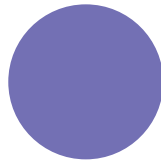




**IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE**  
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# THE CIVIC SPACE GPS

QUARTERLY BULLETIN 05

APRIL 2022



# THE CIVIC SPACE GPS

October – December 2021

The civic space – the sphere between business, the State, and family where citizens organize, debate and act to influence public policy and the general direction of the country – is under attack. The constant assaults on civic space threaten civil and political rights, hinder transparency and curtail the freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association. Such attacks also clash directly with rights and freedoms guaranteed in the Brazilian Constitution, as well as in countless international conventions and treaties, and represent a grave threat to democracy itself. The closure of civic space is not exclusive to Brazil but is becoming troublingly common in this country.

This is why Igarapé Institute has launched “**The Civic Space GPS**”. The objective is to monitor attacks, responses led by State institutions, as well as acts of resistance led by civil society. These quarterly bulletins track and analyze such attacks as reported in multiple media outlets, in particular Folha de S. Paulo, G1, O Estado de S. Paulo, O Globo and UOL. Our researchers then organize and catalogue this data in order to classify the types of strategies and tactics employed to circumscribe civic space. This typology was published in the Igarapé Institute’s Strategic Paper 49,

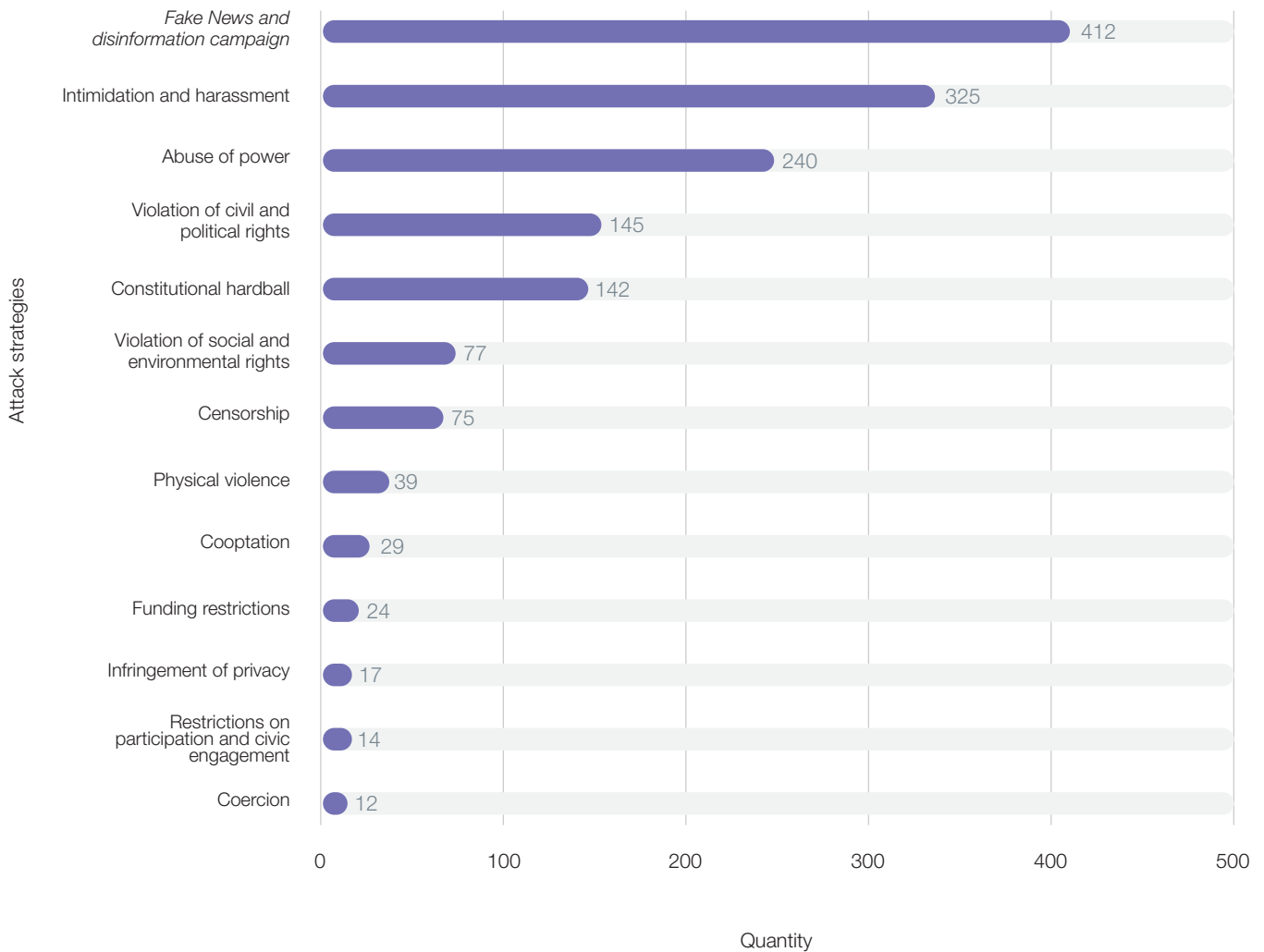
[“The ‘Agora’ is Under Attack: assessing the closure of civic space in Brazil and around the world”](#), and in the supporting Technical Note, [“A Typology to Understand Strategies and Tactics for Attacking the Civic Space”](#), which updated the list of strategies and tactics.

In this fifth edition, in addition to the quarterly bulletin, the Institute provides a 2021 retrospective. Between January and December, **1,551** threats to Brazil’s civic space were identified. On the other hand, during the same period, the Institute identified **1,349** institutional responses and **750** acts of resistance led by civil society and other groups. During the last quarter of the year, **334** threats, **241** institutional responses and **152** acts of resistance were registered. This year witnessed the intensification and diversification of strategies and tactics employed to circumscribe civic space up until the third quarter, whereas the final months of 2021 saw a slight reduction in the frequency of these attacks. This does not mean, however, that the threats and setbacks imposed throughout the year have left the fundamental structures and processes of Brazilian democracy untouched.

# 2021 Retrospective

Between January and December, 2021, the Igarapé Institute mapped **1,551 attacks to Brazilian civil space**. **Fake news and disinformation campaigns** (412 threats), **intimidation and harassment** (325), **abuse of power** (240), **violations of civil and political rights** (145) and **constitutional hardball** (142) were the five most employed tactics identified throughout the year. Together they contributed to the consolidation of an environment marked by fear and intolerance to criticism, in which democratic institutions and processes were blatantly attacked and the public purpose of public institutions mandates subverted to serve the non-republican interests of the certain individuals.

**FIGURE 1 - Most commonly employed strategies to attack civic space in 2021**



Source: Own elaboration, based on the systematic collection of information published in the press.

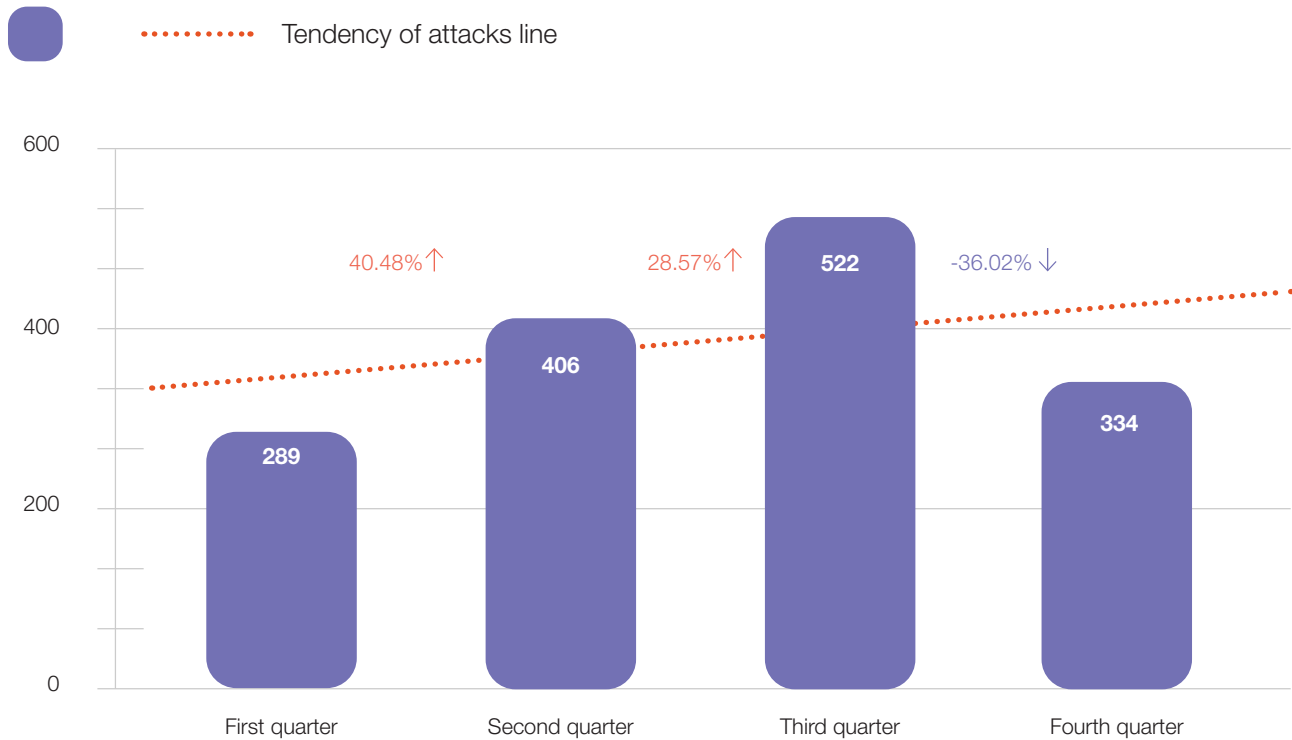
Processes set forth at the beginning of Jair Bolsonaro's government, such as attempts to silence opponents, criminalizing civil society and [attacks on the other government branches](#) intensified throughout the year. Concurrently, new threats have emerged, contributing to the weakening of institutions and the gradual erosion of our democracy. The advance on [subverting key government agencies](#) by means of [appointments based on political alignment in detriment](#) of technical capacity led to deviation from the public purpose of institutions in key areas, such as [Education](#), [Health](#), [Culture](#), [Environment](#), [Science and Technology](#) and [Human Rights](#). [Public servants](#) not aligned with the government have suffered [persecution and institutional harassment](#). [Coopted](#) agencies acted not only to [shield the government from investigations and accusations](#), but also to [persecute critics and those who oppose the government](#). The [illegitimate use of the public security and criminal justice apparatus to silence dissenting voices](#) has become even more detrimental with the [abusive use of the National Security Law \(LSN\)](#). The arbitrary [arrests](#), [subpoenas](#) and [investigations](#) have created an environment marked by fear, insecurity and self-censorship.

Moreover, the attempts to curtail critical opinions and independent thought have impaired public debate by silencing dissent. Intimidation and harassment were responsible for the [restriction on the freedom of speech](#) of journalists, [researchers](#), human rights [activists](#), [indigenous leaders](#), and [teachers](#), amongst other groups critical of the government. In some cases, verbal and online attacks escalated to [physical violence](#). Whilst these tactics that threaten democracy's fundamental principles also contribute to undermining democracy from within, more incisive practices have also found fertile ground in 2021. The escalation of authoritarian rhetoric reached its peak when armored military vehicles

paraded outside Palácio do Planalto [as a means to intimidate the judiciary and legislative branches](#), as well as with the September 7 demonstrations, in which Supreme Court Justices were incisively attacked. A [raid on Congress](#) was incited and pro-coup speeches took center stage in face of the campaign to discredit the electoral system.

The resurgence of the institutional crisis was driven by a wave of fake news and disinformation campaigns, which garnered masses of supporters and corroborated with the population's preexisting distrust in institutions. The unsubstantiated allegations of [voter fraud](#) and denialism are just a few examples of how false facts are spread as a means to undermine the public's trust in democratic values. After all, the very basis of democracy is the ability to maintain dialogue between those with conflicting opinions and the ongoing search for consensus – a continuous, trying and sensitive practice.

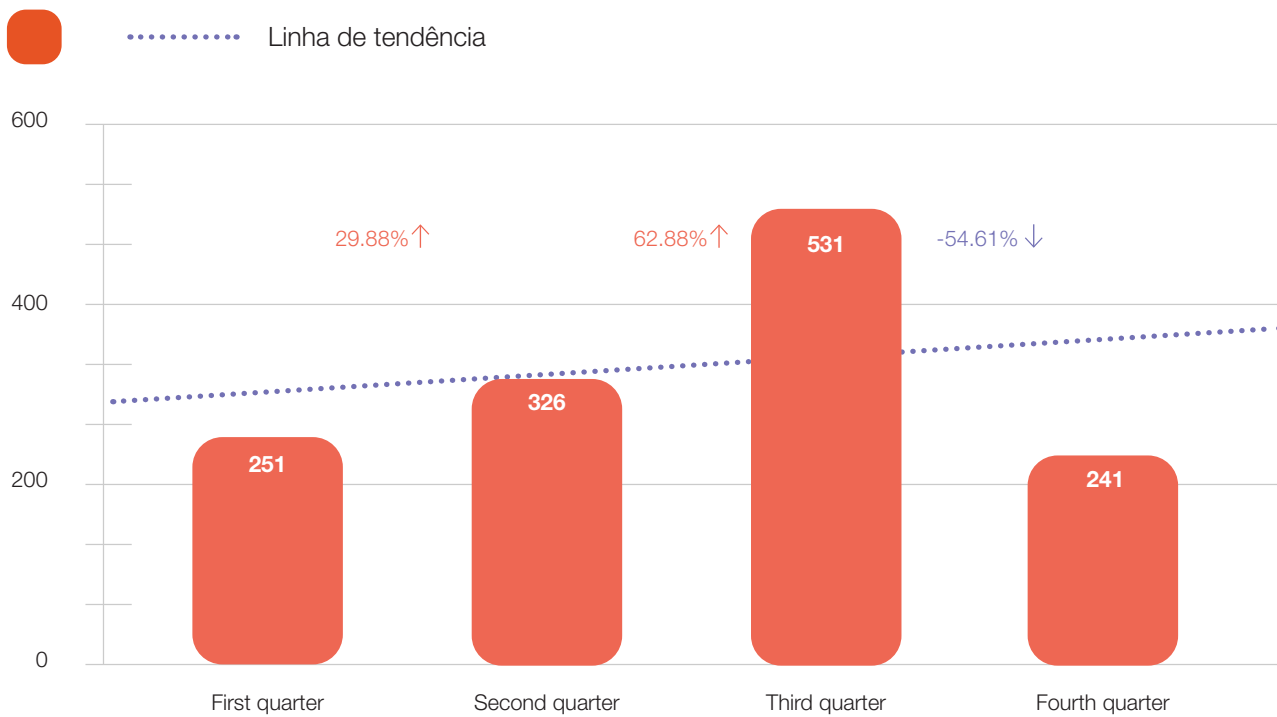
Added to this context is the mismanagement of the pandemic, with the delay in purchasing vaccines, besides the systematic attacks against science and the vaccines themselves. This was especially costly for vulnerable groups, as it created a disproportionate impact on the [indigenous](#), [quilombola](#), [black](#), [incarcerated](#) and [low-income](#) populations. Brazil ended the year with 619,056 deaths from COVID-19.

**FIGURE 2** - Threats to civic space in 2021

The appointment of allies to public positions in control and inspection institutions and the constant publication of infralegal measures contradicted the public purpose of many institutions and dismantled several public policies key to public interest. But despite the limitation of the unfettered functioning of our system of checks and balances, such strategies mobilized reactions by institutions and the other powers.

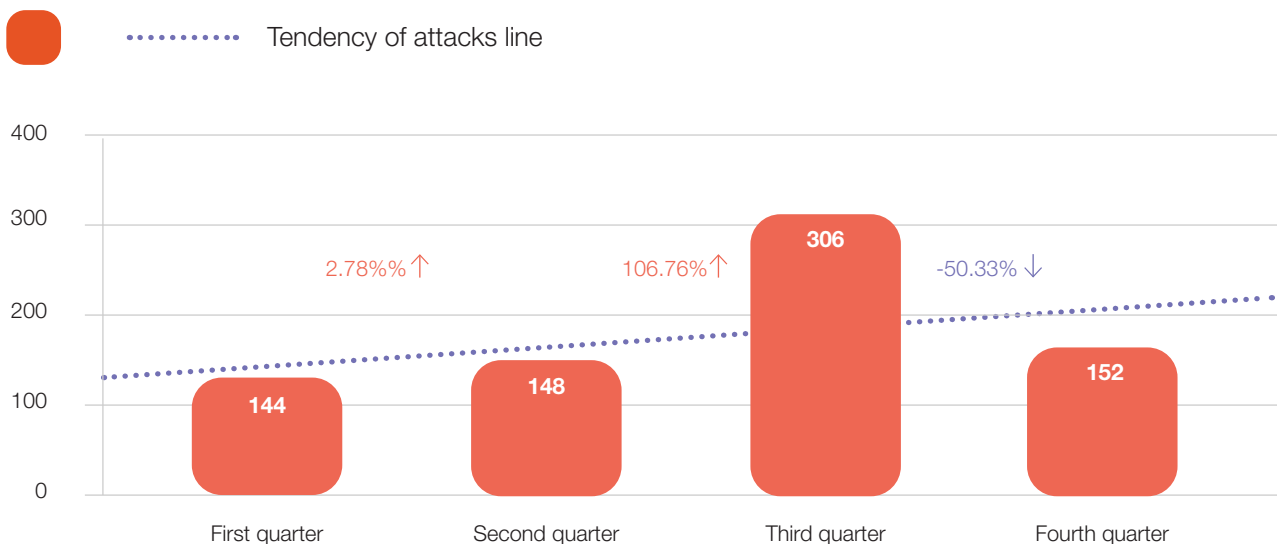
**1,349 institutional responses** were identified throughout the year. The Judiciary championed reactions, accounting for 31.4% of all institutional reactions, followed by the Legislative branch, at the forefront of 27.4% of these initiatives, and the Public Prosecutor's Office, responsible for 13.8% of the responses to the attacks on Brazilian civic space during 2021. Through innumerable actions undertaken by the Federal Supreme Court (STF) and Superior Electoral Court (TSE), the Judiciary acted to counteract these antidemocratic threats, particularly those related to attacks on Supreme Court Justices and the discrediting of the electoral system through disinformation campaigns. Regarding the Legislative branch, the Senate was responsible for investigating government's omission and mismanagement of the pandemic by means of the COVID Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry (CPI). Congress, in turn, reacted to the abusive use of the National Security Law (LSN) by repealing it and passing the new Law for the Protection of the Democratic Rule of Law. Meanwhile, the Public Prosecutor's Office focused on opening investigations against authorities who acted contrary to public interest inherent to the positions they held, as was the case of the former Minister of Health Pazuello, the former Minister of Environment Ricardo Salles and then Attorney General of the Republic, André Mendonça. Although the setbacks are numerous, it must be noted that these motivated push back.

**FIGURA 3 - Institutional Responses in 2021**



Civil society – whether organized civil society or not -, the press and other groups not aligned with government were at the forefront of protests and resistance actions across diverse fronts. No less than **750 acts of resistance** were registered. Civil society took the lead, championing the great majority of these efforts, accounting for 57.1% of all acts of resistance. There were countless public statements given by former presidents and ministers, and the press was diligent in its mission of transmitting information, and demonstrations, both public and online, expressed the population’s dissatisfaction.

**FIGURE 4 - Acts of Resistance in 2021**



2022 promises to be a challenging year. Even those who believe that attacks on democracy will wane after the election must be cautious. An extremely intimidating and aggressive environment that hinders dialogue, participation and transparency leaves profound marks on the behaviors and values that govern society.

## Infralegal measures and constitutional hardball

According to the monitoring carried out by the Igarapé Institute, one of the gravest threats to civic space in 2021 was the excessive use of infralegal measures by the federal government in detriment of due legislative process and other constitutional guarantees. This abusive use of institutional prerogatives is what we call **constitutional hardball**, and the issuance of numerous decrees under the pretext of regulating existing laws is one of the most widely used tactics.

The GPS identifies threats based on what is published by media outlets, but another way to monitor government action is via the [Atos Platform](#), an intuitive platform designed to help society keep track of the decrees issued by the Federal Executive Branch. In 2021 alone, **308 decrees** were issued, covering topics such as public security, human rights, and the environment. In 2019 and 2021, 525 and 389 decrees were issued, respectively.

It is important to note that one of the possible explanations for this decrease in the number of decrees is precisely the previous institutional responses and acts of resistance led by civil society. A considerable amount of the decrees issued during the first years of office were suspended or repealed by the Judiciary or by the Executive itself in face of social pressure. In other words, it is possible that this “improvement” is the result of vast joint reactions by institutions and society.

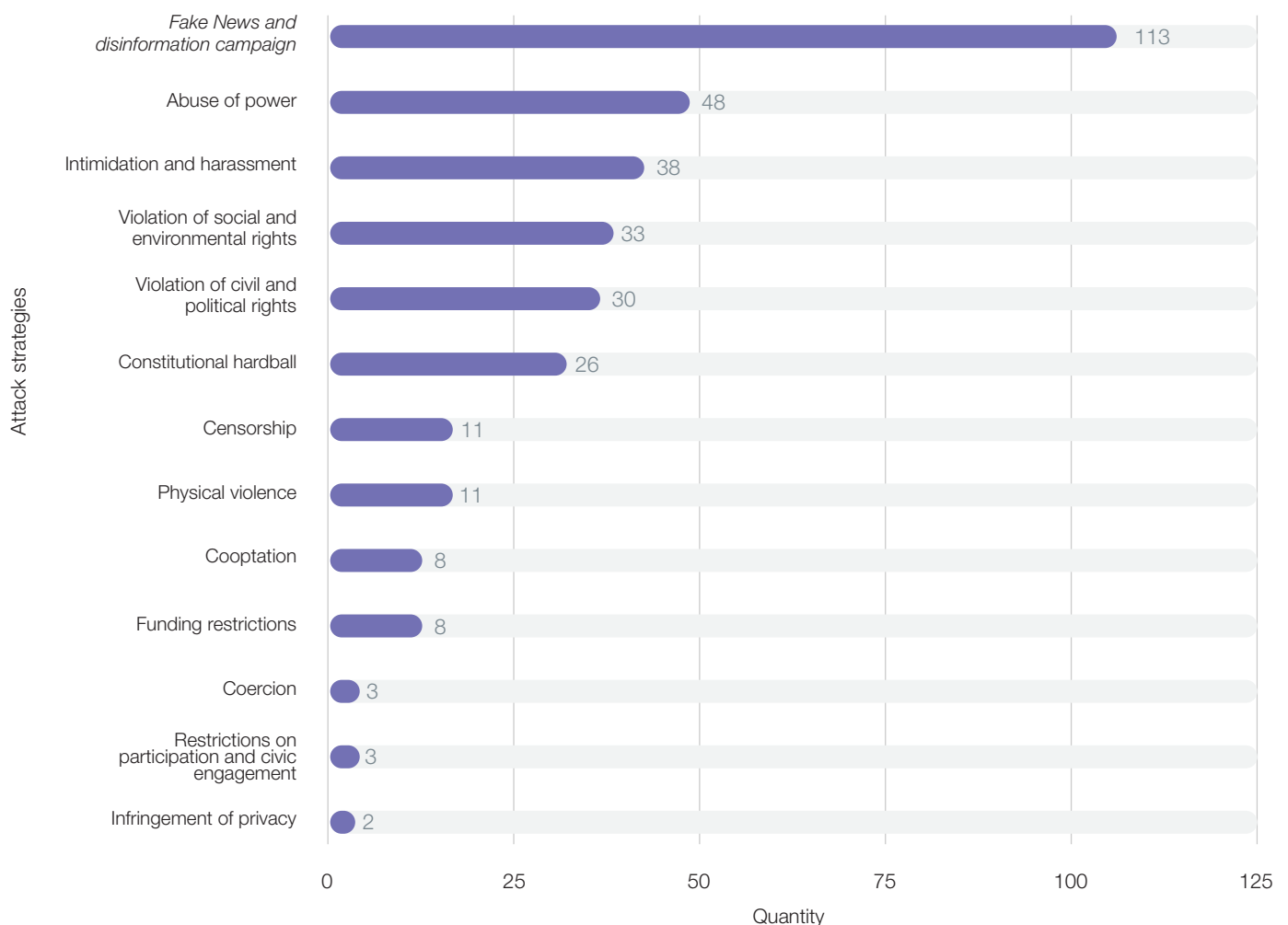
However, in spite of the quantitative advance, the content of the decrees remains a cause for alert. In 2021, for instance, four decrees were issued on the eve of Carnival which loosened the firearms and ammunition control policy under the pretext of regulating Law 10.826/2003 (Disarmament Statute). Said decrees were questioned in the Supreme Court, and some excerpts were suspended through an injunction. Contrary to the apparent restraint of the Federal Executive, the misuse of the prerogative to issue infralegal norms persists, insofar as the content points to the extrapolation of mere regulation to meet political interests by bypassing Congress.

**Would you like to join these acts of resistance?** Turn on the alert system to keep a tab on the topics of your interest. This way, you will closely monitor the regulatory acts published, the changes arising from them, and their impact on public policies.

# Threats

Between October and December 2021, **334 threats** to Brazilian civic space were registered – representing a 32% decrease in comparison to the previous quarter. After September 7 and the threats associated with it during the third quarter, the last quarter of the year saw its numbers resume the levels witnessed in previous quarters. Even so, the year ended with a 15.6% rise in threats to civic space compared to the first period of the year. Among the most common threats, **fake news and disinformation campaigns** stand out totaling 113 threats, followed by **abuse of power** and **intimidation and harassment**, responsible for 48 and 38 incidents, respectively.

**FIGURE 5 - Threats in the quarter**



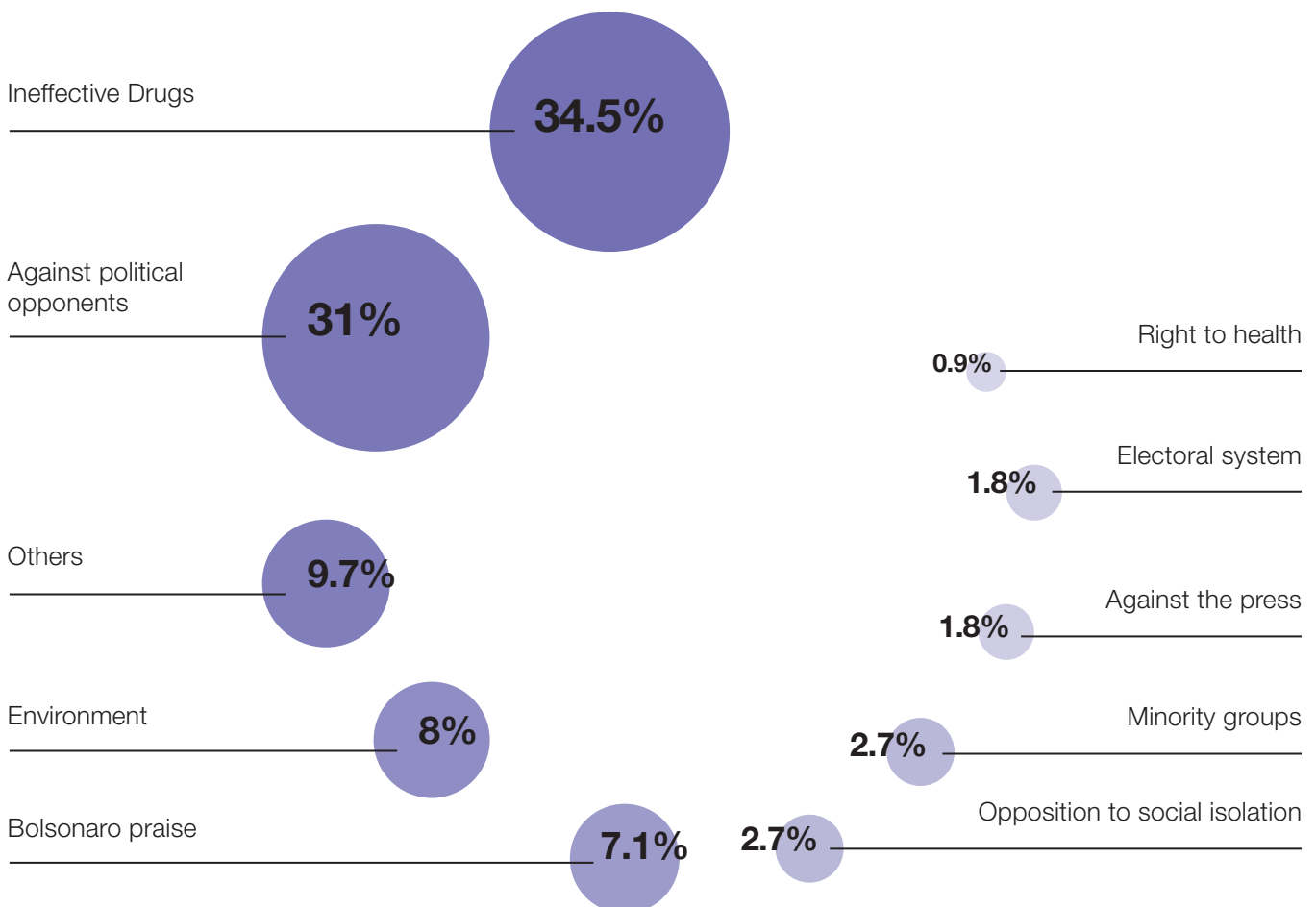
Source: Own elaboration, based on the systematic collection of information published in the press.



Between October and December, 2021, **fake news and disinformation campaigns** ranked first among the identified threats, accounting for roughly a third of the registered threats with 33.83% , or **113 threats**. Among these threats, [fake news](#) related to the [vaccines](#) against [COVID-19](#) (34% of cases), and particularly [child vaccination](#), as well as the promotion of [ineffective drugs](#) and [opposition to social isolation](#) measures stood out. Another highlighted issue was the [disinformation campaigns](#) aimed at [political opponents](#) of [all ideological spectrums](#). [Former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva](#) was the [preferred target](#) of defamatory news, while [Bolsonaro](#) was [praised by his supporters](#) who, according to 'O Estado de S. Paulo', falsely attributed to him [positive public policies created by other governments](#). In [reaction to the COVID CPI's final report](#), many of the federal government's supporters reacted with attacks and unfounded accusations. [Brazilian press](#) and the [electoral system](#) were also targets of disinformation and discredit.

In November, in the [context of COP26](#), false news related to [climate change](#) and the [environment](#) was widely disseminated (8%). Deniers questioned [global warming](#) and contradicted data on [deforestation](#) and [Amazon forest fires](#). [Indigenous leaders](#) were also the target of defamatory campaigns during this period.

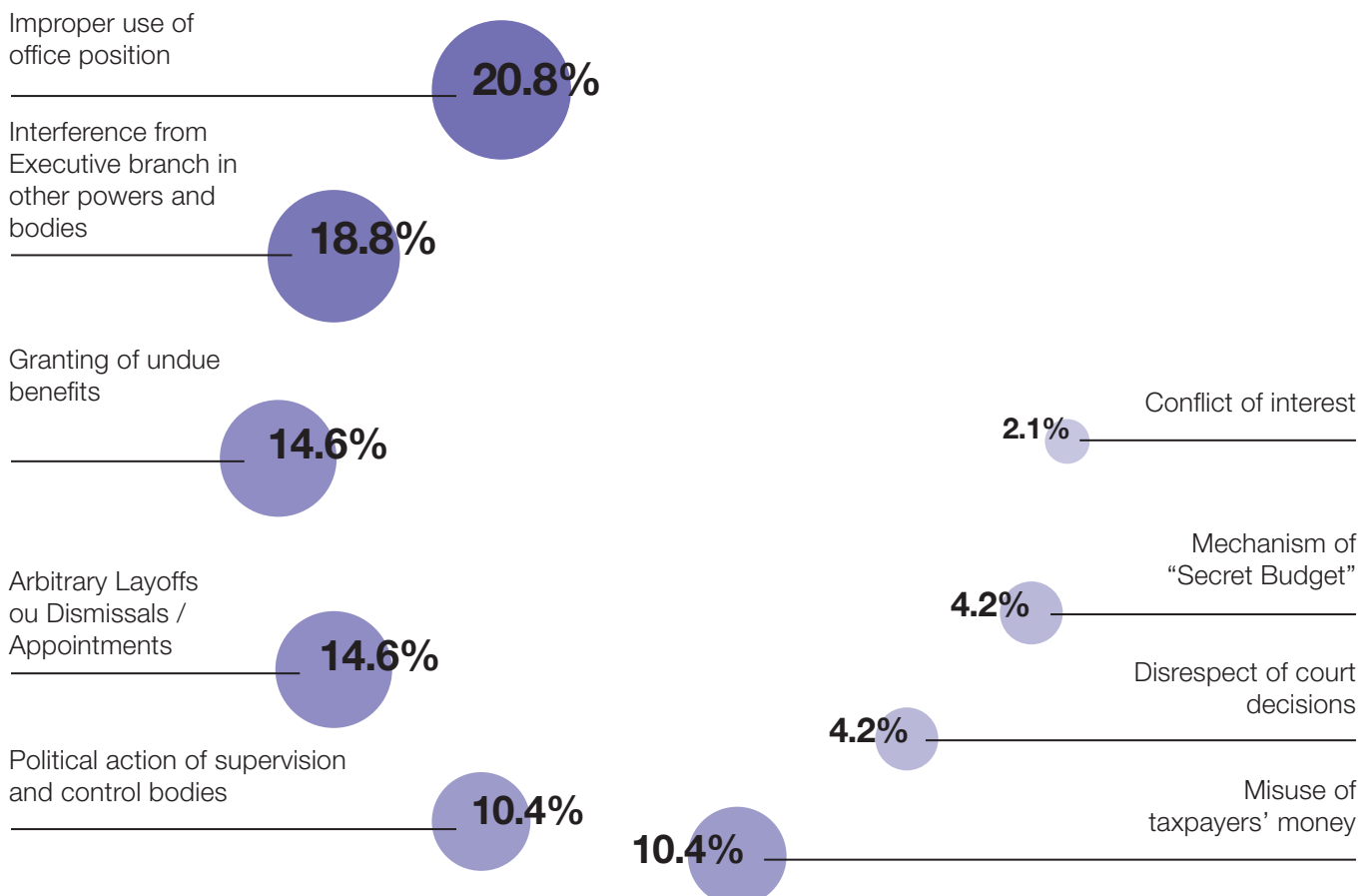
**FIGURE 6 - Fake News and disinformation campaigns**



Among the **48 identified cases of abuse of power** (around 15% of all of the quarter’s threats), 20.8% concern the use of public office for personal and family members’ gain, which is when the State apparatus is used to serve private interests of government members or their families, whether through [official travel](#), [FAB flights](#), [parliamentary amendments](#) or even school enrollment – as was the case of Bolsonaro’s daughter, who was [admitted to Colégio Militar \(a Military School\) after a change on her father’s military status](#), without undergoing an admission process, as reported by Folha de S. Paulo. Not only family members, but also political allies were [unduly benefited](#) or shielded (14.6% of cases). According to [UOL](#), Bolsonaro misused the State apparatus to delay the extradition of far-right blogger Allan dos Santos.

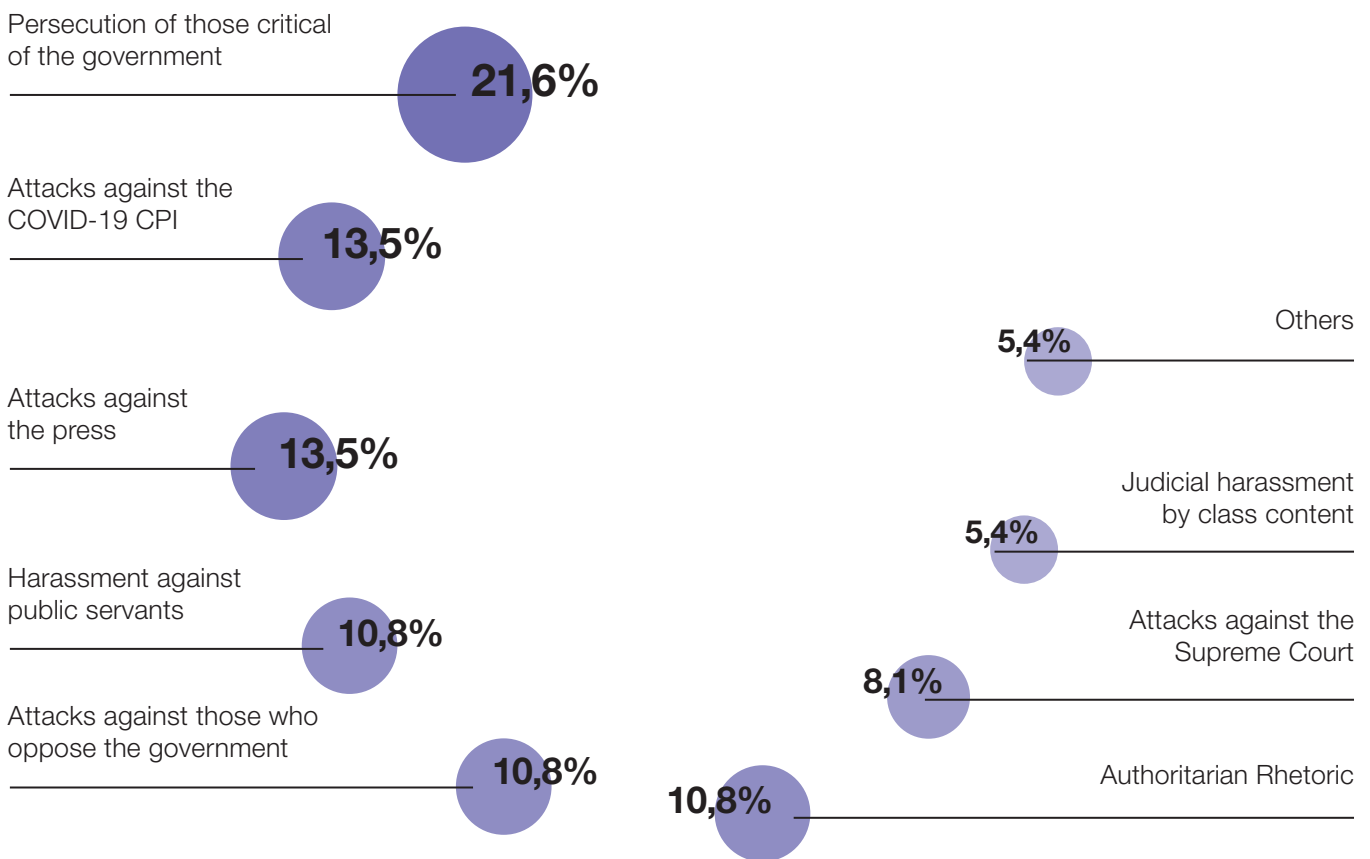
Cases of political interference in public entities and State institutions were also identified (18.8%). According to Folha de S. Paulo, Bolsonaro demanded changes to questions on the [ENEM, a standardized Brazilian national college entrance exam](#), going so far as to say that the exam will “resemble the government”, while the [Anísio Teixeira National Institute of Educational Studies and Research \(INEP\) tried to include professionals who were not officially appointed in the process of creating the exam](#). The [National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute \(IPHAN\)](#) did not come out unscathed, according to the President himself, who swapped out the institute’s director after a complaint from his supporter Luciano Hang. Also noteworthy are the arbitrary [appointments](#) and [dismissals](#), prioritizing [loyalty in detriment of technical capacity](#) and punishing critical voices, as well as the political influence exerted upon inspection and control entities, such as the Federal Police, Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN) and the Attorney General’s Office, according the [Estado de S. Paulo](#), [Folha de S. Paulo](#) and [O Globo](#), respectively.

**FIGURE 7 - Abuse of power**



There were **38 cases** classified as **intimidation and harassment**, representing roughly 11.4% of all threats. They mainly refer to persecution of those critical of the government, such as the [president of NGO SaferNet](#) and [indigenous leader Txai Suruí](#), whose family was threatened. The [authoritarian threats](#) did not cease and the rhetoric involving an [alleged loss of freedom](#) was widely used [to incite groups allied to the government](#). The frequent [attacks directed at the press](#), the [COVID CPI](#) and [STF Justices](#), as well as the institutional harassment of [public servants in disagreement with government policies](#) also stood out.

**FIGURE 8 - Intimidation and harassment**



Debates on child vaccination and COP26 top the list of **social and environmental rights violations** that accounted for **33 cases**, totaling almost 10% of all of the quarter's threats. Health was at the top of the list of the rights that most suffered [threats](#) due to the government's permanent [mismanagement of the pandemic](#). Due to [interference](#) in [environmental protection agencies](#), illegal actions that violate the environment proliferated. With regards to **civil and political rights violations**, [indigenous peoples](#), [black peoples](#), [women](#) and the [LGBT population](#) were the primarily targeted accounting for **30** of the registered cases (8.98%). Acts of [political violence](#), mainly perpetrated by [security forces](#), were also identified.

The **26 cases** of **constitutional hardball** were characterized by the [work of the Attorney General's Office](#) to [defend the interests](#) of the [federal government](#). Moreover, political interference in entities through the appointment of allies in key State institutions, such as the [Federal Court of Accounts \(TCU\)](#), the [Supreme Court \(STF\)](#) and the [Internal Affairs Department of the Public Prosecutor's Office](#) were tactics employed in the analyzed period. All **11 cases** of  **censorship** concern the [denial to provide access](#) to and [disclose data](#) and the [lack of transparency](#) on [information](#) of [public interest](#) and [the illegitimate use of the Data Protection Law \(LGPD\)](#) as a justification for denying requests for access to information. Journalists continue to be the preferred targets of **physical violence (11 cases)**. The period also witnessed the intensification of political disagreements – as illustrated by the case of a [woman run over during a protest against President Bolsonaro](#) – and controversies, such as the [vaccination passport](#), fueled the escalation of discussions.

The **8 incidents** regarding **cooptation** are all intimately related to the federal government's nod to allied groups – such as the [ruralists](#), [truckers](#), [religious groups](#), the [military](#) and [the police](#) – in exchange for support. With regards to **funding restrictions**, [education](#) and [science](#) were the main areas to suffer budget cuts (**8 cases**). The most common cases of **coercion** were related to the so-called ["COVID kit"](#) and [child vaccination](#). **Restriction on civic participation and engagement** (3 cases) in committees that discuss public policy persisted, as was the case with the [National Committee for the Prevention and Combat of Torture](#) and the [Civil Society Monitoring for the TV Rating System Committee](#). Finally, the activities of illicit groups used to procure personal data persevered, and **infringement of privacy** involving the commercialization of personal data [on the internet](#) (**2 cases**) was reported.

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*The period also witnessed the intensification of political disagreements*

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# Reactions

Between the months of October and December 2021, **393 reactions** were detected. Of the acts identified, **241** were **institutional responses** carried out by an array of actors, including the Judiciary, the Legislative, the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) and the Federal Court of Accounts (TCU), whereas members of civil society, the academic community, professional associations, the press, national and international organizations, political parties and the private sector, among others, accounted for **152** of the **acts of resistance**.

Although the number of reactions has exceeded the number of attacks, it is important to note that the responses of parliamentarians, judges or prosecutors do not necessarily represent the overall position of the institution to which they belong. Much the same way, acts of resistance by sectors of civil society do not represent the Brazilian population as a whole. Furthermore, what is recorded is the number of acts carried out to protect civic space, and not those which were successful.

Despite not always being capable to completely halt setbacks, reactions to the closure of civic space still play an important role, albeit partial, in the containment of such threats. In certain situations, the institutional responses imposed explicit boundaries, repealing or suspending legal, infralegal or extralegal actions that undermined democracy. Alternately, the pressure exerted by civil society and other players have enormously contributed for the backing down and **changes in position** by the government (**16** were registered during the analyzed period).

# Institutional responses

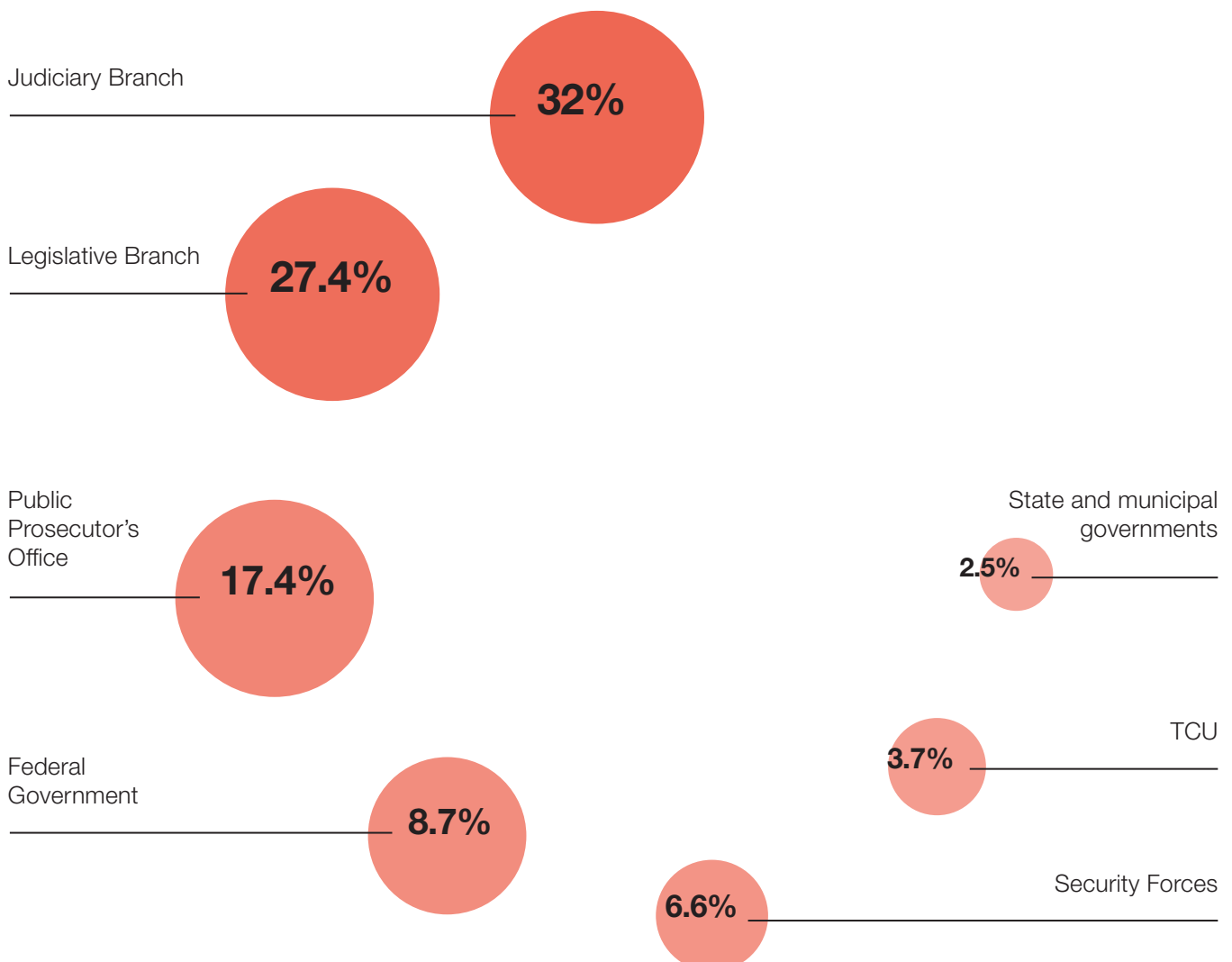
The Judiciary branch (32%), the Legislative branch (27,4%) and the Public Prosecutor's Office (17.4%) were the state entities which most responded to attacks against Brazilian civic space. Most of the reactions carried out by the Judiciary branch came from the Supreme Court (53.25%), having acted mainly to contain the advance of the COVID-19 pandemic, by acting to ensure the [population's vaccination](#) – and [especially that of children](#) -, by demanding the [distribution of tests and masks among quilombolas](#), by authorizing the [dismissal of the unvaccinated](#) from the workforce, by [determining the use of a vaccination passport for travelers](#) and by [investigating Bolsonaro on his unfounded claims on a link between COVID-19 vaccines and AIDS](#). The STF also acted in favor of the [responsible use of social media](#) and the [restriction of violent and offensive posts](#), as highlighted by the Allan dos Santos Case, in which the Court determined his arrest and extradition in light of his [“attack to members of public institutions, discredit of the Brazilian electoral process, reinforcement of polarizing rhetoric, thus generating animosity within Brazilian society and promoting the discredit of the powers of the Republic”](#).

In terms of responses by the Legislative branch, the Chamber of Deputies tops the list of institutional responses (54.6%), especially with regards to the appointment of government allies to key entities and the subversion of their mandates. In reaction to the INEP crises and allegations of harassment against public servants, deputies determined the [removal of President Danilo Dupas from the Federal Court of Accounts \(TCU\)](#) and that he [be investigated by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office \(MPF\)](#). Both he and the [Minister of Education](#) were called upon to give explanations to committees within the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. The [Minister of Health](#) and the [Minister of Environment](#) were also called upon to provide explanations. The

Culture Commission was responsible for the elaboration of a report in which the [“dismantling of the Rouanet Law”](#) and the [“Ideologized Palmares Foundation”](#) were brought to light. In addition to the requests for explanations, the Chamber of Deputies also presented several investigation requests. The deputies called upon the STF, the MPF and the [TCU](#) on several occasions to counteract threats promoted mainly by members of the federal government. The period was also marked by the [approval of a Provisional Measure that allowed for emergency funding](#) to fight the pandemic in indigenous areas, the presentation of a [bill seeking to suspend a Culture ordinance](#) that vetoed the requirement of vaccination passports for projects financed by the Rouanet Law, the [approval of a report that criminalizes the dissemination of fake news](#) and, lastly, the [delivery of the COVID-19 CPI report to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#).

The Public Prosecutor’s Office, in turn, accounted for 17.4% of the institutional responses, focusing mainly on responding to [attacks against the electronic voting machines](#), the [dissemination of fake news](#) and [threats to the Supreme Court](#) and other democratic institutions, as well demanding [reparation for COVID-19 victims](#), investigating irregularities in [Health](#), [Culture](#) and [Education](#), demanding that [measures be taken in response to the final COVID-19 CPI report](#) and warning against the [erosion of the State’s control and oversight entities](#).

**FIGURE 9** - Authors of institutional responses

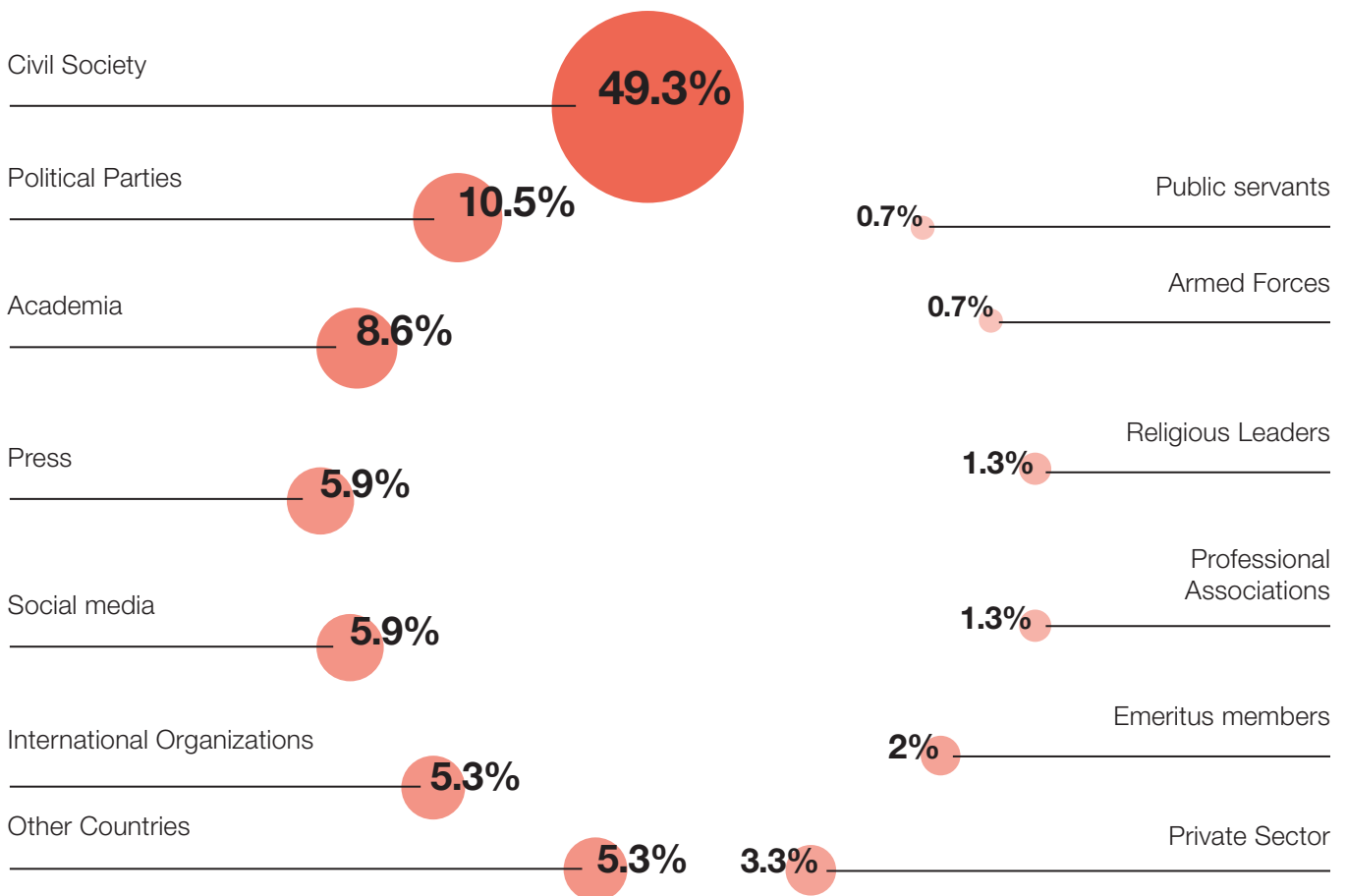


# Resistance

During the last quarter of 2021, civil society was responsible for most of the acts of resistance against the closure of civic space (49.3%). Political parties also deserve to be highlighted, having accounted for 10.5% of the reactions. Ranking third, Academia were responsible for 8.6% of the acts of resistance. Social media (5.9%), the press (5.9%), international organizations (5.3%), leaders from other countries (5.3%) and the private sector (3.3%) also played a role in containing these attacks.

[Civil society organizations were crucial agents of resistance](#), [monitoring government actions](#), bringing forth social [demands](#) and [recommendations](#) to institutional actors, denouncing violations at [IACHR](#) and the [UN](#), [vetting the news](#), [filing public civil actions and organizing demonstrations and acts of protest](#). Some [emeritus members](#) were also extremely active, issuing [notes of repudiation](#) and [manifesting](#) themselves against the setbacks suffered by their [respective fields of expertise](#). Political parties, on the other hand, acted on several fronts, mainly invoking the Judiciary and other state entities against threats involving [fake news](#) and [disinformation campaigns](#), [anti-vaccination groups](#), [political violence](#), violations of the [rights of women](#) and [indigenous peoples](#), [damage to the environment](#) and [intimidation of public servants](#). Among the acts carried out by the academic community were [letters of protest](#) and the rejection of appointments, [titles](#) and [honors](#), in addition to [collective resignations](#) as a form of [repudiation against current management](#).

**FIGURE 10 - Authors of Resistance Actions**



# Changes of Position

Identifying changes in the government's stance over time is crucial for measuring the impact that social and institutional pressure have on decision-making, especially regarding the federal government. During the analyzed period, an appeasement was observed following the [September 7 institutional crises with President Jair Bolsonaro pausing his attacks against STF Justices](#) . A [more moderate rhetoric on certain topics by Bolsonaro](#), such as in relation to the vaccine and environment, especially in international forums, was also observed. [After suffering pressure abroad, Brazil signaled some advances](#) in the environmental agenda during the COP26 negotiations as it [signed the Declaration on Forests](#) and [ceded ground on thorny topics of the carbon market creation negotiation](#).

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*During the analyzed period, an appeasement was observed following the September 7*

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# Annex 1 - Typology of legal, illegal and extralegal strategies and tactics used to close civic space (updated)

Strategies	Description	Examples of tactics / actions
<b>I. Cooptation</b>	<b>Cooptation</b> is the process of garnering or strong-arming political support by offering privileges or advantages, generally to manage the opposition and attend to the demands and interests of allied groups or potential supporters, thus maintaining the group's power and stability. (Selznick, 1948; Piven and Cloward, 1977).	<p>Offer of privileged relationship, including access to public contracts and funding, if given unrestricted support.</p> <p>Public incentives, subsidies, and actions allocated specifically for the support, funding, and strengthening of allied groups, as a concession of excessive privilege in order to maintain loyalty and unconditional support from the allied base.</p>
<b>II. Coercion</b>	<b>Coercion</b> is the use of threats to influence another's behavior by limiting choice (Schelling 1966).	<p>Veiled or open threat to dismiss or disempower public servants and political appointees if they don't adhere to government's false narratives or wrongdoings.</p> <p>Veiled or open threats to suspend ongoing partnerships and/or public funding in light of public criticism.</p>
<b>III. Fake News and disinformation campaigns</b>	<p><b>Fake news</b> are false stories circulated on the news, social media, and spread on the internet, which try to appear as real news. There are six types: news satire, news parody, fabrication, manipulation, advertising, and propaganda (Tandoc, Lim, Ling, 2007).</p> <p><b>Disinformation</b> is false information spread deliberately to cause public harm or for profit, going beyond fake news (EC, 2018).</p>	<p>Mass production and dissemination of false content to earn political influence.</p> <p>Hiring bloggers, using fake profiles, bots and other digital tools to create and spread false stories using public money or resources from supporting groups.</p> <p>Deliberate spread of disinformation campaigns to distract or deceive.</p> <p>Attacks against facts and science.</p>
<b>IV. Censorship (overt or veiled)</b>	<b>Censorship</b> refers to the "policy of restricting the public expression of ideas, opinions, conceptions and impulses which have or are believed to have the capacity to undermine the governing authority or the social and moral order which that authority considers itself bound to protect" (Laswell, 1930)	<p>Intent to provoke self-censorship of individuals that are targeted online or offline.</p> <p>Creation of obstacles to access public information.</p> <p>Classification or restriction of publications and documents.</p> <p>Direct intent to disqualify research results.</p> <p>Defunding of cultural projects not aligned with the government's views.</p> <p>Filtered content or close down of the internet.</p> <p>Vastly enforced censorship of media, research, cultural manifestations and debate.</p>

Strategies	Description	Examples of tactics / actions
<p><b>V. Intimidation and Harassment</b></p>	<p><b>Intimidation</b> refers to direct or indirect actions against others to prevent them from continuing their work or to induce fear of an attack (CIVICUS, 2019).</p> <p><b>Harassment</b> is legal or physical actions or behavior that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a citizen when expressing critical opinions (CIVICUS, 2018).</p>	Use of state security forces and intelligence apparatus to intimidate opponents.
		Persecution and intimidation of activists, artists, civic leaders, journalists, and scientists.
		Blackmail.
		Harassment or attack of institutions by authorities.
		Public targeting / harassment of activists, artists, civic leaders, journalists, and scientists by high level authorities.
		Misogynist attacks against women with a public profile.
		Dehumanization / defamation / delegitimization campaigns against individuals, groups or institutions (direct or indirect action).
		Organized, online attacks and campaigns against individuals, groups or institutions (bots and digital mob mobilization).
		Threats to cancel public concessions of independent media channels.  Pressure and threats to private companies to stop advertising on non-aligned media channels.
<p><b>VI. Infringement of Privacy (State surveillance)</b></p>	<p><b>Infringement of Privacy</b> refers to the violations of the fundamental human right to privacy, which underlines that “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation.” (Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).</p> <p><b>State Surveillance</b> is the collection of information, including the monitoring, tracking, and identification to the administration of subject populations, supervised by officials and administrators, hinged to some specific purpose (Giddens, 1984; Lyon, 1994). It usually inhabits a shadowy realm of public affairs (Starr et al).</p>	Illegal wiretapping.
		Digital media monitoring for profiling, harassment, and intimidation.
		Closure of accounts, websites, servers.
		Hacking profiles to intimidate or harass, or to use private profiles in digital mob campaigns.
		Misuse of private citizens’ data on micro-targeting disinformation campaigns and other digital actions without permission.
		Illegal monitoring of opposition, including protest organizers.

continuation

Strategies	Description	Examples of tactics / actions
<b>VII. Civil and Political Rights Violations</b>	<p><b>Violations of political rights</b> include denial of the right to a fair trial and due process; and rights of participation in civil society and politics such as freedom of association, the right to assemble, and the right to vote (Dahl 2005).</p> <p><b>Violations of civil rights</b> include discrimination on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, color, age, political affiliation, ethnicity, religion, and social origin; and restrictions of individuals' freedom. (ICCPR 1976).</p>	Restrictions or bans on public protests / demonstrations.
		Constraints for the incorporation, registration, operation and lifecycle of CSOs.
		Shutting down CSOs which resist conforming to authoritarian or draconian rules.
		De-registration or cancellation of licenses of operation for CSOs who comply with the law.
		Invasion / destruction of CSO offices.
		Seizure of property.
		Expulsion from or prohibition to operate in a determined country.
		Travel bans.
		Illegitimate legal investigations.
		Fomenting discrimination and infringing on the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups.
<b>VIII. Restrictions on Civic Participation and Engagement</b>	<p>Restrictions to any forms of individual or collective work to solve community problems and to address issues of public concern (civic participation) as well as any forms of following, having knowledge, beliefs, opinions and attitudes on public issues (civic engagement) (Barrett and Brunton-Smith 2014), especially when contributing and interacting with policy design, monitoring and/or decision-making process.</p>	Exclusion of language on civil society participation in national and international resolutions.
		Hardening of rules which allow civil society access to the National Congress.
		De-authorizing State institutions' work with NGOs.
		Penalization of public officers who disobey instructions of cutting access to civil society.
		Shutting down participatory councils and mechanisms.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Examples of tactics / actions</i>
<b>IX. Funding Restrictions</b>	Restrictions on the capacity for civil society and technological-scientific research institutions, public or private, to access public funding, whether national or foreign, through laws, administrative measures, and extralegal activities coordinated by the government (Wolff and Poppe, 2015). Restriction can also be applied through the action of omission of the Government as a means to complicate, limit, or preclude public funding.	Governmental institutions stop granting authorization for CSOs to participate in projects and receive funds from international cooperation donors or from public programs which subsidize, give incentives, and provide financial support to civil society.
		Overly broad application of anti-money laundering and counterterrorism measures.
		Using defamation, treason, and other laws to bring criminal charges against recipients of international funding.
		Restrictions for domestic and international funding and/or prohibition of specific donors.
		Requirement of advance government approval and/or international funds routed through government-controlled entities.
		Capping the amount of international funding per CSO.
		Restriction of activities undertaken with international funding, including content-based restrictions (e.g. ban on human rights work or 'political activity').
		Taxation of international funds.
		Categorizing CSOs that receive international funding as 'foreign agents', adopting specific treatment of these organizing or imposing a burden on their work.
		Burdensome procedural requirements.
		Freezing or seizure of funds targeted toward funding civil society.
		Prohibition from receiving international funding and public budgets allocations.
		Shrinking public universities through excessive budget cuts.
Cutting fiscal benefits for scientific research and academic development.		

continuation

Strategies	Description	Examples of tactics / actions
<b>X. Physical Violence</b>	<b>Physical Violence</b> is the intentional and direct infliction of harm on people, from physical suffering or bodily harm to violent death (Kalyvas 2006). In the context of this research, acts of physical violence can be perpetrated by state or non-state agents, including paramilitary, militia, gangs, private security and others emboldened by the hate rhetoric of political figures to get rid of opposition.	Violent responses to protests by the State.
		Refusal to protect those who are threatened.
		Violent attacks on minorities and vulnerable groups.
		Threats of physical violence by State and non-State actors.
		Illegal imprisonment of civil leaders.
		Tortures / maltreatment.
		Forced disappearance.
		Taxation of international funds.
		Assassination / extrajudicial killing of human rights defenders, civil leaders, and journalists.
<b>XI. Constitutional Hardball*</b>	<b>Constitutional hardball</b> consists of political actors exploiting procedures, laws, and institutions to obtain partisan gains while violating pre established norms and testing the limits of legality, which could undermine the shared understanding of democratic norms and the expectation that the other side will comply with them (Tushnet 2004, Levitsky and Ziblat 2018). The inappropriate use of institutional prerogatives in the interest of political groups and/or private or non-republican interests.	Excessive use of executive and infralegal measures to govern, ignoring Congress, principals, and constitutional guarantees.
		Issuing of norms and decrees that contradict the Constitution.
		Nonconforming with non-written norms that serve to respect the separation of State Powers.
		Executive decisions which reduce budgets, structure, and alter the functioning of public agencies created to audit, inspect, and supervise the Executive Branch.
		Reducing the power of opposition parties in Congress, restricting broader debate on votes.
<b>XII. Abuse of Power</b>	<b>Abuse of power</b> is when political actors take advantage of their position for personal gain, preventing basic managerial responsibility and/or acting against the public interest and institutional responsibilities (Sankowsky, 1995).	Political interference in ordinances from the Armed Forces that violate laws and/or the Constitution.
		Political interference in the public administration with nominations and dismissals of public servants to favor private interests.
		Political interference in nominations of public universities, research centers and participatory councils to impose censorship.
		Political interference in procedures and nomination of leadership of law enforcement and other independent public agencies to protect private interests.
		Nominations geared toward controlling agencies for political means or for satisfying private interests while clearly violating an institution's prerogatives, in a manner contrary to the public interest.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Examples of tactics / actions</i>
<p><b>XIII. Violation of social, economic, cultural, and environmental rights.</b></p>	<p>Social, economic, and cultural rights (PIDESC, 1966) are human rights which guarantee the development and dignity of individuals and communities. They are fundamental for engagement in the civic space. Violations of these rights include the failure to respect, protect, and guarantee (Eide, 2001) adequate nutrition and housing, education, work, health, social security, participation in cultural life, water, and sanitation. In terms of the environment and its essential place in human rights (OC-23/17, CIDH), it is the State's duty to prevent, avoid, mitigate, and cooperate when it comes to environmental conservation.</p>	<p>The failure to elaborate or adopt plans for environmental disasters or emergencies, including safety measures and mitigating actions.</p>
		<p>Block, hamper, or preclude access to information relative to possible environmental interference.</p>
		<p>Promoting environmental destruction.</p>
		<p>The failure to consult or negotiate with populations and communities affected by environmental impacts and damages.</p>
		<p>Adopting measures which directly or indirectly discriminate against segments of the population.</p>
<p>* Even though most tactics which fall under the category “constitutional hardball” and “abuse of power” do not directly target agents in the civic space, these tactics diminish transparency, can undermine the separation of powers, as well as the checks and balances which can keep the tactics described in other categories from being implemented.</p>		
<p>Sources for these tactics: off the record interviews with civic leaders; Buyse 2018; Civicus 2017, 2018, 2019; ICNL; Levitsky and Ziblat 2018; OHCHR; Rutzen, 2015; WEF 2017; World Movement for Democracy.</p>		

## Learn more

For more information of the typology used and for academic reference, read the strategic paper, “The ‘Agora’ is under attack: assessing the closure of civic space in Brazil and around the world”.

Access: <https://igarape.org.br/espaco-civico/>”



# IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE

a think and do tank

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