

Meta's work to protect the integrity of Brazil's presidential election in 2022

Protecting the integrity of elections on our platforms is a priority for Meta. We built teams, made investments, established partnerships, improved technologies and reinforced measures beyond our platforms so that we're ready for the general election in Brazil this October. Here is a summary of our efforts and lessons learned.



Preventing interference

- Since 2016, we have quadrupled the size of our global team dealing with security and integrity, reaching more than 40,000 people. Local knowledge is essential for this work to be effective, so we have professionals who are based in Brazil.
- In 2021 alone, we invested nearly US\$5 billion in both areas. In addition to hiring people, we have improved our technology.
- Over the last three years, we have handled more than 200 elections around the world.
- Among our actions in the 2020 municipal election in Brazil, we removed more than 140,000 pieces of content that violated our Facebook and Instagram election interference policies before the first round.
- We use artificial intelligence to identify fake accounts. Currently, we remove [99.7% of these accounts](#) before they are reported.
- Our security teams [continually investigate and disrupt](#) networks that, in a coordinated way, use our platforms to influence public debate, hiding who is behind accounts, pages, groups, or what they are doing.
- In the case of WhatsApp, the use of bulk and automated messaging has been prohibited, since the application is not an adequate space for electoral propaganda.
- WhatsApp's integrity system bans around 8 million accounts worldwide every month for abnormal or unwanted behavior.
- Digital ads about automation and bulk messaging on WhatsApp made outside the platform are taken down, and legal action is taken against the companies responsible.
- In July 2022, we started to place [less emphasis](#) on comments and shares to determine the distribution of political content on Facebook in Brazil. The change took place after testing and feedback we received.
- Close to the election date, we will have the Elections Operations Center up and running which allows integrity specialists from different teams in Brazil and around the world to monitor the platform for policy violations and threats developing in real time. This enables us to speed up the response time to address them before they become widespread.
- We have specific rules for [public figures](#) to post content during acts of violence or times of civil unrest, if our standard restrictions aren't sufficient.
- We are in an open and ongoing dialogue with electoral authorities, political parties, media outlets, civil society and academia to understand more about how we can fight misinformation, coordinated inauthentic behavior and to receive reports of abuse on our platforms.



Collaboration with authorities

- We've launched tools to ensure people can access official election information on Facebook and Instagram. Since December 2021, we've been adding a [label](#) to posts about elections and politics on both apps, directing users to the Electoral Justice website. According to the Superior Electoral Court (TSE), access to the portal's homepage increased by almost 10 times in two months after the label started being used.
- In May 2022, we posted reminders on Facebook for Brazilian users to update their voter id cards. Close to election day, Facebook and Instagram will display polling day reminders — an important tool in the face of high abstention rates.
- To combat online violence against women in politics, we launched a guide with the support of the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) and the organization Women's Democracy Network (WDN) - Chapter Brazil.
- For the first time, Facebook and Instagram have a direct channel for the TSE to report content that may violate the apps' rules. Once the complaint is received, it is analyzed by Meta. This is an improvement from previous partnerships.
- WhatsApp has an [extrajudicial channel](#) of communication to receive complaints from the TSE, launched in the 2020 elections. The focus is on quick response to cases of bulk messaging.
- The fight against misinformation is waged with reliable and accurate information. In partnership with the TSE, WhatsApp developed a [virtual assistant](#) (chatbot) to allow voters to interact directly with the electoral authority and receive relevant information.



Fighting misinformation

- Our [Community Standards](#) describe what's allowed and prohibited on the platform. Among content that's removed from Facebook and Instagram is, for instance, those that discourage voting or interfere with voting. This is the case of incorrect information about the election date or polling places. We also remove content that may directly contribute to the risk of harm in the offline world.
- We work with independent [fact-checking agencies](#) to verify the veracity of reported posts on Facebook and Instagram in multiple languages, including Portuguese. In Brazil, our partners are Agência Lupa, AFP, Aos Fatos, Estadão Verifica, Reuters Fact Check and UOL Confere.
- Posts marked as false, altered or partially false have their distribution significantly reduced. If that piece of content still appears in the feed, it's covered so people can decide if they want to see the post, and it's labeled with more information.
- Additionally, posts classified as false, altered or partially false cannot be boosted on Facebook and Instagram.
- Partner verification agencies also have WhatsApp channels where they can receive and bring verified information to users.
- WhatsApp has taken a number of measures in recent years to reduce the virality of messages, such as implementing tags that indicate when messages have been forwarded.
- As of 2020, messages with five or more forwards can only be resent to a single conversation at a time. This led to a global reduction, also observed in Brazil, of 70% in the aggregate number of frequently forwarded messages.

- In 2022, a new forwarding limit was launched by WhatsApp: a previously forwarded message can only be forwarded to one WhatsApp group at a time.
 - In order to empower people who use the app and encourage the verification of content before it's shared, WhatsApp provides, for frequently forwarded messages, a function that allows users to [search the internet](#).
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Increasing transparency in ads

- We require that ads about politics and elections on Facebook and Instagram in Brazil be identified with a [label](#). To get it, advertisers need to verify their identity through an authorization process before pushing content.
- In the [Ads Library](#), users can search for all posts with labels dealing with politics and elections. These ads are stored in the library for a period of seven years.
- Now, the tool provides more information about targeting options for advertising pieces about politics and elections.
- In June 2022, we expanded transparency policies to advertising on Facebook and Instagram made in Brazil on [social issues](#) such as economics, safety and education.