, also authorized by WhatsApp Inc., have promoted training sessions for the Regional Electoral Courts and Polling Stations civil servants, with explanations about the operation of the platforms, measures for fighting against disinformation adopted by them, practical aspects of electoral litigation and measures being adopted to prepare to the 2020 Elections, and a Q&A session at the end. Training sessions took place on September 08th and 18th, 2020, and involved all the Regional Electoral Courts in the 27 Federation states.

Google. Google Brasil has offered training for the capacity building for TSE and Regional Electoral Courts civil servants, from two perspectives: (i) training of the communication teams to support the fact-checking process and the dissemination of information during the electoral period; and (ii) training of judges and civil servants providing information about the operation of Google and YouTube platforms, their policies and operation of the reporting channels, in order to assure a more effective action during the electoral period. Training sessions took place on September 21st and 25th, 2020.

Twitter. Twitter has offered training sessions for TSE and the Regional Electoral Courts communication teams on the app best practices, as well as training sessions for TRE judges and civil servants providing explanations about the operation of the platform, the community policies and the practical aspects of electoral litigation. The training sessions took place on September 23rd and 30th, 2020.

TikTok. TikTok has offered a training session and support to TSE communication team about the operation of the platform, providing guidance to support video production and therefore assure the dissemination of official information. Training session took place on September 25th, 2020.

Goal 3: *To distribute guidebooks and other educational materials about the major application service providers to the Regional Electoral Courts.*

In association with TSE, many application service providers have created and distributed guidebooks and informative materials aiming at deepening knowledge on the operation of the platforms and the actions for Counter disinformation in each one of them.



WhatsApp has produced a guidebook containing information about the measures for the app security, integrity and transparency, tips to help users to avoid the spread of rumors and fake news, in addition to important elements in the cooperation with the Electoral Justice System.

Facebook Brasil has produced two guidebooks containing practical information about Facebook and Instagram platforms, information about fighting against abuse and digital electoral litigation. Besides, contents recorded with explanations about Facebook tools and the actions concerning the 2020 Elections were made available.

Goal 4: *To provide poll workers with information about disinformation on the operation of the electronic voting system in the scope of poll workers' training.*



Due to covid-19 pandemic, poll workers have been trained mainly through *Mesário* app and via Moodle, a distance education platform. In the training offered to poll workers, through both channels, the topics covered included but were not limited to: (i) tips to Counter disinformation; and (ii) information about the Electoral Process and the electronic voting machine security. Besides, the Electoral Justice System disclosed useful information about the organization of the elections, health protocols and clarifications about fake news to poll workers through the notifications center unit in *Mesários* app.

Action 2: Capacity building for internal and external publics about the Electoral Process

Objective: To build the capacity of judges, civil servants and associates of the Electoral Justice System, as well as of the Program partners, journalists and a broader external public about the Electoral Process in order that they could: (i) act as disseminators of truthful information about the Electoral Process, in general, and about the security of the electronic voting system, in particular; and (ii) have adequate truthful information about the Electoral Process to exercise their rights.

Goal 1: *To review and improve the distance learning course Por Dentro do Processo Eleitoral (Inside the electoral process) in order that it could be launched in 2020.*



In May 2020, for the first time, *Por Dentro do Processo Eleitoral* course was taught for a pilot class as part of the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections. The course produced by TSE Personnel Management Department (SGP), with the follow-up of the Program Managing Group, aimed at providing the participant with the knowledge of the Electoral Process in order to be able to fight against disinformation. It is split into four modules on the following topics: Elections Overview, Security of the Electoral Process; Transparency and Oversight; Counter Disinformation. Members of the Program Executing Team have attended the 4 course modules. After the follow-up stage, meetings were held with the team liable for its development in August, September and October, in which suggestions for improvement and amplification of contents were presented and discussed. The major part of the suggestions, amenable to be implemented in the short run, were adopted, allowing the course to be offered again in October. In this class, 161 TSE and Regional Electoral Courts civil servants were present. Two new classes were opened in 2021.

Goal 2: *To build the capacity of the focal points for fighting against disinformation in the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts in order that they create networks for the dissemination of information.*



The focal points for Counter disinformation in the Regional Electoral Courts were trained in a meeting with the Program Executing Team. The training session included information on how to act in the scope of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections (for instance, for sharing identified information about fake news and also for providing official information to the fact-checkers) and about how to spread the checks made in the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts.

Additionally, the focal points for fighting against disinformation in the scope of the Regional Electoral Courts have attended specific training sessions, organized by TSE together with Program partners. Such sessions included:

- i. Training sessions offered by social media platforms;
- ii. Workshop hosted by Luiza Bandeira from the American forensic lab Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRLab) aiming at building capacity for identifying and Counter disinformation, notably concerning coordinated networks, inauthentic behaviors and Open Source Intelligence techniques for investigation in networks; and

- iii. Course called *Desinformação e Automação em Contexto Eleitoral* (Disinformation and Automation in the Electoral Context), taught by Instituto de Tecnologia e Sociedade do Rio de Janeiro (ITS Rio) followed by the creation of a support network for assistance in case of technical doubts of the attendees.

Goal 3: *To promote a workshop for fact-checkers on the electronic voting system and disinformation related to the security of the electronic voting machine.*



On September 22nd, 2020, the TSE Information Technology Secretary has taught the course called *Sistema Eletrônico de Votação: Segurança e Transparência* (Electronic Voting System: Security and Transparency) to representatives of nine partner fact-checking institutions. The course clarifies the main fake news disseminated about the electronic voting machine and the Brazilian Electoral Process. Besides, researcher Luiza Bandeira from DFRLab has also offered capacity building for the identification of coordinated networks, inauthentic behaviors and OSINT techniques to attendees from the fact-checking institutions.

Goal 4: *To build the capacity of journalists and civil servants on the Electoral Process, including recent legislative changes, the general aspects of the organization and the operation of the Electoral Justice System, accountability and disinformation in the electoral context.*



The online *Por Dentro do Processo Eleitoral* course focusing on legislation changes and their application to the 2020 elections was offered. Besides, journalists from all over the country attended the *Direito Eleitoral para Jornalistas* (Electoral Law for Journalists) course, taught in 11 classes of about 2 hours, on topics including but not limited to: (i) knowledge about the Electoral Process; (ii) accountability, campaign fund-raising; (iii) security of the electronic voting system; and (iv) disinformation in the Electoral Process.

Action 3: Raising-awareness campaigns on disinformation and media and informational education actions for the external public

Objective: To teach and raise voters' and citizens' awareness of the phenomenon of disinformation, the importance of fact-checking, as well as the Electoral Process, in order to: (i) contribute to voters exercising their right to vote in a conscientious and informed way; and (ii) to strengthen the ability of the citizens to identify and cope with disinformation, mainly in the electoral context.

Goal 1: *To broadcast live streaming event about the phenomenon of disinformation on social media, with the participation of TSE President, and lectures with experts on the subject.*



In June 2020, TSE broadcast a live streaming event on social media for the *Diálogos Democráticos* (Democratic Dialogues) series, called 'Disinformation: the challenge of the fake news', moderated by TSE President. Journalist Cristina Tardáguila, from the International Fact-Checking Network, biologist and communicator Atila Iamarino and congressman Felipe Rigoni, joint author of the Bill oriented to Counter disinformation, took part in the event.

The event has approached different subjects, including but not limited to: the difference between fake news, lack of information and the spread of misinformation; the risks of the dissemination of fake messages; the importance of content-checking; and the strategies to fight against fake news without jeopardizing the right to freedom of speech.

Goal 2: *To broadcast a live streaming event about financial literacy, democracy and disinformation in the scope of school education, with the participation of TSE President, and lectures with experts on the subject.*



TSE and Instituto Palavra Aberta supported by Unesco, with the participation of Todos pela Educação, broadcast on August 07th, 2020 the *Educação para a Cidadania* (Education for Citizenship) webinar, approaching subjects such as Democracy, Freedom of Speech, Media Education and Counter Disinformation.

Goal 3: *To produce a media campaign with videos about disinformation and fact-checking, with the participation of the well-known digital influencer, to be disclosed on social media, radio and television.*



Se for fake news, não transmita (If it is fake news, do not spread it) campaign, starred by digital influencer Átila Iamarino was produced and launched, broadcast nationally on radio and television, and also posted on the Court social media. The campaign goal was to approach the spread of fake news on a daily basis, highlighting the negative impact of such phenomenon in the Brazilian electoral democratic processes, as well as in citizens' lives. In one of the campaign videos, the phenomenon of disinformation is compared to a kind of virus, warning that in the Electoral Process such dissemination of rumors and fake news is lethal to democracy and may seriously jeopardize the reputation of competent people or conceal the truth about malicious candidates. The campaign aims at encouraging checks on the veracity of messages by citizens before spreading them. It is estimated that the campaign has reached more than 130 million Brazilians. The campaign hit more than 10 billion single views during the broadcasting period.

Goal 4: *To produce and disclose posts about the importance of fact-checking and the phenomenon of disinformation in the Electoral Process on social media.*



Throughout the 2020 electoral period, materials about disinformation and fact-checking were produced and broadcast. Such materials include but are not limited to: (i) the publication of informative texts and cards on TSE profile on social media as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter; (ii) the production of informative videos on TikTok, with the launching of the Court official profile on this platform; (iii) the launching of #EuVotoSemFake (I vote without fake news) and #NãoTransmitaFake News (Do not spread fake news) campaigns, which had as one of their purposes the encouragement to share messages orienting and informing about the Electoral Process; (iv) on YouTube, TSE has promoted *Diálogos Democráticos* (Democratic dialogues) series, with live streaming events with TSE President and public figures in order to debate the phenomenon of disinformation and promote the dissemination of information of public interest about the elections (for instance, the health protocols adopted for voting).

Action 4: Cooperation and actions to potentialize the reach of partners' media and information literacy initiatives

Objective: To promote the interaction and cooperation between partners of the media and information literacy field in order to potentialize the reach of current media and information literacy initiatives.

Goal 1: *To debate strategies with partner institutions acting in the media and information literacy field in order to potentialize the reach of media and information literacy initiatives, especially in the electoral period.*



A survey with partner institutions acting in the field of media and information literacy, as well as a preliminary debate with the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, was undertaken, with the purpose of jointly design strategies for implementation in the 2021-2022 cycle.

Goal 2: To implement strategies for broadening the reach of media and information literacy.



Many partnerships entered into with application service providers and other institutions and civil society organizations have involved media and information literacy initiatives. As an example, the partnership with WhatsApp covered the creation of a chatbot which provided information to help the voters to identify disinformation, as well as to allow the access to the more relevant fact-checking about the Electoral Process. Additionally, the *Fato ou Boato* website, dedicated to gather checks made by the fact-checking agencies, included a section orienting the voter to recognize false and deceitful contents. With the purpose of broadening the reach of such initiatives, different strategies have been adopted. Websites of many government bodies published a banner directing the internet user to the Electoral Justice System chatbot on WhatsApp. Participants in such initiative included but were not limited to the Federal Supreme Court (STF), the Superior Court of Justice (STJ), the Superior Labor Court (TST), the National Council of Justice (CNJ), the Federal Accounting Court (TCU), the Labor Prosecution Office (MPT), the National Association of Labor Prosecutors (ANPT), the National Association of Federal Prosecutors (ANPR), the Ministry of Agriculture, Cattle Raising and Food Supply (Mapa), the Ministry of Citizenship (MC), the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovations (MCTI), Office of the Federal Controller General (CGU), the Presidency of Brazil (PR), the Office of the General Counsel for Federal Government (AGU) and the Office of the President's Chief of Staff. YouTube has launched a banner on its home page to promote the *Fato ou Boato* webpage and the fact-checking carried out in the scope of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, in order to contribute to the strengthening of the fact-checking ecosystem. Besides, in order to promote the access of voters to information on disinformation, electoral myths and related subjects, live streaming events have been carried out by Google Brasil in association with TSE, which have been broadcast not only on the Court channels, but also on the official channels of YouTube and Google Brasil on YouTube.

Action 5: Interaction with political parties to raise awareness of their responsibility towards Counter disinformation

Objective: To promote the interaction with political parties to raise awareness of their responsibility to developing a healthy informational environment during the electoral period, as well as on the need to adopt measures to fight against disinformation and discourage the creation and use of disinformation networks and inauthentic behavior in electoral campaigns.

Goal 1: *To hold meeting with all national bodies of political parties for presenting a brief report on the impacts and risks of the phenomenon of disinformation.*



During the 2020 Elections, two meetings were held with TSE President and national representatives of political parties on December 23rd and October 27th, 2020. On such occasions, the Court President stressed the importance of organizations to take a stand against disinformation and act against the dissemination of false information, notably during the electoral period.

Goal 2: *To propose an engagement agreement to representatives of national bodies of political parties to engage on: (i) carrying out activities oriented to raise their members' awareness of the phenomenon of disinformation; and (ii) adopting measures to discourage the creation and use of disinformation networks and inauthentic behavior in electoral campaigns.*



The Program Executing Team has drafted the engagement agreement setting out commitments by the political parties to: (i) carrying out activities oriented to raise their members' and candidates' awareness of the phenomenon of disinformation, its harmful impacts on the democratic public debate and the importance of fact-checking; (ii) adopting measures to discourage the creation and use of disinformation networks and inauthentic behavior in electoral campaigns; (iii) taking an attitude of transparency and openness to fact-checking organizations and to the press, therefore assuring the provision of clarifications of issues during the Electoral Process; and (iv) helping the dissemination of contents related to the Electoral Process produced by TSE. After the meetings with the presidents of the political parties, and as the elections were close, it was resolved to postpone the proposal, negotiation and execution of specific commitments agreements with the political parties to the 2022 Elections.

3.3 Axis 3 – Disinformation Containment

This axis aims at promoting the adoption of measures oriented to detect, discourage and restrain disinformation practices, through directing technological resources and activities to prevent and restrain inauthentic behaviors, use of computational propaganda, use of false identities and other frauds when accessing citizens' details, as well as other types of coordinated actions of disinformation spread.

Action 1: To engage digital platforms and their technological resources to fight against structured disinformation networks and inauthentic behavior.

Objective: To develop cooperation agreements with service application providers that favor the mobilization of these platforms and their technological resources for the benefit of the dissemination of true information about the Electoral Process and fighting against inauthentic behaviors.

Goal 1: *To hold regular meetings with Program partner service application providers to know their initiatives for Counter disinformation and discuss the possibilities of acting jointly in the Electoral Process.*

From June to December, 2020, different meetings were held with the main Program partner service application providers, including Facebook/Instagram, WhatsApp, Google/YouTube, Twitter and TikTok, aiming at getting to know the actions taken by these platforms to fight against disinformation, as well as discussing, defining, implementing and following-up the initiatives in cooperation with the 2020 Electoral Process. Besides, representatives of the Program and the platforms established direct communication channels, in order to guarantee a productive and collaborative relationship throughout the electoral period.



Goal 2: *To enter into memoranda of understanding with all Program partner service application providers in order to set up initiatives and concrete measures to be implemented in the scope of the 2020 Elections*

TSE has entered into memoranda of understanding (MoU) with all the main Program partner service application providers, such as Facebook/Instagram, WhatsApp, Google/YouTube, Twitter and TikTok. Such memoranda set forth concrete measures to be adopted by the platforms in association with TSE to fight against disinformation in the 2020 Elections. The commitments affirmed aimed at promoting a joint effort by the Electoral Justice System and the service application providers in order to assure the access by the voters to truthful official news and information about the Electoral Process, to allow them exercising their right to vote in a conscious and safe way. The initiatives foreseen in each executed MoU brought capacity-building actions, dissemination of true information and mobilization of resources from the platforms to fight against inauthentic behaviors. Examples of commitments affirmed are capacity-building courses, production of informative guidebooks, communication and reporting channels (as the channels for reporting mass text messaging in partnership with WhatsApp and the channel reporting contents offering risks to the integrity of the elections with TikTok) and the use of features and resources from the platforms to assure a simple access to citizens to contents about elections (as *Megafone* on Facebook, TSE chatbot on WhatsApp and a prompt on the Twitter searching box). All the agreements entered into are available on <https://www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br/parcerias-digitais-eleicoes/>.



Goal 3: *To promote the interaction with service application providers that have not joined the Program, aiming to getting them enter into a partnership for Counter disinformation.*

For the 2020 Elections, the interaction with TikTok, a platform rising in popularity in Brazil in 2019 and 2020, notably among the youngsters, was nurtured. The app joined the Program through a commitment agreement entered into on September 30th, 2020, and executed on the same date a Memorandum of Understanding with the Court, in which the platform agreed to adopt collaborative measures to Counter disinformation.



Action 2: Creation of a network for monitoring disinformation practices against the Electoral Process.

Objective: To create a network for monitoring disinformation practices operated on the internet that may be considered harmful to the Electoral Process. The monitoring and intelligence network must be capable of: (i) identify, expose and disclose disinformation practices against the Electoral Process; and (ii) report the disinformation practices identified by TSE and propose, if applicable, related counter-information practices and the Information Technology (IT) resources adequate to that purpose.

Goal 1: *To enter into cooperation agreements with forensic laboratories and other research institutions and specialized civil society organizations, with the purpose of monitoring coordinated monitoring networks that disseminate disinformation, sharing information, setting a communication channel to indicate suspicious messages and further training, under the supervision of the digital coordinator for fighting disinformation.*



In the scope of the partnerships with civil society organizations, engagement agreements and memoranda of understanding with academic and research entities, such as Safernet Brasil, Instituto Igarapé, ITS Rio, FGV/DAPP, DFR Lab (Atlantic Council) have been entered into. Such partnerships have foreseen sharing information, knowledge and notes referring to potential cases and practices of dissemination of disinformation against the Electoral Process. In some cases, training sessions for the Court team dealing with the identification and monitoring of such disinformation practices were also foreseen.

Goal 2: *Engagement of a company specialized in network monitoring, with information technology and communication resources able to identify disinformation practices involving the Electoral Process.*



During the electoral period, TSE drew on two tools specialized in social media monitoring and identification of online trends and disinformation: BuzzSumo and Knewin Monitoring, the latter through user assignment by Rondônia Regional Electoral Court (TRE/RO).

Goal 3: *To implement the Integrated Center of Command and Control, using the existing one under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice, to identify disinformation practices on the internet, to verify potential counter-information measures, reporting the answer to the Electoral Justice System, and to expedite judicial police measures in case crimes are identified. During the time the Integrated Center is not operating, to formalize a partnership with the Federal Police (PF) and the Federal Public Prosecution Office (MPF) to indicate representatives and forwarding information on potential wrongdoings.*

The interaction with the Integrated Center, that in 2020 started to reckon with a specific rate related to disinformation, was made through TSE International Affairs Advisory Board (Ain/TSE).



On October 16th, 2020, the Integrated Center of National Command and Control for the 2020 Elections (CICCN – 2020 Elections) was set in, through the execution of a cooperation agreement between the Federal Police and the Integrated Operations Department (Seopi) from the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety. The signature of the agreement happened in an event where TSE President, the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety, André Mendonça, and the Director-General of the Federal Police, Rolando de Souza, were present. At that time, the insertion of a specific

monitoring rate related to electoral disinformation, as well as tools and systems to fight against fake news, was debated. Throughout the electoral period, TSE has worked in the scope of the Integrated Center of Command and Control of the 2020 Elections, through cooperation, with the follow-up by members of TSE Special Security and Intelligence Advisory Board — who were also members of the Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation — to monitor eventual incidents, made in real time by the Center.

Beyond CICCEN – 2020 Elections work, TSE has invited the Electoral Prosecution Office and the Federal Police to participate in actions included in the Program in the 2020 local elections, through the cooperation in the scope of TSE Strategic Committee for Fighting Disinformation and the creation of an instant communication group with appointed members, in order to allow a quicker identification of situations arising from disinformation practices against the Electoral Process, as well as the adoption of measures to mitigate their negative effects. The invitations were sent by GAB/SPR Official Letters nº 4021/2020 and 4159/2020 and answered with the appointment of members of the bodies through RBG/PGE Official Letters nº 195/2020 and 302/2020/Dicor/P.

Goal 4: *To set reporting and/or communication channels with service application providers aiming at allowing citizens and Electoral Justice System bodies to report mass text messaging and dissemination of false information on the web.*

In the scope of the partnership with service application providers, the creation of a communication channel between the Program Executing Team and the platforms is highlighted. Respective focal points were appointed, allowing a quick communication of the cases of disinformation. Besides, a reporting channel for mass text messaging on WhatsApp, through the creation of a form on TSE website, was set. Such channel has allowed any citizen to report suspicions of mass text messaging during the elections, recording the phone number of the message writer. The reports were forwarded to WhatsApp in order that it could investigate eventual violation of the platform's terms of service due to mass text messaging. If the violation was confirmed, the platform would ban the account in question. The Program has also tried to broaden the disclosure of other reporting channels for dissemination of fake news, such as the channels kept by the platforms themselves, *Pardal* app, the forwarding to the Electoral Prosecution Office and the Complaints Office of the Electoral Justice System.³



Action 3: To set in a network for sharing truthful information about the Electoral Process.

Objective: To create a network for citizens to receive and share true and accurate information for fighting against disinformation about the Electoral Process, including through a public campaign (#euvotofake). The network will be operationalized through the creation of a digital communication infrastructure able to send short, clear and accessible messages, aiming at disseminating quality content on the Electoral Justice System apps and on other digital communication platforms.

³ <https://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2020/Outubro/eleitor-conta-com-varios-canais-para-denunciar-fake-news-e-outras-irregularidades-nas-eleicoes-2020>

Goal 1: *To develop and operate a digital communication infrastructure (notifications central unit) capable of sending short messages, in order to disseminate quality content on the Electoral Justice System apps.*



The Counter Disinformation Program has conceived, developed and operated, together with STI/TSE and SGP/TSE, the Notifications Central Unit for the Electoral Justice System apps, through which TSE has changed its *e-Título*, *Mesário* and *Pardal* apps into channels allowing the Electoral Justice System to communicate directly with the voters and disseminate useful information about the elections, health protocols against Covid-19 and clarifications on fake news.

Goal 2: *To create and disseminate short messages with a clear, accessible language getting straight to the point to citizens about the Electoral Process and clarify rumors and disinformation on the Electoral Process.*



The Counter Disinformation Program in association with Ascon/TSE and SGP/TSE has created and conveyed, through the Notifications Central Unit of *e-Título*, *Mesário* and *Pardal* apps, 23 specific messages oriented to the target audience of each app, aiming at assuring the dissemination of official information, to raise awareness of voters on the risks of disinformation and to clarify fake news (for instance, the myths about the electronic voting machine).

Goal 3: *To set in a network of disseminators of true information about the Electoral Process, based on partnerships with civil society entities and digital influencers.*



TSE has launched the campaign against disinformation called *#EuVotoSemFake*, with the purpose of starting a social media movement able to transform public and private institutions into disseminators of true information about the Electoral Process. The movement has been conceived to raise voters' awareness of the role they have while disseminating true information and how they can join the Electoral Justice System to fight against disinformation. More than a hundred institutions, including government bodies and companies, have engaged with the movement and made their best efforts to share official contents on the elections and against disinformation. Many entities have joined the campaign including but not limited to the National Board of Justice (CNJ), the Federal Supreme Court (STF), the Superior Court of Justice (STJ), the Federal Accounting Court (TCU), the Superior Labor Court (TST), the National Association of the Judges of the Labor Courts (Anamatra), the National Association of Labor Prosecutors (ANPT), the National Association of Federal Prosecutors (ANPR), the National Council of Christian Churches (Conic), the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), Instituto Palavra Aberta, Pacto pela Democracia, Redes Cordiais, Politize!, Ashoka Brasil, Brazilian Association of Radio and TV (Abratel) and Camp Brasil. In the scope of the campaign, which has tried to be plural and collaborative, any celebrities and citizens could become ambassadors of the movement for sharing of posts with the hashtag. *#EuVotoSemFake* hashtag was the subject of 23.3 thousand postings on Twitter from September 25th to November 24th, 2020.

Besides, in a partnership with the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) and different national soccer clubs from all divisions, *#NãoTransmitaFakeNews* and *#PartiuVotar* campaigns were created to discourage the sharing of fake news, clarify rumors and lies about the Brazilian

Electoral Process through an analogy with VAR (Video Assistant Referee), and encourage voting. It is estimated that #NãoTransmitaFakeNews campaign on Twitter has reached 44,889,817 people through 2,372 tweets posted, while #PartiuVotar campaign has reached 37,202,793 people through 344 tweets posted.

Goal 4: *To enable the reactive and transactional use of WhatsApp Business API to interact with and sending checked information to the constituency, through a chatbot on WhatsApp.*

To ease the access of voters to relevant information on the 2020 Elections, TSE has created a chatbot called *Tira-dúvidas Eleitoral* (Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat). The tool was developed for free in association with WhatsApp and Infobip on WhatsApp Business API. Through it, the user could browse through a menu with many options, allowing to get information about the elections dates, health protocols, fact-checked news, profiles of the candidates, voting places, procedure to justify absence, besides allowing to sign up to receive important information from the Court. In one of its main functionalities, the virtual assistant has offered a service exclusively dedicated to clarifying fake news, involving the Brazilian Electoral Process: the *Fato ou Boato*. When selecting the topic, the user could have access to some contents denied by fact-checking agencies, demystify the main rumors about the electronic voting machine and watch videos including tips of how to identify a deceitful content disseminated on internet during the Covid-19 pandemic.



3.4 Axis 4 – Disinformation Identification and Checking

This axis aims at broadening and improving the channels of identification and checking of fake contents related to the Electoral Process, as well as at concurring to disseminate checks made.

Action 1: Creation of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections

Objective: creation and organization of a network to checking facts and providing information on the Electoral Process during the 2020 Elections, called Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, through the cooperation and partnership with fact-checking agencies and institutions.

Goal 1: *To prepare, submit and enter into cooperation agreements with fact-checking institutions with the purpose of creating a network to checking facts and providing information on the Electoral Process, in which it is set forth at the very least the scope of checking (Electoral Process) and the work plan to be developed.*

Nine of the main fact-checking institutions of the country have entered into Cooperation Agreements with TSE, aiming at establishing the Fact-Checking Coalition to Detect Disinformation on the Electoral Process in the 2020 Elections (Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections). The Coalition is composed of AFP Checamos, Agência Lupa, Aos Fatos, Boatos.org, E-farsas, Estadão Verifica, Fato ou Fake, Projeto Comprova and Uol Confere. The Cooperation Agreements, prepared by the Executing Team, based on many discussions with the fact-checking institutions, had the purpose of creating a network to checking facts and providing information on the Electoral Process. In this scope of checking, information on (i) the Electoral Process in its different stages, from the registration of candidacies through the certification of the elected candidates; (ii) the operation of



the electronic voting machine and other aspects of the electronic voting process; (iii) the Electoral Justice System, its members, civil servants and other associates; (iv) the health security of the Electoral Process in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic; and (v) other actions related to the organization and carrying out of the elections (in aggregate referred to as information about the Electoral Process) was included. The Cooperation Agreement has also set forth the work plan, the obligations of the parties and other relevant provisions, besides a detailed work plan. In the scope of the Coalition, it was set forth that each fact-checking institution would be liable for checking, by its own means, the veracity of potential disinformation about the process identified or brought to its attention, provided that it is within its reach, and its autonomy and independence are not challenged.

Goal 2: *To organize a TSE team accountable for gathering and providing information needed to enable the checking.*



In the scope of TSE, the collection and transfer of information was centered in representatives of Ascom/TSE Press Division, supported by the Program Executing Team.

Goal 3: *To request and obtain from each Regional Electoral Court the appointment of one representative to make up the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, preferably a member of the Communication Advisory Board, by sending official letters to the Regional Electoral Courts.*



In response to GAB-SPR Circular Letter nº 355/2020, sent by TSE to the presidents of the Regional Electoral Courts, all the 27 Regional Electoral Courts have appointed a representative to act as a focal point, making the creation of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections possible.

Goal 4: *To define a work flow in the scope of the Fact-Checking Coalition applicable to fact-checking institutions, TSE and Regional Electoral Courts.*



The Cooperation Agreement, entered into with the fact-checking institutions, has set forth the detailed work flow, which provided for briefly: (i) a quick communication between the fact-checking agencies and TSE and TRE representatives on a WhatsApp group; (ii) the insertion and updating of checked information on a Google Drive spreadsheet for control; and (iii) posting of the content of checked information on the *Fato ou Boato* webpage on the Court website.

Goal 5: *To create a WhatsApp group and to create and manage an editable spreadsheet for recording the information and checking flow, aiming at enabling the operationalization of the Coalition.*



The Cooperation Agreement has set forth that the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections would be operationalized through: (i) the creation of a WhatsApp group with representatives from TSE, the Regional Electoral Courts and the fact-checking institutions; and (ii) a spreadsheet for recording work flow, created on Google Drive, with, at the very least, the following spaces: information to be checked; court or institution that has identified the information to be checked; source of information and eventual complementary information, if any; time of sending the request for checking on the WhatsApp group; institution(s) responsible for making the checking; date of checking made; outcome of the checking; name of the person responsible for the checking with respective contact details; link to a check on the website of the institution in charge; link to the check on *Fato ou Boato* webpage; and information on eventual further correction of the checking.

The WhatsApp group and Google Sheets spreadsheet were adequately created in September 2020 and have functioned throughout the electoral period.

Action 2: Guarantee of access, dissemination and potentialization of the reach of the fact-checking on the Electoral Process

Objective: To concur to the disclosure and dissemination of the checks made in the scope of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, with the purpose of guaranteeing that voters have actual conditions to have access to truthful information about the Electoral Process and to the clarifications of the rumors circulating during the elections period.

Goal 1: *To develop and readjust the webpage hosted by the Electoral Justice System website, called Fato ou Boato, in order that it could function as a hub for checks made on the Electoral Process by the fact-checking institutions.*



In September 2020, a new version of *Fato ou Boato* webpage was launched. This webpage was adjusted to meet the needs of the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections, taking into account not only the improvement of the users' experience but also the requirements of the fact-checking institutions. As an example, the new page started to allow the publication of the fact-checking contents, made available by the fact-checking institutions, following the chronological order, as well the publication of an editable brief of the more relevant checks to the Electoral Process.

Goal 2: *To enter into a partnership with the cell phone companies in order to allow that their users could have access to fact-checking and other information contents made available to voters, published by the Electoral Justice System, on a zero rating basis.*



Assuming that the voters have access to the internet through cell phone only and with limited data plans, making the possibility of making checks of the veracity of the information received unfeasible, TSE has sought to enter into partnerships with Brazilian cell phone companies, represented by Conexis Brasil Digital, former Sinditelebrasil. After meetings and discussions, TSE has executed via Sinditelebrasil/Conexis a partnership with the cell phone companies Claro, Oi, TIMBrasil, Vivo, Algar Telecom, which started to allow their users to have access to contents and applications of the Electoral Court System, on a zero rating basis, during the 2020 Elections. Sinditelebrasil/Conexis Brasil Digital has also joined the Counter Disinformation Program, making the establishment of new partnerships of this kind easier in future voting periods.

Goal 3: *To enter into a partnership with communication and media associations, to allow them to disclose to their affiliates true information about the Electoral Process, including those arising from fact-checking.*



TSE has entered into many memoranda of understanding with Program partner communication and media associations to allow them to disclose to their affiliates true information on the Electoral Process, including those arising from fact-checking. These associations include Brazilian Association of Radio and TV Broadcasting Stations (Abert), Brazilian Internet Association

(Abranet), Brazilian Association of Radio and TV (Abratel), Brazilian Association of Internet and Telecom Providers (Abrint), Brazilian Association of Communication Agencies (Abracom), Brazilian Press Association (ABI), National Association of Magazine Editors (Aner), National Association of Newspapers (ANJ). The executed memorandum has allowed such associations to become disseminators of true content on the Electoral Process. Each one of them has committed to publish and disclose in their channels, as available, information checked by the fact-checking institutions that have joined the Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections Project.

3.5 Axis 5 - Enhancement of the Legal System

The purpose of this axis is to review and draw up rules fighting against disinformation practices in the scope of the Electoral Court System jurisdiction, especially referring to electoral campaigns.

Action 1: To follow-up and cooperate with discussions about bills dealing with the disinformation topic

Objective: To follow-up the current stage of bills and other rulemaking dealing with the disinformation topic – for instance Bill (PL) n° 2630/2020 – Internet Bill of Freedom, Responsibility and Transparency, also known as ‘Fake News Bill’ – and also to concur, as possible, with the enhancement of legislative proposals for the discussions on the subject, in light of the experiences developed by TSE in the scope of the Counter Disinformation Program.

Goal 1: *To follow-up the current stage of bills dealing with the disinformation topic, especially the Bill (PL) n° 2630/2020, known as ‘Fake News Bill’, and also to concur, as possible, with the enhancement of proposals.*

The Program Executing Team has followed-up the current stage of Bill (PL) n° 2630/2020, and has participated in discussions with the Work Group of the Chamber of Deputies that has analyzed the Bill. The Team has made efforts to refining proposals, especially for the change of the wording of article 41, relating to the prevision of a new definition of crime. Besides, TSE has promoted live streaming events to debate disinformation stressing the impact of fake news on democratic and electoral processes with the participation of one of the joint authors of the Bill, congressman Felipe Rigoni. At last, the Program has started a dialogue with members of the Mixed Parliamentary Commission of Investigation (CPMI) of Fake News aiming at promoting a continuous sharing of information and experiences, and an instant communication group has been created for this purpose.

Goal 2: *To participate, through the member of the Managing Group and the Executing Team, in the debates, seminars and conferences dealing with the enhancement of the legal system for Counter disinformation, especially those organized by the Program partners and civil society organizations and entities active on this matter.*

During the electoral period, TSE president and other members of the Program have actively participated in the public debate on the challenges imposed by fake news and the enhancement of the legal system for Counter disinformation, through lectures, live streaming events, seminars, conferences, meetings, interviews and articles. Those events included, but were not limited to:

- Organization of live streaming of *Diálogos Democráticos* (Democratic Dialogues) series, with the debate on fighting against fake news, with the participation of TSE President, Justice Luís Roberto Barroso; journalist Cristina Tardáguila, founder of fact-checking agency Agência Lupa; biologist and youtuber Atila Iamarino; and congressman Fellipe Rigoni (PSB party), in June 2020;
- Meeting with the Permanent Commission for Communication and Freedom of Speech to debate recommendations for the enhancement of the Program, in August 2020;
- Meeting with *Direitos na Rede* (Rights on the Web) Coalition with the purpose of debating the document *Eleições, Internet e Direitos: Contribuições da Coalização Direitos na Rede ao Processo Eleitoral de 2020* (Elections, Internet and Rights: Contributions of the Rights on the Web Coalition to the 2020 Electoral Process), in September 2020;
- Publication of interviews and newspaper articles relating to disinformation, such as the interview with TSE President to *O Globo* newspaper, *Eleições 2020: TSE Prepara Cerco às Fake News e ao Uso de Robôs nas Redes Sociais* (2020 Elections: TSE besieges Fake News and Robots on Social Media) of September 27th, 2020, and the article *Como Driblar as Fake News nas Eleições?* (How to Bypass Fake News in the Elections?), published in newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* by the digital coordinator for fighting disinformation;
- Organization of international seminars to foreign authorities, where the strategies for Counter disinformation were presented in November 2020.

Action 2: To contribute to preparing proposals for TSE regulations relating to disinformation for the next elections

Objective: To research and contribute to preparing proposals of TSE regulations relating to disinformation for the next elections, through: (i) follow-up of TSE and TRE case-law on the subject, gathering the most important judgments on disinformation, with the purpose of learning and updating TSE resolutions for the next elections; and (ii) attempt to guarantee the participation of the members of the Managing Group and/or the Program Executing Team in the Work Groups dedicated to preparing proposals for resolution in the next elections, in order that the insertion and/or change of norms oriented to fighting against disinformation practices could be assessed, always taking into consideration the national and international experiences and reports on freedom of speech and fake news, disinformation and propaganda.

Goal 1: *To monitor TSE and TRE case-law on disinformation, gathering the most important judgments on the subject.*

Program members have followed-up TSE case-law and the most important TRE judgments on the subject of disinformation during the 2020 Elections. The work on a list of judgments is in progress and shall be published with the support of TSE Information Management Division (SGI). In October 2020, TSE, through its Library, has launched the work entitled *Tema eleitoral – minibiografia selecionada* (Electoral subject: selected mini biography) on disinformation in the



elections, available on <https://www.tse.jus.br/hotsites/catalogo-publicacoes/pdf/temas-eleitorais/tema-eleitoral-minibibliografia-selecionada-desinformacao-nas-eleicoes.pdf>.

Goal 2: *To guarantee the participation of the members of the Program Managing Group in the Work Groups dedicated to preparing proposals for resolution in the next elections, in order to assess the insertion and/or change of norms oriented to Counter disinformation practices.*



Negotiations dealing with the participation of members of the Managing Group and the Program Executing Team for fighting against disinformation in the work of preparing resolutions for the 2022 Elections focusing on proposals for enhancement for Counter disinformation actions. This endeavor shall come to fruition by the end of 2021, when the Work Groups shall be set for preparing the resolutions.

3.6 Axis 6 – Enhancement of Technological Resources

This axis aims at encouraging the development and enhancement of information technology and communication resources used to identify disinformation and counter-information dissemination.

Action 1: Development of a chatbot on WhatsApp using WhatsApp Business API

Objective: To develop, in association with WhatsApp, a chatbot for reactive or proactive use of WhatsApp Business API tool to make the access of the citizens to useful information on the 2020 Elections easier.

Goal 1: *To develop, in association with WhatsApp, a chatbot for reactive or proactive use of WhatsApp Business API tool to make the access of the citizens to useful information on the 2020 Elections easier.*



TSE has developed, in a partnership with WhatsApp and Infobip for free, an Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat, a chatbot (virtual assistant) to make the access of the voters to relevant information on the 2020 municipal elections and fake news checking easier. The chatbot has been developed for a reactive and proactive transactional use after many meetings with WhatsApp, Infobip, the Program Executing Team and STI/TSE. Such meetings facilitated the integration with Electoral Court systems and operational support.

Goal 2: *To define functionalities and produce contents for the TSE chatbot on WhatsApp.*



The definition and enhancement of functionalities of the chatbot have been made through a permanent interaction with the Court team and representatives of WhatsApp and Infobip. The production of content had fallen on Ascom/TSE and the Program Executing Team, supported by STI/TSE. Therefore, during the elections, information on, including but not limited to, dates, time and voting places; health protocols; candidates' details; tips for poll workers; clarification of fake news; responses to frequent asked questions to the Electoral Justice System could be accessed. Besides sending texts, the chatbot sent images and links.

Goal 3: *To produce content for a proactive use of WhatsApp Business API tool in unusual situations especially in case of serious disinformation affecting the Electoral Process.*



The chatbot has allowed the registration of users who had opted-in for receiving important messages from the Electoral Justice System. First-draft texts for the proactive use of the tool were produced. Throughout the electoral period, active messages were sent in four occasions dealing with: date and time of the first round of vote and health protocols; second round of vote in 57 cities; raising awareness to the ‘path of the vote until the results disclosure’, in order to clarify fake news relating to the Electoral Process; and encouragement to voting and attention to health protocols after the postponement of the elections in Macapá, due to a blackout and security issues.

Action 2: Development of other technological tools and digital channels for Counter disinformation

Objective: To develop, through TSE Information Technology Department or by way of partners’ cooperation, technological tools and digital channels allowing TSE to act quicker when Counter disinformation, including: (i) development of a notifications central unit allowing the use of Electoral Justice System apps to send active notifications to app users; (ii) creation of a digital form allowing voters and citizens in general to send reports on mass text messaging; and (iii) make adaptations on the Electoral Justice System website domain to allow the implementation of a zero rating practice.

Goal 1: *Development of a notifications central unit allowing the use of Electoral Justice System apps to send active notifications to app users.*



STI/TSE, in partnership with the Program Executing Team, has developed the Notifications Central Unit on the Electoral Justice System apps (*e-Título*, *Mesário* and *Pardal*) to bring accurate information on the organization of the elections, health protocols and fake news to the voters.

Goal 2: Creation of a digital form allowing voters and citizens in general to send reports on mass text messaging.



STI/TSE and Ascom/TSE, in a partnership with the Program Executing Team, have designed a digital form specific for receiving reports on mass messaging during the 2020 Elections. Such form has enabled the implementation of an unprecedently created out-of-court communication channel between TSE and WhatsApp Inc. The business rules and texts were in charge of the Program Executive Program, with Ascom/TSE collaboration.

Goal 3: *Make adaptations on the Electoral Justice System website domain to allow the implementation of a zero rating practice.*



In September 2020, STI/TSE has rolled out efforts to technically enable the implementation of a zero rating practice (data traffic without charge) granted by cell phone companies during the 2020 Elections for www.justicaeleitoral.jus.br domain and its subdomains, through the migration of the domains and subdomains envisaged for the HTTPS protocol.

Schedules

Schedule 1 – Partners of the Counter Disinformation Program Focused on the 2020 Elections – up to December 2020

Seq	Body/Institution	Joining date
1	Brazilian Association of Radio and TV Broadcasting Stations (Abert)	08/30/2019
2	Brazilian Press Association (ABI)	08/30/2019
3	Brazilian Internet Association (Abranet)	08/30/2019
4	Brazilian Association of Radio and TV (Abratel)	08/30/2019
5	Brazilian Association of Internet and Telecom Providers (Abrint)	08/30/2019
6	National Association of Newspapers (ANJ)	08/30/2019
7	Agência aos Fatos	08/30/2019
8	Associação Acredito	08/30/2019
9	Brazilian Association of Communication Agencies (Abracom)	08/30/2019
10	InternetLab Association for Law and Technology Research	08/30/2019
11	Boatos.org	08/30/2019
12	Internet Managing Committee in Brazil (CGI.br)	08/30/2019
13	Instituto Palavra Aberta	08/30/2019
14	Instituto Update	08/30/2019
15	Ministry of Justice and Public Safety	08/30/2019
16	Federal Prosecution Office	08/30/2019
17	Federal Council of the Brazilian Bar Association (OAB)	08/30/2019
18	Avante Political Party	08/30/2019
19	Brazilian Communist Party (PCdoB)	08/30/2019
20	Christian Democracy Party (DC)	08/30/2019
21	Democratas Party	08/30/2019
22	Brazilian Labour Renewal Party (PRTB)	08/30/2019
23	Solidariedade Party	08/30/2019
24	Progressistas Party (PP)	08/30/2019
25	Republicanos Party	08/30/2019
26	Brazilian Labour Party (PTB)	08/30/2019
27	Politize!	08/30/2019
28	Safernet Brasil	08/30/2019
29	Brazilian Computing Society (SBC)	08/30/2019
30	Executive Secretariat of National Committee of the Movement against Electoral Corruption (MCCE)	08/30/2019
31	Agência Lupa	08/30/2019

Seq	Body/Institution	Joining date
32	Christian Social Part (PSC)	08/30/2019
33	Podemos Party (Pode)	08/30/2019
34	Democratic Labour Party (PDT)	08/30/2019
35	Office of Institutional Security of the Presidency of Brazil (GSI)	09/04/2019
36	Instituto Não Aceito Corrupção (Inac)	10/08/2019
37	Twitter Brasil Rede de Informação Ltda.	10/17/2019
38	WhatsApp Inc.	10/21/2019
39	Facebook Serviços Online do Brasil Ltda.	10/22/2019
40	Google Brasil Internet Ltda.	10/22/2019
41	National Association of Magazine Editors (Aner)	11/05/2019
42	Uma a Mais Serviços de Tecnologia e Consultoria Ltda.	10/01/2019
43	Federal Accounting Court (TCU)	11/26/2019
44	Brazilian Academy of Electoral and Political Law (Abradep)	11/27/2019
45	Instituto Liberdade Digital (ILD)	11/27/2019
46	Freitas e Bittencourt Sociedade de Advogados	12/03/2019
47	National Board of Attorneys General of the State and Federal Prosecution Offices (CNPJG)	11/28/2019
48	National Group of Electoral Coordinadores (GNACE)	11/28/2019
49	Instituto Nacional de Ciência e Tecnologia em Democracia Digital (INCT.DD)	02/18/2020
50	Redes Cordiais	05/11/2020
51	Federal Senate	06/27/2020
52	Instituto Tecnologia e Equidade (IT&E)	09/10/2020
53	Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV)	09/22/2020
54	Globo Comunicação e Participação S.A.	09/26/2020
55	Editora Globo S.A.	09/26/2020
56	Rádio Excelsior S.A.	09/26/2020
57	National Union of Phone, Mobile and Personal Services Companies (Sinditelebrasil; now Conexis Brasil Digital)	09/29/2020
58	Byte Dance Brasil Tecnologia Ltda. (TikTok)	09/30/2020
59	Brasil Serviços de Valor Adicionado Ltda. (Infobip)	10/01/2020
60	Clube Associativo dos Profissionais de Marketing Político (Camp)	10/07/2020
61	Instituto Tecnologia e Sociedade (ITS Rio)	10/09/2020
62	Fundação João Magabeira (FJM)	10/16/2020
63	The Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFR Lab)	10/21/2020
64	Bluetrix Tecnologia Ltda.	10/23/2020
65	Avaaz	10/27/2020
66	Instituto Igarapé	11/23/2020

Schedule 3 – Working Criteria for the Database Committee

Document version: October 27th, 2020

Description: The purpose of this document is to objectively register the criteria for the evaluation and forwarding of notes to TSE. Such criteria will be fulfilled by the team in charge of the Strategic Committee Database. Such criteria may be enhanced and updated insofar as non-foreseen cases occur.

The Strategic Committee aims at structuring and concentrating (i) the process identification of events arising from disinformation practices capable of negatively affecting the Electoral Process, as well as (ii) the process of preparation of responses and adoption of measures to mitigate the effects of disinformation. The Database team work is focused on the first scope, as well as on the preparation of proposal to be addressed by the Committee in the second scope.

Who may report?

- Anyone who comes to know a message, post or news including disinformation about TSE;
- The Regional Electoral Courts, notably through their focal points in the scope of TSE Strategic Committee;
- Any public or private institution, especially the program partners acting in the scope of the Strategic Committee.

What is the scope of investigation?

Any and all disinformation about the Electoral Process, namely:

- All different Electoral Process stages, from the registration of candidates to the certification of the elected candidates;
- The electronic voting machine operation and other aspects of the electronic voting process;
- The Electoral Justice System, its members, civil servants and other associates;
- The health security of the Electoral Process during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Other acts related to the organization and conduction of the elections.

When it is necessary to issue an official clarification note?

- When the disinformation relates to an action, program or procedure assigned to the Superior Electoral Court, the Communication Advisory Board shall promptly issue an official clarification note about the fact, after referring to respective technical unit liable for the affected area.
- The message produced shall consider the information gathered through previous or concurrent monitoring of the repercussion of disinformation content.

- Therefore, the action is guided by: (i) fighting disinformation with official, true and quality information; (ii) the need to mitigate potential harmful effects of the engagement with the disinformation content, i.e., the broadening of reach of the disinformation itself.

Criteria applied before the issuance of an official clarification note

- Number of platforms (social media and text messaging apps) in which it is possible to identify the presence of the note through public data;
- Engagement with the note, i.e., number of sharings, views and comments;
- Gravity of the note.

When to send the note to the Fact-Checking Coalition?

The disinformation is forwarded to the Fact-Checking Coalition, previously or simultaneously to the issuance of an official note in the cases mentioned above, and separately in the other cases, provided that the content may be checked. In the scope of the Coalition, contents sent by the agencies themselves to the Regional Electoral Courts shall also be checked.

Through this action, besides official true information, the independence of the checks and the plurality of sources are guaranteed.

Criteria applied before sending the note to the Coalition

- Content has been previously checked in the 2020 Elections context?
- Is there an official note on the content of the note?

Rates analyzed before sending the note to the Coalition

- Number of platforms (social media and messaging apps) in which it is possible to identify the presence of the note through public data;
- Engagement with the note, i.e., number of sharings, views and comments;
- Gravity of the note.

When to send the note to the platforms?

- As broadly disclosed, the Superior Electoral Court has entered into memoranda of understanding with different service application providers: WhatsApp, Facebook (including actions with Instagram), Google (including actions on YouTube), Twitter and TikTok. All platforms have their own policies and reporting mechanisms that may bring about: (i) reduction of the posting reach; (ii) tagging the content as violating policies against disinformation; (iii) insertion of tags related to fact-checking; (iv) issuance of alerts at the moment of sharing; (v) demonetization; (vi) removal of content; (vii) others.
- At this point, in favor of freedom of speech, and recognizing the risks inherent to the attribution to any entity of the 'moderator of the public debate' role, the Electoral Superior Court shall privilege less restrictive measures, therefore the requests for removing contents will only be forwarded in face of the identification of: (i) risk to health security during the voting process; (ii) encouragement to absenteeism or other information oriented to prevent voting

or cause confusion relating to the conduction of the elections; (iii) incitement to violent acts, especially against civil servants, members and associates of the Electoral Justice System ou poll workers; (iv) hate speech; (vii) evidence of inauthentic behavior; (viii) evidence of irregular financing; (ix) falsification of the source, by the undue use of official symbols of the Electoral Justice System; and (x) other exceptional cases involving crimes and/or serious circumstances capable of negatively impacting the Electoral Process.

Criteria applied before forwarding to platforms

- The note has already been object of an official note or has already been checked by the Coalition?
- According to the platform policy, a preventive measure is foreseen to deal with such note?

Rates to be analyzed before forwarding to platforms

- Engagement with the note: sharings, views and comments.
- Gravity of the note.

When to forward the note to the Public Prosecution Office?

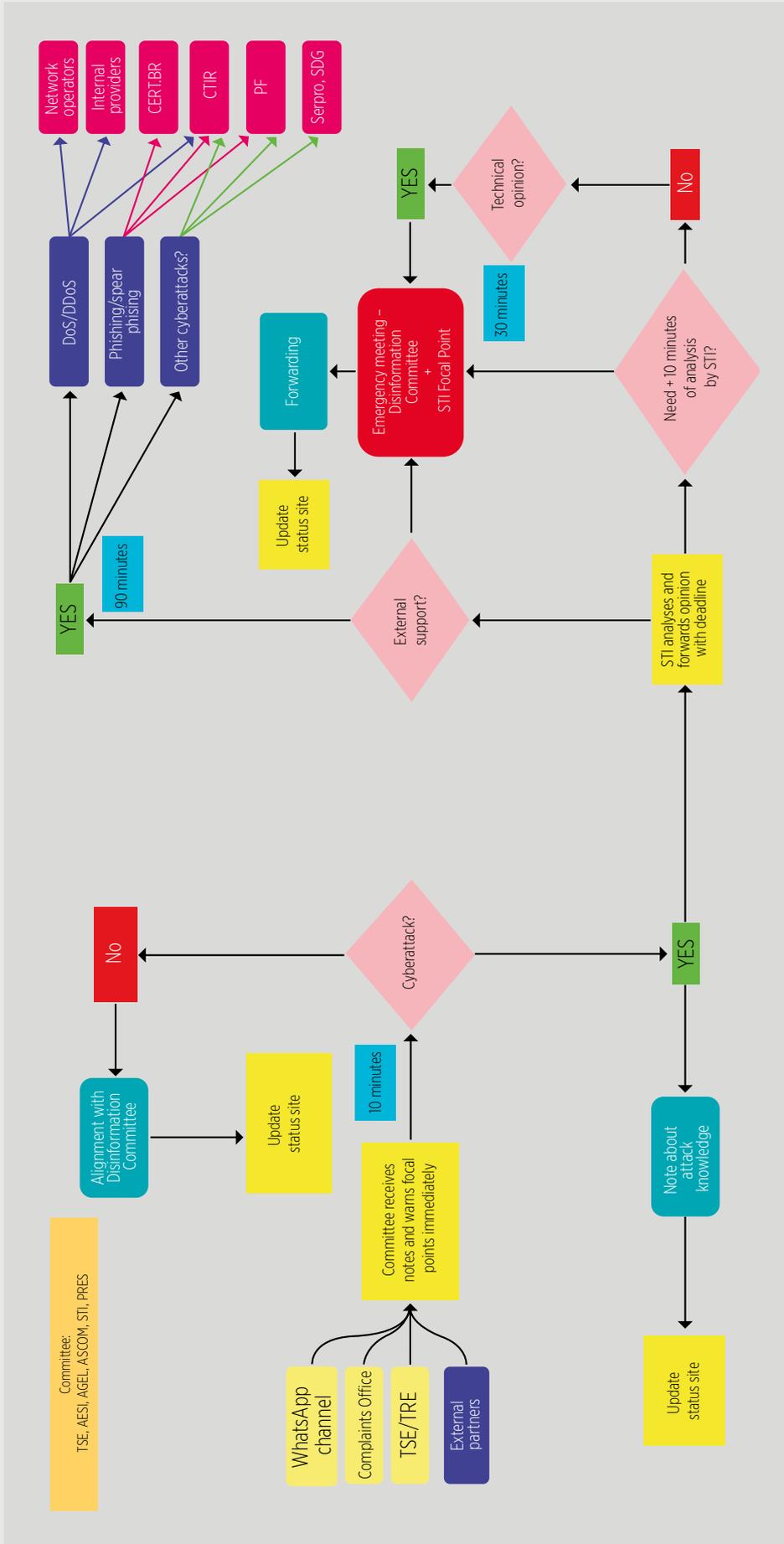
- In case of disinformation not related to the Electoral Process, for instance, disinformation about a candidate or political party that may constitute illicit electioneering, the reporting person shall be informed of the possibilities of report to the Prosecution Office, of the use of *Pardal* app of the Electoral Justice System and, occasionally, of the actions made by the electoral judge exercising the police power vested in him/her. Such notes will not be recorded on the database.
- In cases where disinformation about the Electoral Process represents defamation against the institutions or its representatives, the Court Presidency or the defamed representative will be informed of the resolution. In this assessment, freedom of speech, opinion and criticism shall be privileged.
- At last, if the disinformation configures the offenses under articles 296 and 297 of the Electoral Code, namely, ‘to promote disorder that jeopardize the electoral work’ and ‘to prevent or impair the exercise of voting’ or also configures a threat, damage to the voting machine and other more serious wrongdoings, the fact will be reported to the representative of the Prosecution Office together with the Committee, or rather directly to the electoral prosecutor in charge. In the last case, the fact might be also forwarded to the representative of the Federal Police member of the Committee or to the Integrated Center of National Command and Control.

Other measures available

- In case the information is not included in the scope of the Counter Disinformation Program or cannot be checked, it will be recorded on the database and dismissed.

- In case the information had been received through the Complaints Office and there has been a check on the subject, TSE may choose to respond to the voter with current information.
- Information referring to companies offering mass text messaging services, in violation of the prohibition set forth in TSE Resolution nº 23.610/2019, will be forwarded to the Electoral Prosecution Office, as well as to the platforms.
- Evidence of coordinated inauthentic behavior may be forwarded to the Integrated Center of Command and Control and to the platforms.
- In case the note has low engagement, the option might be not to adopt any measures, in order to avoid that the measures taken amplify and potentialize, in an unwanted way, the reach of the message.
- On the election day, if there is publication of audiovisual material which content is included in the scope of tallying and if it is possible to identify the police district or the polling station of the incident, it must be reported to respective Regional Electoral Court to investigation *in loco*, by the clerk in charge.

Schedule 4 – Work Flow of the Cyber Intelligence Committee



Schedule 5 – Lessons Learned and Enhancement Proposals

Fighting disinformation with information

1. Fact-Checking Coalition – 2020 Elections

- The work of the fact-checking institutions committed to limits of scalability and reach has shown TSE need to foresee actions for strengthening the fact-checking ecosystem, notably initiatives to support the institutions and amplify the visibility of the contents.
- The importance to highlight the checks made by the agencies, prioritizing true contents, shows the need to validate the operation of integration protocols, as well as claim review with the checkers.
- As a hub of official information and fact-checking on the Electoral Process, the *Fato ou Boato* webpage may be enhanced in order to host contents in different formats and from different sources, as well as to facilitate browsing and people's access to checks and articles. The changes may include the use of tags to organize the content and make searching easier, links to ease sharing on social media and validation of the use of the tool for access statistics.

2. Chatbot – Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat

- The volume of messages exchanged with voters on the Electoral WhatsApp Online Chat has evidenced the usefulness and convenience of the tool to broaden the communication with the Court, showing the importance of keeping the chatbot active during non-electoral periods.
- It is noteworthy that the chatbot has the potential for achieving even more voters, providing information and services. Therefore, it is necessary to amplify its outreach to retain and increase its registered user base.
- The chatbot has worked at first by means of a decision tree, i.e., the voter chose an pre-defined option of browsing on the menu. In this sense, the communication could be enhanced and facilitated by way of the integration of natural language processing, which allowed the chatbot to broadly capture the voter's intention.
- Additionally, the implementation of new functionalities that, going beyond information and services, could cover voters' capacity-building and media literacy must be taken into consideration. A gamified dynamics related to producing, consuming and filtering disinformation about the Electoral Process is indicated.

3. Massive dissemination of true official information on the elections

- The Program partner social media platforms have made available some features to broaden the access to reliable electoral contents on their own platforms for the 2020 Elections. This

strategy has guaranteed more people to have an easy access to official information and, therefore, it must be kept and amplified — including in non-electoral times — considering specific features of each platform.

- Movements started by the Court, such as #euvotosemfake initiative tried to be more plural, cooperative and decentralized. The experience gained in the 2020 Elections, however, has shown that it is important to consider, at the moment of disseminating such actions, the commitment of the people involved in fighting against disinformation, as well as their acceptance by different audiences (in a way to avoid occasional cognitive blockages). The partners involved in the communication actions are key in this decision-making and selecting process.
- It is possible to enhance the notifications central unit for Electoral Justice System apps, for instance, by means of rates referring to notification reading and encouragement to message sharing, from the set-up of forwarding functionalities on the apps.
- It is important to broaden the network of information disseminators through producing and offering a full communication kit about the voting process that may be updated regularly. Thus, the Program partners and other institutions shall have enough informational support to build their own messages about the electronic process integrity and security.

4. Zero rating for the Electoral Justice System portal

- In a context where a major part of the population has a restricted access to information due to limited data plans, zero rating is a way to render the access to reliable information more democratic. In this sense, and considering the continuous circulation of disinformation content on the Electoral Process beyond the critical period and even after the elections year, it is important to extend zero rating to the *Fato ou Boato* webpage during non-electoral times.

Fighting against disinformation with capacity-building

1. Institutional campaigns

- The context of polarization on social media creates cognitive blockages that might prevent institutional campaigns to successfully reach the target audience. Therefore, the key point of the capacity-building campaigns should be the diversifications of actors.

2. Capacity-building for the external public

- *Mesário* app has information related to Counter disinformation. However, it is important to broaden and deepen the poll workers' capacity-building of with specific modules on the app exclusively dedicated to approach disinformation about the Electoral Process.
- It has been noted that fake narratives are 'recycled' each year. Therefore, a possible way to prebunking the dissemination of 'resurrected narratives' would be to create capacity-building based on the principal fake news against the Electoral Process.

- *Por Dentro do Processo Eleitoral – Enfrentamento à Desinformação* (Inside the Electoral Process – Counter Disinformation) course has received positive feed-back and suggestions to be extended to other bodies and to the external public in general, in order to disseminate basic knowledge on the Electoral Process, the electronic voting process and disinformation.

3. Capacity-building for the Internal Public

- In the 2020 Elections period, courses were offered to deepen civil servants' knowledge of social media, as well as communication strategies. In this sense, it is important to keep the initiative alive, strengthening and deepening the knowledge of: (i) nudges and disinformation; (ii) inauthentic behaviors; and (iii) extreme polarization.
- In 2020, the Regional Electoral Courts were invited to create their own Committees for Fighting Disinformation, inspired by TSE Committee. In this sense, TSE experiences during the electoral period may be exploited in the regional structures, or may even inspire those who have not created their own Committees previously to do it now. Thus, it is suggested that workshops on the Committee for Fighting Disinformation be offered to the Regional Courts. Relevant topics for the capacity-building including but not limited to: (i) coordinated networks and inauthentic behavior; and (ii) OSINT (Open Source Intelligence) techniques to investigate disinformation networks.
- *Por Dentro do Processo Eleitoral – Enfrentamento à Desinformação* (Inside the Electoral Process – Counter Disinformation) course have been attended by many civil servants. In this context, the possibility to offer it to other bodies and to the external public is presented as an opportunity for revision, enhancement and updating. This could happen notably by considering recent and complementary materials and the disinformation dynamics itself.
- The institutional communication strategy for battling against disinformation may benefit from regular meetings of the Program team with Secom for sharing knowledge gained on fake narratives and metanarratives used against the Electoral Process.

Fighting disinformation focusing on inauthentic behaviors

1. Form for reporting mass messaging in association with WhatsApp

- The form has received a considerable number of reports about mass text messaging. However, when considering that the form would have the potential to reach a greater number of voters, it is suggested to increase the promotion of this channel.
- The rapid preparation of the form has limited the features used, so it is possible to enhance the rapidity of extraction when forwarding data;
- The model used for WhatsApp could be taken for fighting against inauthentic behaviors and other means of dissemination of disinformation.

2. Creation of a network for monitoring disinformation practices against the Electoral Process

- The monitoring network was operated in 2020 by the Database Committee of the Strategic Committee, with a much needed help for team formation. In this sense, the need to enlarge the team and to build servants' capacity internally for the work with social media was identified for the Permanent Program.
- The registration, analysis and forwarding of information received were made manually using spreadsheets, and this required more time in a multiple-user scenario. Thus, it is necessary to automate the flows with a ticket system.
- The possibility to remove URL, with the need to keep a database for the incidents, has shown the importance to engage a URL eternization tool.
- The Regional Electoral Courts have act as points for the identification of disinformation and supply of official information as early as in 2020. This integration to the monitoring network may be amplified in the future.
- Disinformation contents on the Electoral Process have been forwarded to the Program partner platforms by the Court team. This flow may be enhanced through: (i) foresight of any form of feedback on the measures adopted by each platform in response to the forwarding material; and (ii) discussions on the promotion of more straight-forward policy by each platform, especially when the Brazilian elections are concerned.
- An instant communication group with representatives from the Electoral Prosecution Office and the Federal Police has been created to be active during the electoral period. In the scope of the Permanent Program, the integration of the institutions and the work flow with such institutions may be deepened and enhanced.
- In 2020, two tools for social media monitoring, BuzzSumo and Knewin, have been used. The access to the latter has been assigned by a TRE. For the Permanent Program, it is important not only to engage with a new monitoring activities but also to build the team's capacity to deal with the tool.
- 2020 experience has shown that the disinformation dynamics is sometimes mutable, so it is necessary to constantly enhance the forwarding criteria. As an example, the emergence of phishing in 2020 has evidenced the importance to define protocols for forwarding reports to platforms, the Prosecution Office, the Federal Police and the Center for Prevention, Handling and Response to Cyber Incidents of the Government (CTIR Gov) (CTIR-Gov) in case of cybercrimes. It is important to improve and organize the incoming flow of reports through the Court Ombudsperson Office.
- It is necessary to improve the analytics of the *Fato ou Boato* website to get more quantitative and qualitative information on the searches made and the checks made. For instance, it would be important to have statistics on the access to each one of the webpage checks.
- It is possible to search for external partners able to identify inauthentic behaviors and to design cooperation agreements with them for sharing reports based on public data.

3. Integrated Center of National Command and Control of the 2020 Elections (CICCN – 2020 Elections)

- CICCN, which gather public safety forces, monitors in real time the actions performed during the electoral period. In 2020, it has had for the first time a rate referring to disinformation practices, something that must be kept for future elections with the purpose of making joint actions stronger. Disinformation, as a new and mutable phenomenon, requires constant capacity-building; therefore, to integrate CICCN and its participants in capacity-building actions is a good practice to be adopted.

New strategies with no response to 2020 Elections challenges

1. Cyber Intelligence Committee

- The cyber incidents happened during 2020 Elections first round have evidenced the importance to have a quick and accurate communication relating to any cyber events in order to avoid an information void. To guarantee the rapidity and accurateness of the team, it is suggested to promote simulations of cyber incident responses.
- It was further noted the need to set up more robust channels with the major suppliers of technology and infrastructure during the electoral period.

2. Service status page

- It was noted that fraudulent narratives are also created from small technical incidents – such as on time instability on some webpages or apps – that are normally object of official communication. Therefore, from the manual model developed in 2020, it would be important to implement a website with an automated mechanism to supply digital service status in real time.

