

BIG TECHS, INFORMATION AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA

agreements on how to confront the
power of big digital platforms
and foster alternatives



First Seminar on Big Techs, Information and Democracy in Latin America
Executive Summary
December 5-6, 2023, São Paulo, Brazil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Big techs, information, and democracy in Latin America: agreements on how to confront the power of big digital platforms and foster alternatives

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Glossary

Agência Nacional de Telecomunicações (Anatel)
National Telecommunications Agency

Coalizão Direitos na Rede (CDR)
Rights in Network Coalition

Comitê Gestor da Internet no Brasil (CGI)
Brazilian Internet Steering Committee

Conselho Administrativo de Defesa Econômica (CADE)
Administrative Council for Economic Defense

Federação Nacional dos Jornalistas (Fenaj)
National Federation of Journalists

Fundo de Universalização de Serviços Tecnológicos (FUST)
Fund for the Universalization of Technological Services

Ministério Público Federal (MPF)
Federal Public Prosecutor's Office

Parlamento do Mercosul (Parlasul)
Mercosur Parliament

Projeto de Lei (PL)
Bill of Law

Secretaria de Comunicação Social (Secom)
Social Communication Department

Secretaria de Políticas Digitais (SPDIGI)
Digital Policies Department

Sistema Brasileiro de Defesa da Concorrência (SBDC)
Brazilian Competition Defense System

Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS)
Unified Health System

PRESENTATION

The executive summary titled "Big techs, information, and democracy in Latin America: agreements on how to confront the power of big digital platforms and foster alternatives" is the outcome of discussions at the First Seminar on Big Techs, Information, and Democracy in Latin America, which took place in São Paulo on December 5 and 6, 2023. The event was organized by Intervezes - Coletivo Brasil de Comunicação Social and the Coalizão Direitos na Rede (CDR), and it was the result of collaboration among Brazilian organizations that focus on digital rights and the Forum on Information & Democracy based in France.




The global information and communication space is a common good of humanity that must be protected.

International Declaration on Information and Democracy (2018)



The Forum on Information and Democracy¹ is an international organization founded by 11 independent organizations from different backgrounds and regions. In 2019, the Forum launched the **International Partnership for Information and Democracy**, a non-binding intergovernmental agreement currently endorsed by 52 countries, including Brazil. The signing of this International Partnership took place in September 2019, during the 74th UN General Assembly. Since then, the Forum has promoted intergovernmental articulations and encouraged a global coalition of civil society for the implementation of independence, pluralism, and reliability of information.

With the aim of broadening the debate in the region, the First Seminar on Big Techs, Information and Democracy in Latin America was attended by 70 people, including organizations and social movements from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Canada, France, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. The seminar was free of charge and included a live broadcast of the panel discussions on YouTube².



The global communication and information space is a common good of humankind and should be protected as such.

International Declaration on
Information & Democracy

¹ Available at: <<https://informationdemocracy.org/>>. Accessed on: March 13, 2024.

² Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqe9vY_5IFA>. Accessed on: March 13, 2024.

The Seminar was organized around four topics: **democratic regulation** (1), **technological sovereignty** (2), **economic competition** and (3) **media education** (4). Based on these topics, four debates were held, open to the public, on the mornings of December 5 and 6, 2023, with the presence of experts and guests. In the afternoon, four Working Groups (WGs) were held with the participants registered for the Seminar to deepen the reflections on the topics debated throughout the morning.

In this executive summary, the reader will find the **main points discussed** during the Seminar. The document is structured in four chapters. In each chapter, you will find an **overview of the debates** held on the topic, based on the systematization and organization of the different approaches made by the invited panelists, the reactions and participation of the plenary and the reflections of the Working Groups (WG) on each topic.

In the second part, each chapter contains a **map of the consensus reached** during the debates and also a map of **ongoing discussions**. This presents topics and actions that still need further development and maturation among the partnerships that took part in the seminar. Additionally, you can find **global, regional, and local recommendations** structured by each thematic axis.

Given the global information and communication space is considered a common good for humanity, and with the aim of understanding the political and economic controls that impact this common good, we are sharing a summary based on discussions from the First Seminar on Big Techs, Information and Democracy in Latin America. We hope you find it informative and enjoyable to read!



Democratic Regulation

01

Overview of the discussions

The panel on the topic "Experiences of platform regulation in Latin America and the development of a regional agenda on the subject: Bill 2630/2020 and other legislative initiatives" emphasized the importance of expanding the global discussion on digital rights, particularly given the significant influence of a few international corporations, known as big techs, in controlling and mediating public space. The regulation of platforms should be democratic and committed to upholding freedom of expression.

The participants also highlighted the need to consider the Brazilian, regional, and global political context. Political and ideological conflicts not only impact the discussion on platform regulation and its formulation, but also challenge the consensus established by international norms. The panelists noted that, in addition to a general lack of interest in the topic, the distorted appropriation of the freedom of expression agenda by the ultra-right makes the debate even more difficult.




Some parliamentarians are worried about the proliferation of disinformation because they have been the target, out of revenge. The people who have benefited from the disinformation are trying to use this debate to eliminate any restrictions.

Paulo Rená, Coalizão Direitos na Rede



Apart from this macro-political analysis, another challenge is dealing with the potential approval of hastily drafted regulatory frameworks. These are often created by politicians or public officials who, fueled by a desire for **revenge** after being **victims of disinformation**, aim to restrict freedom of expression. Urgent debates also arise when social media-related events lead to significant public outcry³. Therefore, in addition to proposing effective and democratic laws, it is crucial to also work towards preventing punitive legislation that is based on surveillance.

³Cases such as the attacks on schools that were organized via the Discord platform, among others.



The communication and information space must be **organised** in such a way as to allow **rights** and **democracy** to be exercised.

International Declaration on
Information & Democracy

The discussions have positioned Brazil as one of the most advanced countries in Latin America regarding platform regulation. There is a general consensus that Bill 2630/2020⁴ imposes important regulatory and institutional frameworks, allowing Brazil to play a leading role in the platform regulation debate. However, some analysis suggests that although it is a

step forward, the regulation proposed in Bill 2630/2020 may not be sufficient to limit the power of platforms.

During some presentations, the idea that we need to develop regional proposals for the democratic regulation of digital platforms gained momentum. This could be achieved through agreements and partnerships with **common agendas** among countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Colombia, and also by establishing a regional institutional framework that operates on a supranational basis. This is especially important as the regulation debate is influenced by global **geopolitics**.



We must build ways to guarantee public funding for journalism to strengthen pluralism. The sustainability agenda for journalism is a central theme.

Orlando Silva, federal deputy for the PCdoB



The panel discussed the importance of establishing a comprehensive regulatory system, which would involve a **regulatory body** but not be limited to it, considering the complexity of issues like disinformation. This regulatory system should be multi-sectoral and representative of the diversity of society. The need to invest in public policies that support **media pluralism** was also emphasized, including proposals for **funding journalism** in the public interest to ensure its sustainability.

⁴ It is currently on hold in the Brazilian Congress.

While there was a lot of agreement, the debate also highlighted the necessity of further exploration of certain issues, such as the **duty of care** and **systemic risk analysis**, both of which are addressed in the European Digital Services Act (DSA). It was suggested that the debate on platform regulation should be conducted in stages rather than attempting to cover all dimensions of regulation in a single proposal. Additionally, thematic gaps in Bill 2630/2020, including the protection and defense of **children and adolescents**, were pointed out and need to be addressed.

The panel included representatives from the Secretariat of Digital Policies of the Secretariat of Social Communication of the Presidency of the Republic (Brazil), Intervenções - Coletivo Brasil de Comunicação Social (Brazil), Coalizão Direitos na Rede (Brazil), federal deputy Orlando Silva (PCdoB-SP), OBSERVACOM (AL), and was moderated by Desinformante (Brazil). Discussions on the topic "Experiences of platform regulation in Latin America and the development of a regional agenda on the subject: Bill 2630/2020 and other legislative initiatives" continued during the Working Group discussions, and the main points are presented below.

CONSENSUS MAP - DEMOCRATIC REGULATION

#Proposition

We need to shift from a defensive approach to a proactive one, connecting more with society to address the risks associated with the excessive control of information by big tech companies.

To avoid the issue being guided by revanchism or social tragedies, which often result in policies of greater vigilance. More surveillance does not necessarily lead to greater security or better quality information.

#Surveillance

#Traceability

There have been no proposed methods to address the traceability of messages without compromising user privacy, so we should question such actions.

In addition to a regulatory body, we need a regulatory system involving different state entities that is multi-sectoral and representative of society's diversity.

#System

#Processes

While the proposed regulation of processes in Bill 2630/2020 is a good step, it may not be enough to limit the power of the platforms.

#Stages

To avoid the challenge of creating a comprehensive regulation for all issues caused by digital monopolies, we should implement regulations in stages to strengthen our common agenda.

Producing more data and raising awareness about the role of journalism as a public good that requires proper compensation and support in the digital environment.

#Journalism

#Compensation

There is a need for actions and public policies to finance public interest journalism and the production and dissemination of general information. Various proposals, including compensating journalism by digital platforms, need to be considered for discussion.

In Brazil, especially among political figures, there is still a lack of conviction about the importance of the regulatory agenda, which is often only addressed in emergencies.

#Conviction

#Limitations

Addressing the platform regulation debate solely through the legislature is limiting, as the challenge is to engage citizens in the issue. To achieve this in Brazil, it is necessary to consider normative paths with the active participation of civil society.

One of the challenges is to develop a regional approach for Latin America in light of various global experiences. There is a consensus that the Latin American perspective on regulation is not well-established or politically mature in the region.

#Regionalization

#LeadingRole

Given its geographical and market size, Brazil needs to play a leading role in the discussion, avoiding a self-centered approach to regulating digital platforms.

We must avoid the constant risk of adopting legislation from other countries in Brazil and Latin America, which have distinct histories, cultures, and populations.

#Europe

#Inspiration

It's important to closely examine inspiring examples of platform regulation in neighboring countries in Latin America or the Global South.

In addition to drawing inspiration from foreign experiences, it's necessary to acknowledge the significant role of existing laws in Brazil, such as the Internet Civil Rights Framework and the General Data Protection Law (LGPD), along with their regulatory institutions.

#Acknowledgement

#Concentration

Evaluate experiences in regulating traditional media, considering the fight against the concentration of advertising resources.

#Infrastructure

Addressing the issue of internet access infrastructure and platforms in conjunction with public policies, without establishing a hierarchy of agendas.

Advocate for net neutrality and bring attention to zero rating, as this commercial strategy is crucial to the debate and can lead to disinformation.

#Neutrality

#LatinAmerica

Develop a Latin American strategy for regulating digital platforms that considers regional specificities and establishes a unified discourse on the subject.

Take into account the context of the Brazilian municipal elections in 2024 when developing strategies to regulate platforms.

#Elections

ONGOING DISCUSSIONS - DEMOCRATIC REGULATION

#Europe

Delve into debates on 'duty of care' and 'systemic risk assessment', within the context of European laws that intersect with Latin American culture and the regional scenario.

#Impacts

Work to ensure that the new legislation incorporates regulations for platforms that have a significant impact, rather than generic rules that impose greater responsibilities on technology companies.

#Regional

Delve into debates on the need to establish a regional institution, in addition to national ones, to address the need for regionalized operations.

#Expansion

Leverage debates and formulate proposals for comprehensive platform legislation that goes beyond regulating only transparency, control, and journalism compensation, etc.

#Dialogues

Closer dialogues with organizations such as the Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE), the National Consumer Secretariat (SENACON) and the National Telecommunications Agency (ANATEL) regarding existing regulatory models.

#Financing

Explore financing journalism through taxes on big tech companies and the establishment of public funds, although there are differing opinions on sustainability models based on tax collection.

#Concerns

There are concerns about the compensation of Brazilian journalism, particularly in light of the economic power of platforms.

#Elections

Advocate for the prohibition of boosting and recommending paid content during Brazilian elections to prevent the abuse of electoral economic power in digital media.

#Slicing

Regarding the slicing, hyper-slicing or non-slicing of the agendas present in Bill 2630/2020, there is consensus within the working group to split the agendas, albeit with objections.

#RegulatoryBody

Identify the regulatory body responsible for overseeing platforms in Brazil and determine whether the regulation will be broad, restricted, or segmented.

Recommendations - Democratic Regulation

From the debate "Experiences of platform regulation in Latin America and the development of a regional agenda for the issue: Bill 2630/2020 and other legislative initiatives", the following recommendations were considered:

Regional recommendations

- Create a regional (Latin American) campaign on process regulation as an alternative to the Silicon Valley and Chinese models.
- Hold the second seminar on big tech companies. Consider holding it in Colombia in June 2024.
- Mobilize Latin American civil society to participate in the NetMundial event, in São Paulo, Brazil, in 2024.
- Develop a unified Latin American approach to address big platforms from the perspective of sovereignty as opposed to coloniality.
- Encourage Latin American states to create public infrastructure to enable the creation of public platforms.
- Expand the thematic agenda of activities on platform regulation and internet governance.

Local recommendations

- Strengthen the influence of civil society on the issue of regulation in Brazil, including local and community players in the territories.
- Enhance the role of the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGI.br) and its multisectoral mechanisms.
- Include the topic of journalism and remuneration in the calendar of activities for the next period.
- Advocate for transparency, decentralization of power, and debate the dominance of big tech companies over the communications infrastructure in Brazil.
- Map Brazilian organizations for the development of new technologies at community level.



Technological Sovereignty

02

Overview of the discussions

The thematic panel "Technological sovereignty and the development of independent alternatives for the distribution of information online" conducted a comprehensive analysis of the structural, economic, and geopolitical issues related to technological and data sovereignty. It also highlighted practical experiences in self-managing projects, community communication and training.

Participants emphasized the need to **(re)think technology** beyond its current use and consumption, and to consider strategies for technology appropriation and development to counter the current dominance of big tech companies. This would require the creation of a "complete technological start" start-up, which would need significant investment from the government to be successful.



The internet is how it is today because the state has never intervened. It's difficult to regulate the internet today because it wasn't regulated initially.


Guillermo Mastrini, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas



For the panelists, the concentration of infrastructure has an impact on the production of experiences of technological autonomy, especially those that occur in territories, as communities often struggle to maintain a meaningful connection and are dependent on the **connectivity infrastructure offered by megacorporations**. Participants evaluated that neoliberalism, through globalization, has swept away the state and public policies for access to **technological infrastructure**.

It is widely agreed that the companies are part of a transnational oligopoly that wields political (and technological) power, hindering **technological sovereignty**. These power imbalances between the companies and the countries developing these technologies are created and sustained by profitable political agendas and, most importantly, by a data extraction business model designed for **platform capitalism**.

There are currently alternatives to monopolies, such as community radio, Linux, Signal, Ubuntu, Decode, etc. However, Brazil has not engaged in a widespread debate about using these alternatives to challenge monopolies. It would be important to revive the intense discussions from the



The global communication and information space should serve the exercise of freedom of expression and opinion and respect the principles of pluralism, freedom, dignity, tolerance and the ideal of reason and understanding.

International Declaration on
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early 2000s about the significance of utilizing free and open-source software and to bolster the efforts to improve internet access, which is still not a reality in Brazil.

“

We need to debate big tech's dominance over national infrastructure. We need a common approach in Latin America to confront the big platforms.

Flávia Lefèvre, Coalizão Direitos na Rede

”

From this perspective, ensuring technological sovereignty and data security must be achieved through a **national infrastructure** based on a **national strategy**. To implement **technological sovereignty**, the government needs to redefine state sovereignty strategies within the framework of human rights, for example, by creating conditions for **storing** data generated in Brazil within the country's own territory.

The participants highlighted that the challenges to technological sovereignty are now a part of a global agenda and an economy of scale, and therefore need to be addressed globally. However, they also cautioned that alternatives aiming to establish global public infrastructures could lead to the country becoming **technological dependent**. They suggested that regional initiatives could provide a way forward.

The importance of public policies in promoting technological sovereignty was emphasized, with proposals such as the development of **public technology platforms** in Brazil or at local and regional levels. The establishment of a **universal public platform** could also facilitate this process.

The panelists discussed the importance of addressing strategic and macro-structural possibilities in large-scale public policies, as well as the significance of **digital autonomy** in territories and communities. They noted that in Brazil, **technological cooperativism** as a means of challenging platforms has not been widely explored. Although autonomous and decentralized alternatives exist, they often lack funding and rely on private initiatives.

During the debate, thought-provoking questions emerged, such as "What are the ways of financing these initiatives?" and "How can technological autonomy be achieved beyond the state?" The responsibility of civil society and academia to monitor the economic concentration of the internet in the Northern Region, particularly in the Amazon, was emphasized. The ongoing process of internet expansion with **low-orbit satellites** (Starlink) in the region poses a risk to the communication rights of the population, as it depends on a single company for connectivity.

The panelists also highlighted the importance of conducting and sharing successful experiments in alternative technologies. For instance, in Mexico, indigenous communities have established a **community cell phone network**. With support from private sector and the government, Mexican communities have created their own **internet** and cell phone **cooperatives** with a nationwide reach. Additionally, there was emphasis on clouds and services specializing in projects based on the use of **free technologies**, and the need to deepen independent and alternative debates on **community rules**. These are examples that could **inspire discussions** on technological sovereignty **in Brazil**.

The presentation discussed the experiences of independent and alternative sovereignties, focusing on the case of the Guarani indigenous people in the southern region of the city of São Paulo. They have developed an intranet system, known as Nhandeflix, which provides internet access to the entire community. The system includes collegiate moderation to regulate access to **sensitive content** such as pornography and violent games. Additionally, *Nhandeflix* stores and distributes films produced by or about the Guarani people.

Representatives from organizations such as Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (Argentina), Código Sur (Costa Rica), Rhizomatica (Mexico), and Coletivo Digital (Brazil) participated in the panel, which was moderated by the Nupef Institute (Brazil). The discussions focused on the theme "Technological sovereignty and the development of independent alternatives for the distribution of information online." The main points from the discussions are presented below.

CONSENSUS MAP - TECHNOLOGICAL SOVEREIGNTY

#Literacy

There is no political education process on internet governance, especially in vulnerable territories. Digital literacy is essential at this time.

Apart from digital literacy focused on use, we need to emphasize critical and conscious use of the internet through media education processes that reach all territories.

#Consciousness

#Accessibility

Ensuring linguistic accessibility to translate and democratize verbal access to the internet for traditional territories and peoples, including those with disabilities, as well as promoting the education of public officials.

Defending the right to communication to encourage various perspectives on technologies and promote the production and distribution of content rather than just the role of user/consumer of information from and about the world.

#Incentive

#Racism

Denouncing "technological racism" and acknowledging the impact of monopolistic projects on the environment, which culturally destroy territories and harm the population.

Building a less predatory sovereignty, which prioritizes and values the maintenance of territories and communities and influences community network policies.

#Territories

#Return

Revisiting important debates from the early 2000s, such as the need for the production and use of free and open-source software and the strengthening of public connectivity and application infrastructures.

Building an agenda on sovereignty to pressure the state by occupying spaces and monitoring resources and policies.

#Monitoring

#Sovereignty

Pressure the state and public officials to build a technological and data sovereignty agenda that is aligned with the country's strategic development project.

#Inequality

Tackling economic challenges, such as inequality, and addressing access issues related to lack of infrastructure and economic resources/funding in the territories.

Strengthening the role of the state in promoting democratic access to the internet and developing and implementing applications and technological solutions.

#Access

#Violations

Pressuring platforms to address rights violations, especially gender and racial violence, so that they involve not only punishment, but provide appropriate reparation measures.

Developing solutions and public policies in different spheres that are not standardized but rather adaptable and born from various contexts and territories.

#Policies

#Amazon

Intensified monitoring by civil society the of expansion of the internet through low-orbit satellites in the Amazon region, operated by companies like Elon Musk's Starlink.

ONGOING DISCUSSIONS - TECHNOLOGICAL SOVEREIGNTY

#Autonomy

We need to develop and map experiences that lead to connectivity and autonomy in the territories, independent of government actions.

#Financing

By studying independent initiatives, we can explore different methods of financing these endeavors.

#State

One of the questions that emerged in the debate is whether it is feasible to promote technological sovereignty/autonomy beyond the state in a world of economies of scale.

Recommendations - Technological Sovereignty

From the debate on "Technological sovereignty and the development of independent alternatives for the distribution of information online", the following recommendations were considered:

Local recommendations:

- Create a map of municipal and state public applications used by society and movements, as well as digital solutions such as Botocar, MobilizaSP, Valeu (food in RJ), Taxi Rio, and Contrate Quem Lute (Movement of Homeless Workers - MTST).
- Monitor the Fund for the Universalization of Telecommunications Services (FUST) to ensure that civil society has a presence in the discussion forums, including the FUST Management Committee, which is expected to be established in 2024.



Economic Competition

03

Overview of the discussions

The topic “Economic regulation of digital platforms: how to solve the lack of plurality and diversity of information and the repeated abuses of economic power” addressed the importance of creating mechanisms to regulate the **platforms’ business model**. Big tech’s high concentration of power and the way digital platforms operate have continually interfered with the democratic balance and social life. Platform regulation has, therefore, been seen as one way to safeguard fundamental rights.



The big platforms can now be considered the public sphere itself. And they need to be regulated because this has consequences for democracy and freedom of expression.

Ana Mielke, Intervozes




One of the needed actions is **denaturalizing** platformization, which makes technology companies the exclusive owners of all **technological solutions**. This denaturalization would also involve implementing **economic competition** regulation, which guarantees, for example, the separation of services offered by big techs and the imposition of rules to prevent the formation of **digital oligopolies**.

According to the participants, companies can exploit various features and strategies to gain competitive advantages, often leading to market distortions and abuses of dominant position. To address this, one of the first proposals is to invest in ex-ante regulation designed to prevent potential harms related to threats to competition, consumption, abuse of economic power and economic and data concentration. The panelists also proposed reviewing Brazilian antitrust legislation to tailor it to the platform market and conducting market concentration tests based on the quality of services rather than prices.

Another proposal was to prohibit platforms from using the data they collect as a database for launching new ventures, as recently happened in Brazil with the launch of **Threads** by Meta using data transferred from Instagram. Utilizing a profiled database to create a new service platform gives the owning company a significant competitive advantage in the platforms and applications market. There has also been

criticism of exploiting the network effect and certain business models, such as freemium³. It is suggested that these practices should be regulated to prevent market concentration.



The communication and information space should guarantee the **freedom**, independence and pluralism of news and information. As a **common good**, this space has social, cultural and democratic value and should not be **reduced** to its commercial dimension alone.

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It was also pointed out that the ban on **cross-ownership**, which is already provided for in some broadcasting regulations worldwide, should be expanded to include media and technology companies. In practical terms, this would involve creating regulations to prevent a single conglomerate from operating multiple services such as messaging, social networking, search engines, and e-mail. This would require different

companies to offer each of these services, preventing the formation of large holding companies that share capital and user data. Prohibitions on cross-ownership already exist in the Brazilian regulatory framework to prevent monopolies and oligopolies.

“

With globalization, neoliberalism swept away the space of the state and public policies on access to technological infrastructure. Our task now is to take back this space.

Helena Martins, Diracom

”

In the realm of structural regulation, there is a proposal to separate companies that provide applications or content hosting services from those that curate the content for users. This proposed separation would directly affect content distribution, which

³ Freemium is a business model in which a product or service (typically a digital offering such as software, media, game, or web services) is offered free of charge, but premium users are charged for additional features, functionality, or virtual goods.

is currently carried out using algorithms that prioritize reach over the quality of information, and could potentially help reduce the spread of disinformation and hate speech on networks.

Some proposals did not involve separating the companies from their capital. One example is creating regulatory mechanisms to **separate** content curation from hosting services. This would allow users to choose which company provides the curation service, regardless of where the content is hosted. This measure would increase the number of companies offering these services, promote fair competition, foster innovation, and potentially give users more autonomy and choice.

The importance of ensuring that platforms and applications offer **interoperable** services to allow user control, autonomy, and **data portability** was emphasized. It was also highlighted that net neutrality on the internet should be guaranteed, prohibiting agreements between connection operators and application and content providers (such as **zero rating**). This **unfair practice** gives platforms an advantage in **competition** by allowing them to be accessed without using the data allowance.

In addition to highlighting ways to reduce the concentration of digital platforms, the panelists cautioned against the power imbalance in the public discussion on regulation since the platforms themselves play a role in this debate by **spreading and promoting** views that oppose regulation, as seen in relation to Bill 2630/2020 in Brazil.

This panel included representatives from Intervezes - Coletivo Brasil de Comunicação Social (Brazil), the European Commission's Communications Networks, Content and Technology (CNECT) Directorate, the Forum on Internet and Democracy (France) and Coalizão Direitos na Rede (Brazil). The discussion was moderated by TEDIC - Tecnología y Comunidad (Paraguay). The debates on the topic "Economic regulation of digital platforms: how to solve the lack of plurality and diversity of information and the repeated abuses of economic power" continued in the Working Group on the same topic. The main points from the discussion are presented below.

CONSENSUS MAP - ECONOMIC COMPETITION

#Advantage

Implement measures to prevent a technology company from unfairly leveraging its database to gain an advantage in offering other services. Data accumulation gives companies a significant competitive edge.

Promote the education of platform users about the role of the media, algorithms and how hidden interests manipulate their interactions on networks.

#Rights

#Gratuity

Create mechanisms to forbid agreements between internet operators and application providers, especially the practice of zero rating, which gives big platforms an advantage in the market by inducing their use and consumption through a free-of-charge agreement.

Ensure civil society's participation in decision-making forums and organizations, such as councils, authorities, and agencies.

#Participation

#Advertising

Address the concentration of advertising revenue in the digital environment by creating rules to redistribute the revenue, as 90% of it is currently concentrated in the hands of Facebook and Google.

Advocate for regulatory models that guarantee the interoperability of services offered by platforms and applications to ensure user data control, autonomy and portability.

#Interoperability

#Lock-in

There are initiatives, such as a user "data wallet" in Belgium, to reduce the costs of moving from one platform to another and avoid user lock-in.

Propose regulatory measures to ensure structural and functional separation between the different services offered by platforms to mitigate impacts on information production and circulation controls.

#Separation

#Unbundling

Separating content curation and hosting services allows users to choose a company to curate their content, which doesn't have to be the same company hosting the content.

#TheoryOfHarm

By applying the concept of relevant markets and various theories of harm, we can demonstrate how the lack of competition significantly damages users.

The Brazilian antitrust regulatory frameworks need to be reviewed and updated to address today's platform market, where the price of services offered doesn't determine the abuse of economic power.

#Antitrust

#Acquisitions

Addressing the dynamics of acquiring new companies is a practice carried out by large companies to avoid competition, directly impacting innovation.

Implementing rules to minimize the costs of entering competition involves public policies to assist small technology companies wishing to compete in the market.

#EntryCosts

#Transparency

Establish mechanisms that impose transparency obligations on platforms and demonstrate to society the harm caused by the lack of transparency in platform operations.

Develop local, regional or national projects that rely on platform cooperativism to challenge the dominance of private platforms.

#Cooperativism

#Contracting

Establish parameters for the contracting of platforms by public entities, such as governments and universities, to achieve greater state control over the data produced and stored by private companies.

Create regulatory measures that limit cross-ownership based on the knowledge already gained from the debate on broadcasting regulation.

#Cross-ownership

#Infrastructure

Advocate for the development of universal infrastructure that can be utilized by small businesses and technological innovation projects for commercial and non-commercial purposes, such as ensuring access to rights.

ONGOING DISCUSSIONS - ECONOMIC COMPETITION

#Authorities

Encourage discussions about which entities could regulate the economic competition of big platforms utilizing the resources of established authorities like the Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE).

#Advertising

Implement regulations to limit the concentration of advertising in the digital space in order to prevent the misuse of user data for ad targeting. Collection and profiling of data for advertising purposes should be prohibited.

Recommendations - Economic Competition

The debate on "Economic regulation of digital platforms: how to solve the lack of plurality and diversity of information and the repeated abuses of economic power," led to the following recommendations:

Global recommendations:

- Conduct global meta-analysis to understand algorithm impact on democracies worldwide.

Regional recommendations:

- Consider developing a Latin American agenda to reach a consensus and define common ground for regulating the economic competence of digital platforms.
- Broaden the discussion of economic regulation in society to encourage press coverage and critical analysis of big tech companies.

Local recommendations:

- Engage other stakeholders such as trade unions and consumer associations in the dialogue on antitrust mechanisms and authorities, and establish a network of these organizations to influence the issue.
- Provide training to various stakeholders including civil society, the media, advertisers, and advertising agencies to enhance their understanding of platform regulation language.
- Systematize the key points in the regulation debate, including the discussion on economic competition and the role of the Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE).
- Delve into the implications of antitrust laws that could be applied by the Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE).
- Deepen the debate on the importance of establishing public platforms and explore the regulatory frameworks within which these platforms could operate.
- Further analyze Bill 2768/2022, authored by federal deputy João Maia (PL/RN), known as the future "Digital Market Law," which among other points, seeks to designate Anatel as the regulator of digital platforms.




Media Education

04

Overview of the discussions

The debate on "Media education and the construction of alternatives: how to empower and foster spaces for social participation by users in Latin America to improve the digital environment" involved numerous reflections on the concept of media education, which, according to the panelists, is in constant dispute. There is a need to establish consensus on the role of media education focused on the citizen rather than just the user. This contrasts with the view that training for use is enough, as some proponents often argue. We must return to the notion that citizens are subjects, not objects, of technology and digital media.

During the presentations, recent data showed that nine out of ten children use the internet in Brazil. At first glance, this figure could seem optimistic but the data shows that 50% of these children access the internet exclusively via their cell phones, and more than 80% of them are in classes D and E. The immediate assumption that Brazilian children are **digital natives** should, therefore, always be questioned because access is very unequal. In addition, children should have the **right to learn** how machines work, and the involvement of families in this context is fundamental.



Digital platforms shall fully comply with standards of freedom of expression and opinion and, to this end, shall respect political, ideological and religious neutrality when structuring the information and communication space.

International Declaration on
Information & Democracy

“

The vigilantism movement concerning children also needs to be tackled. We do not want children to be subjected but citizens.

Isabella Henriques, Instituto Alana

”

The debate also addressed the importance of including media education in public policies, in addition to formal education. The panelists agreed that media education should be integrated into school curriculums from an early age. They also highlighted the role of popular education in empowering social participation in the **digital environment**. Considering Brazil's vast size, they emphasized the need for public policies to respect the **diverse forms** of organization and communication in different regions, promoting self-management and avoiding hierarchical and one-way approaches.



Meta has used its structure to interfere in democracy. We want regulation that addresses this concentration of power. The population cannot depend on these companies to exercise their rights.

Gabrielle Graça, Artigo 19 Brasil



This panel featured representatives from Instituto Alana (Brazil), Ação Educativa - Assessoria, Pesquisa e Informação (Brazil), Cooperativa Sulá Batsú (Costa Rica), Secom-PR (Brazil). It was moderated by Instituto Vero. The discussions focused on the topic "Media education and the construction of alternatives: how to empower and foster spaces for social participation by users in Latin America to improve the digital environment" and continued in the Working Group on the same theme. The main points are summarized below.

CONSENSUS MAP - MEDIA EDUCATION

#Popular

Media education should not be limited to formal, school-based education but should also encompass popular education experiences.

Actions by governments and society (universities, organizations, movements) should promote the role of popular education in citizens' education and highlight its connection with issues such as the climate emergency, racism and discrimination, gender and sexual violence, and the rights of children and adolescents.

#Transversality

#Citizenship

Media education actions should focus on building citizenship rather than just using digital media and emerging technologies.

Universities should serve as a space for training the workforce and empowering educators and schools in media education.

#Universities

#Capillarization

It is crucial to provide teachers with training to promote media education at all levels of education (primary, secondary, and higher education) and popular education.

Media education should be made accessible through the translation of content into different languages using less complicated or technical language and contextualized methodologies.

#Accessibility

#Self-criticism

It is important to acknowledge that the Brazilian education system is excluding, and we need to take steps to make it more inclusive for different ethnic and social groups to be able to access these resources and platforms.

Communication strategies should prioritize people's security, with strategic media education and communication aimed at protecting and defending peoples and their territories, particularly their leaders and human rights advocates.

#Communication

#Collaboration

Developing strategies for collaborative projects, partnerships, and networking between organizations to leverage each organization's expertise.

#Technologies

Advocating for funding to facilitate the adoption and use of technologies, as well as enabling organizations and various groups to develop their own technologies.

In digital education, ensuring the security and protection of user data, especially for children, adolescents, and historically vulnerable groups, in addition to providing resources and support.

#Data

#Strategy

Media education cannot overlook a critical analysis of big tech companies' business models, particularly their focus on targeted advertising, and should be part of a broader discussion on national technological development strategy.

Promoting greater interaction among Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and educational institutions within their communities to foster the development of innovative projects.

#Territories

#Self-management

Empowering communities and territories to self-manage media education policies to avoid hierarchical and one-sided implementation.

Encouraging organized civil society to learn about and support digital cooperatives as a non-profit model for the digital environment, drawing from successful examples in Brazil and Latin America.

#Cooperativism

#Sovereignty

Media education must promote an awareness-raising process for independence. It must be critical of the current model's dependence on large platforms and become the arena for debate on the importance of technological sovereignty.

Exploring ways to reduce the interference of big tech companies in providing media education as the training they offer focus on building audiences for the private market.

#Corporatism

#Access

The media education debate must involve advocating for universal internet access, particularly for different ethnic and social groups in Brazil who currently lack proper connection or electricity.

ONGOING DISCUSSIONS - MEDIA EDUCATION

#Financing

Discuss the potential for public funding to support independent and self-managed initiatives in various regions, in order to prevent them from relying solely on projects funded by telecommunications companies or major platforms.

#Consultation

Evaluate the importance of public consultations conducted by the federal government and their limited effectiveness in gathering input from society. These consultations primarily engage organized civil society and often fail to reach diverse communities and territories, making them inaccessible to groups that speak different languages or use alternative forms of communication.

Recommendations - Media Education

During the debate on "Media education and the construction of alternatives: how to empower and foster spaces for social participation by users in Latin America to improve the digital environment," the following recommendations were considered:

Regional recommendations:

- Organize a virtual meeting to further explore and create opportunities for sharing experiences, methods, and content, with a focus on media education/citizen education.
- Include education movements and educators (teachers from nursery and primary education, Indigenous schools, quilombola schools, and peripheral schools) in future media/citizen education discussions.

Local recommendations:

- Improve public consultations to accurately reflect the reality of different Brazilian contexts and develop diverse strategies and actions for these contexts.
- Ensure that public consultations also utilize non-digital methods, allowing participation for individuals who are not connected, and conduct them using various methods and languages to include non-normative forms of communication.



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