#ElectoralAlgorithmVE:

SOCIAL MEDIA AHEAD OF THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

JANUARY 2023 - MAY 2024

PROBOX

LET'S START WITH 2023

LOSS OF API ACCESS

Since we started our work in 2019, **Twitter has been one of the few spaces that Venezuelan civil society has to protest, to denounce, to receive information fromindependent media, etc.**

In 2023 this was profoundly altered. With Elon Musk's purchase of the platform, the network changed much more than its name. X, as it is now known, has had significant modifications ranging from the closure of the API that allowed (among other things) the study of the conversation, to the verification, the length of publications with the payment of X Blue and we even saw the reappearance of accounts deleted for violating the old policies.

This has made it difficult to access essential data, preventing researchers and journalists from analyzing and monitoring activity on this platform. ProBox was also affected by this measure; as **of March 15, 2023, our tool ceased to have access to the API,** limiting the ability to analyze the inorganicity of the conversation. Despite these limitations, **our monitoring of socio-political trends has been continuous and using different tools, we resumed the analysis of narratives in the digital conversation.**

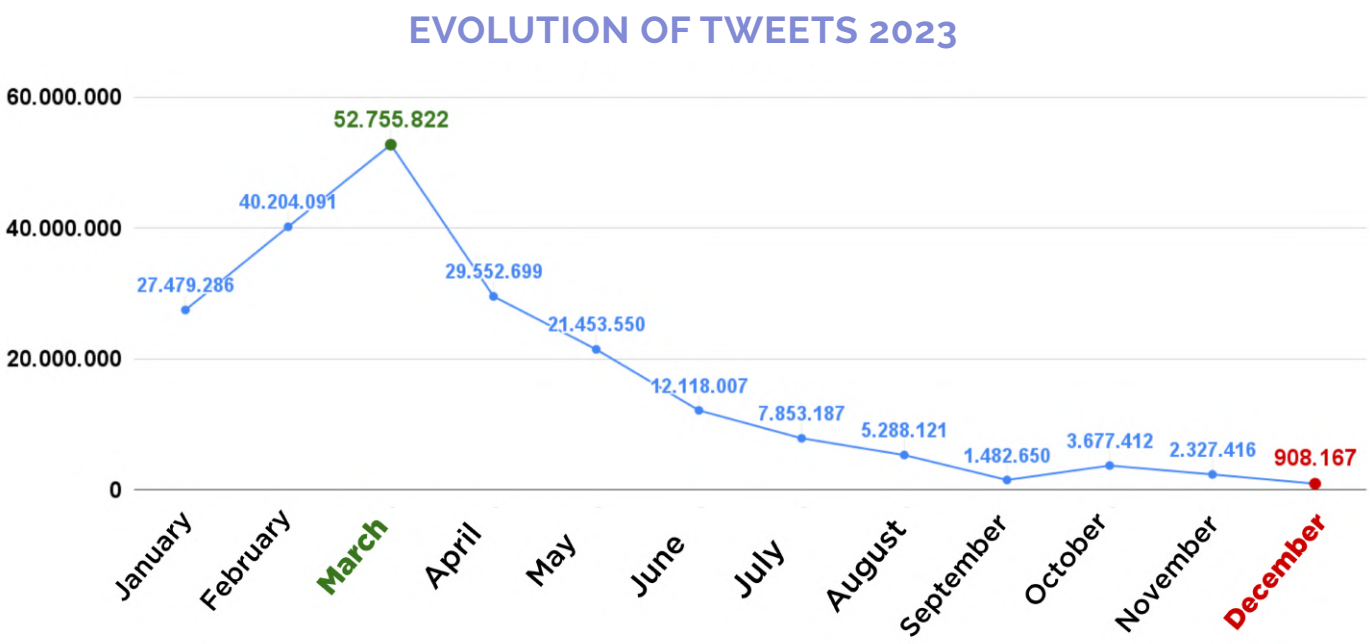
DECLINE OF GENERAL CONVERSATION IN X

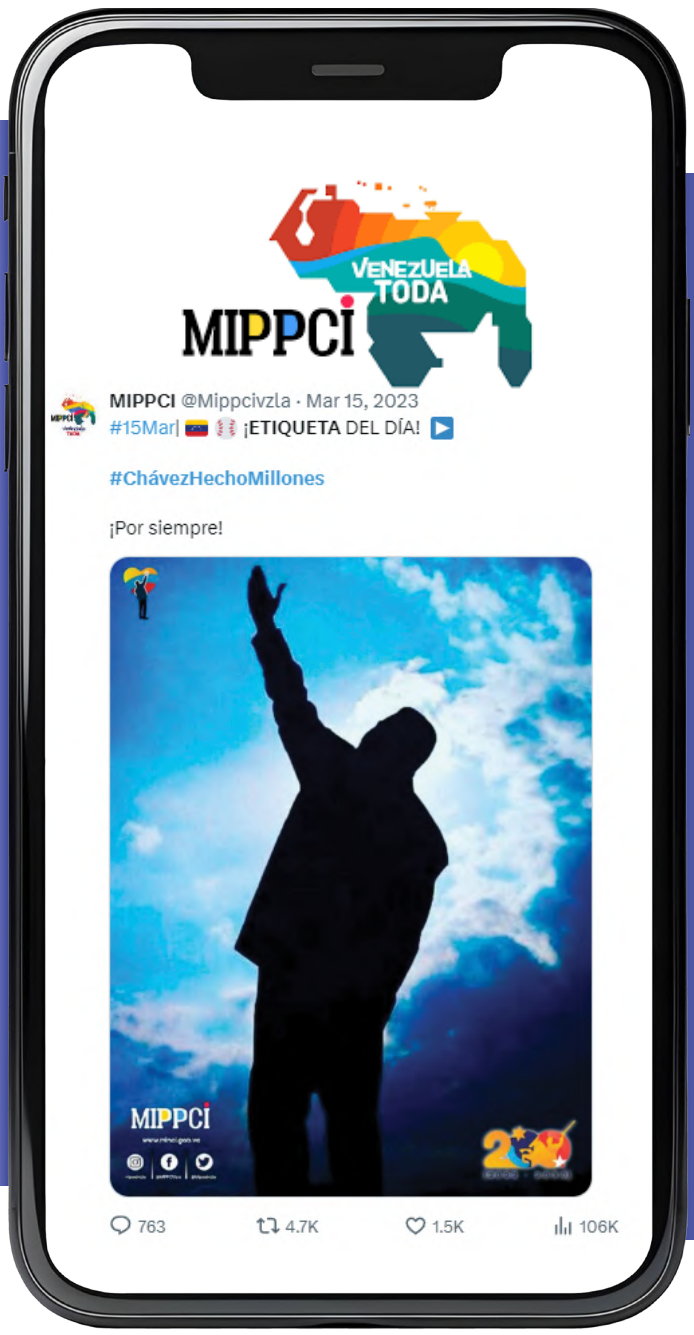
One of the biggest signs of the changes occurring in X is in Venezuela's socio-political activity during 2023. We recorded 817 trends totaling around 205,100,408 tweets approx. **34.2% less than in 2022, being the second consecutive year in which the number of socio-political hashtags in the network decreases.**

However, there are two historical records since we started monitoring in Venezuela:

In March 2023 we recorded the highest number of tweets in a month with 52,755,822 appx; **and in December the lowest** with about 908,167 tweets. In other words, **if we compare March 2023 with December of the same year, the number of messages decreased by approximately 98.3%.**

The highest peak was due to the large volume of messages in the first four months of the year, especially between February and March. However, from May onwards the decline was drastic.



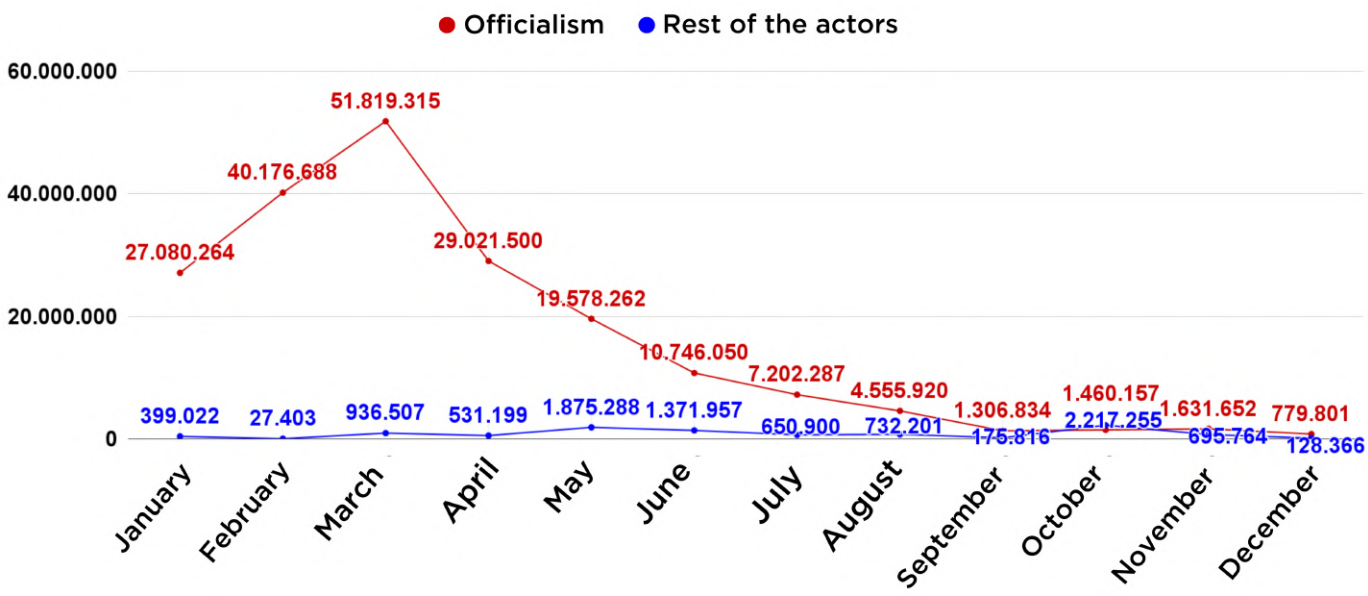


An example prior to the decline is the largest trend of 2023, #ChávezHechoMillones with more than 2,350,000 tweets, promoted on March 15 by the Ministry of Communication and Information (MIPPCI).

This trend surpassed the biggest in 2022, #QueenElizabeth, a worldwide trending for the passing of Queen Elizabeth II of United Kingdom with approximately **1,730,000** tweets at the time.

THE OFFICIALISM CONTINUES TO PREVAIL IN 𝕏 IN SPITE OF THE DECLINE

EVOLUTION OF TWEETS OF THE OFFICIALISM Vs. THE REST OF THE ACTORS OF THE VENEZUELAN CONVERSATION IN 2023



In 2023, Officialism once again dominated the conversation with 81.15% of the trends (663) and 95.25% of the tweets (195,358,730 appx.). It was followed by Other Actors, mainly international, with 62 (7.59%) of trends and 4.42% tweets (9,058,587 appx.), and Civil Society with (52) 6.36% and 0.24% tweets (497,515 appx.). The Opposition and Anonymous Networks barely added 0.09% of tweets together, that is, less than 0.1% of the conversation. **The dominance of Officialism is increasingly evident.**

1. MIPPCI

MIPPCI again led the way in positioning trends in Venezuela with 409, representing 50.06% of the total trends registered in 2023 in X; **but its dominance is much greater at the message level,** as these trends managed to group 90.66% of the tweets (185,953,228 appx).

A steady decline in posts began in April, **recording only about 741,059 tweets in December, the historic low for ProBox monitoring of posts coming from MIPPCI-driven hashtags.**

At the end of May, we registered a protest coming from the "Tuiteros de la Patria". This is a group of coordinated users in charge of amplifying the narratives promoted mainly by MIPPCI, denouncing that they were no longer receiving payments for carrying out this activity; which we can infer also had an impact on the decrease of messages that was also evident at the end of September.

The referendum on the Essequibo was MIPPCI's top 2023 topic with 57 hashtags and more than 6.5 million messages. **Economic sanctions occupy the second place** with 36 trends that accumulated the highest number of messages with more than 29.6 million. **Also, trends remembering Hugo Chávez** with more than 24 million tweets, propaganda for the Bolivarian Revolution and support for Nicolás Maduro as Presidential candidate were also present.

2 & 3.

Governmental Entities and Radical Officialism, occupy the second and third place at the level of trends with 182 and 72 respectively; however, at the level of tweets, international trends managed to occupy the second place with approximately 8,468,832 messages. **The #YoSoyFANB hashtag was the most repeated of 2023, occupying for the first time this place in the ProBox record by trending at least 16 times.** The Bolivarian National Guard (GNB) and the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB) were the group of Government Entities with the highest number of trends in the year.

4.

In a year marked by 6,956 protests, **citizens' voices struggled to be heard in X, occupying the 4th place in the Venezuelan socio-political conversation. Throughout** 2023, we registered **52 protest trends** and 497,515 tweets approximately. May and September saw the highest number of protests with 8 trends each; however in January we registered the highest volume of messages with around 147,655, **mainly due to the protest of the teachers' union demanding better salaries.**

Compared to 2022, the numbers may seem discouraging with 50.48% fewer trends and 57.67% fewer messages; reaching even **in August, for the first time in ProBox's record, a full month without any social protest trends being positioned.**

THE MAIN REASONS FOR CITIZEN PROTEST REMAIN THE SAME:

Reports of **human rights violations** (21 trends, 130,214 tweets appx.)

Economic demands (14 trends, 256,633 tweets appx.)

Service failures (6 trends, 24,557 tweets appx.).

WHO LED THE DIGITAL PROTEST?

1. **Organized citizens were in charge of promoting the largest number of social protest trends with 15.** Examples: #SinLuz, #SinGasolina, among others.
2. **Teachers accumulated the largest number of messages with 217,254 tweets** in 11 trends, maintaining their leading role in the struggle for a better country despite the decrease in conversation. Examples: #ProtestaNacionalDelMagisterio, #SalarioJustoYa, #AlianzaPorLaEducación, among others.
3. **NGOs together with activists** occupy the third place with 9 trends and around 63,809 messages. Examples: #LaONUDetermina, #VenezuelaEnLaCPI, #LeyAntiSociedad, among others.

#ProData:

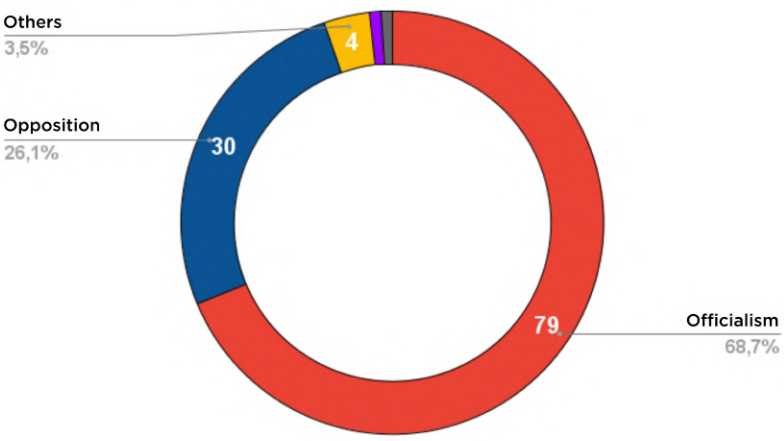
Unlike previous years, the hashtag #SinLuz ranked third as the most repeated of the year, positioning itself only five times. This is a clear example of how citizens have not been able to get their message across among the large amount of inorganic content produced by the Officialism in X, since **the decrease in the positioning of this trend does not translate into fewer service failures, on the contrary, together with the #LupaElectoral team we analyzed how the increase in power outages are the ones that most concern Venezuelans.**

Another example of how the government diverts the focus of the citizen protest in social media is evidenced by the Intervention of the "Tocorón Prison". During the presentation of the fourth report on the human rights situation by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela, the State decided to carry out the intervention of the Aragua Penitentiary Center, better known as the Tocorón prison. This operation almost completely monopolized the attention of the digital conversation and trends of the day, achieving, in part, to invisibilize the protest for human rights of citizens. NGOs and activists.

THE DIGITAL ELECTORAL RACE IN 2023 AS A PREVIEW OF THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

In 2023 we identified 115 trends with electoral narratives, 14% of the sociopolitical hashtags of the year. With about 3,582,622 messages.

ELECTORAL TRENDS BY CATEGORY



Officialism dominated the electoral conversation with 68.70% of the trends (79 hashtags) and almost 87% of the messages (3,116,038 tweets approximately).

The opposition only managed to position 26.09% of the trends (30 hashtags), **and 4.5% of the tweets** with 161,114 approximately.

#ProElectoralData:

The superiority of the Officialism is mainly due to the MIPPCI, with 47.83% of the trends (55 hashtags) and 81.22% of the messages; that is, **around 2,909,704 electoral tweets contain trends promoted by this governmental entity.**

Several Opposing Parties ranked second with 20% of the trends and 3.12% of the messages with 111,829 approximately. **Vente Venezuela promoted the highest number of hashtags with 8.**

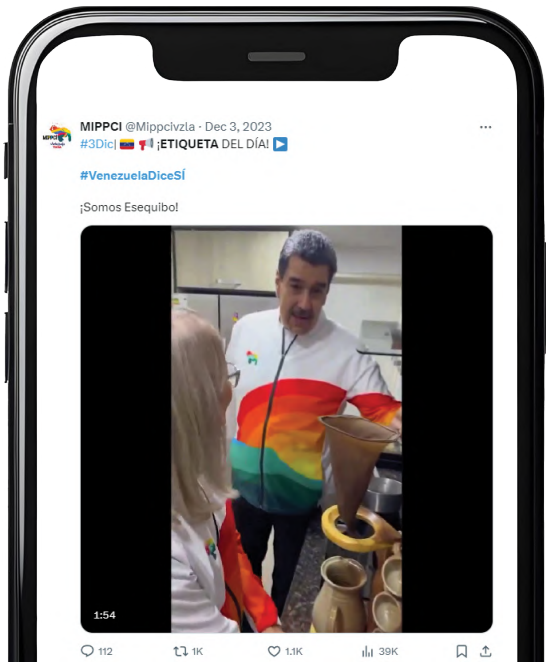
In third place, the radical Officialism with 15 trends and more than 153 thousand messages. **Diosdado Cabello from his program "Con el Mazo Dando" led this conversation** with 13 of the 15 hashtags.

November was the month with the highest number of trends and electoral messages (40 hashtags, 1,141,452 tweets appx.).

Two of the most important events of 2023 were the opposition primaries in October and the referendum on the Essequibo in December; rekindling the electoral conversation in the country, the disqualifications of candidates, the vote abroad and the resources used in political campaigns.

Under this scenario, **the organizations Medianálisis, Redes Ayuda, EsPaja and the independent media RunRunes, Diario TalCual and El Pitazo, .we joined forces in the #LupaElectoral,** documenting different disinformation, defamation and propaganda campaigns prior to the presidential elections in the country.

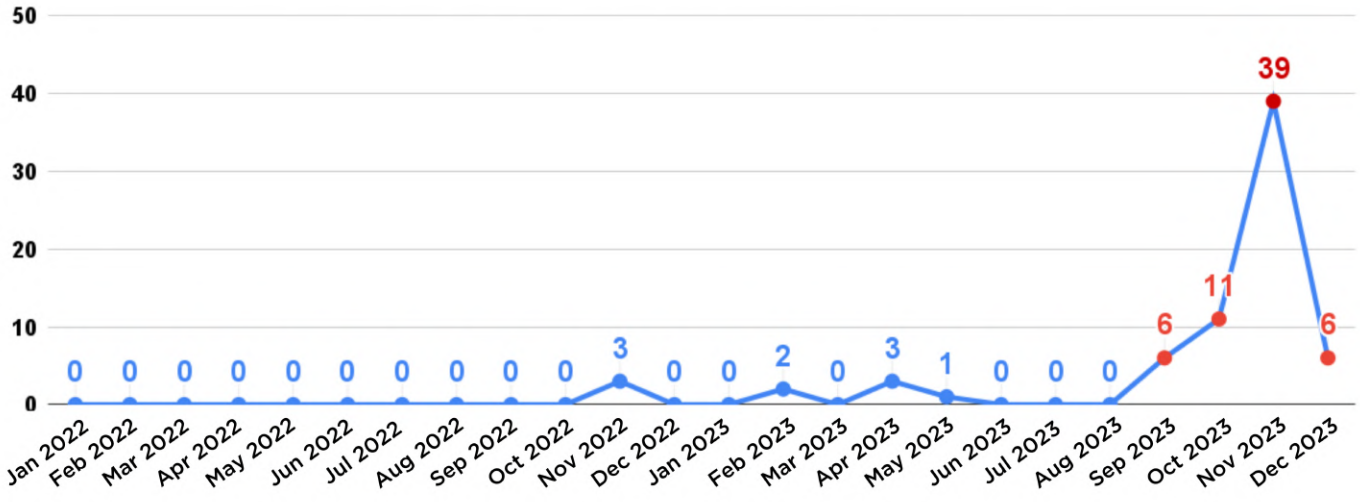
THE INSTANT POPULARITY OF ESSEQUIBO



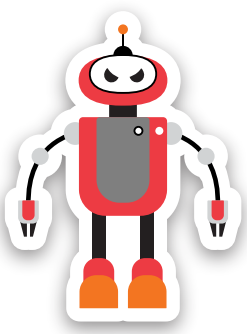
As of September 2023, there was an increase in the narrative about the territorial dispute over the Essequibo and the approval of a consultative referendum, which **triggered a campaign that included paid advertisements in social media,** street activities, programs and propaganda in traditional media, among others. This campaign reinforced the discourse around fear, empathy and "the theft of something that belongs to all Venezuelans".

The referendum on the Essequibo was the most massive topic in the 2023 election conversation in X with around 1.6 million tweets in 55 trends, **41 of them promoted by MIPPCI.** However, this campaign had a boom in November and then a significant decline, despite the consultation having taken place.

EVOLUTION OF TRENDS ON THE ESSEQUIBO 2022 - 2023



From #LupaElectoral we analyzed this campaign, a coordinated and multiplatform effort of the government that was **not only evidenced in X, but also in Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and TikTok;** using a combination of disinformation, propaganda and advanced digital strategies, with the intention of influencing national and international public opinion.



Disinformation against María Corina Machado was also present in the framework of this campaign; with anonymous networks promoting #MCMEntregaElEsequibo but without managing to position her among the trends; as well as the support of other regimes in the region such as Cuba using #CarcelParaLaTraidora against Machado for *"rejecting the Essequibo referendum".*

THE OPPOSITION PRIMARIES AND THE OFFICIALISM'S ATTACKS ON THE PROCESSES

The campaign of the Primaries called by the Unitary Platform occupies the second place in the electoral conversation with 34 hashtags that totaled a little more than 404 thousand messages. **Becoming the democratic political milestone of the year.**

The Opposition Parties led this topic with 21 trends, mainly by Vente Venezuela supporting Machado's candidacy and her victory in the process, despite the ratification of her political disqualification by the regime.

It is followed by the radical Officialism with 6 trends, promoted mainly by Diosdado Cabello from "Con el Mazo Dando", who dedicated himself to attack the process and its participants, as well as to disinform about it.

In *"From #Primarias2023 to #MegaFraude: The digital battle in Venezuela"* we explain how #Primarias2023 kept trending in Venezuela for three consecutive days and how the Officialism tried to denounce #MegaFraud in a process that they initially ignored, then assured that it would not take place and in which they had no participation at the candidate level.

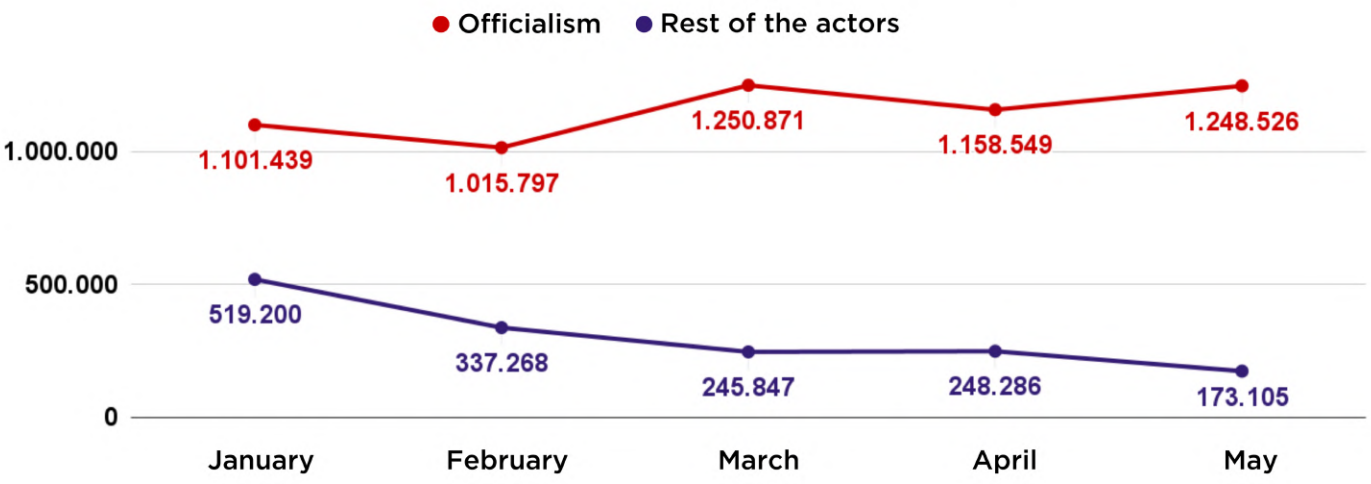
In *"#CiberalianzaAlDescubierto: El Mazo and anonymous networks unite to disinform",* in alliance with C-Informa, we identified how anonymous networks and Diosdado Cabello acted in coordination to disinform and attack the Primaries, amplifying disinformation on multiple platforms: X, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. Defaming the most prominent opposition leaders and reusing hashtags such as #NiPorLasBuenasNiPorLasMalas and #AsiChillesOPataleesNoVas.

In *"#CiberalianzaAlDescubierto: disinformation and gender-tinged online attacks",* a study together with C-Informa we evidenced how female candidates in the opposition primaries received 71.4% of gendered attacks and disinformation compared to their male counterparts, In addition, positive words on social media were lower for women (39.4%) compared to men (60.6%).

2024: DIGITAL BATTLE FOR THE MIRAFLORES CHAIR BECOMES OFFICIAL

Between **January and May 2024, 290 socio political trends were positioned in X** with around 7,297,888 messages. **Once again, the Officialism dominates this conversation** with 238 hashtags and 79.12% of the tweets (5,774,182 appx.).

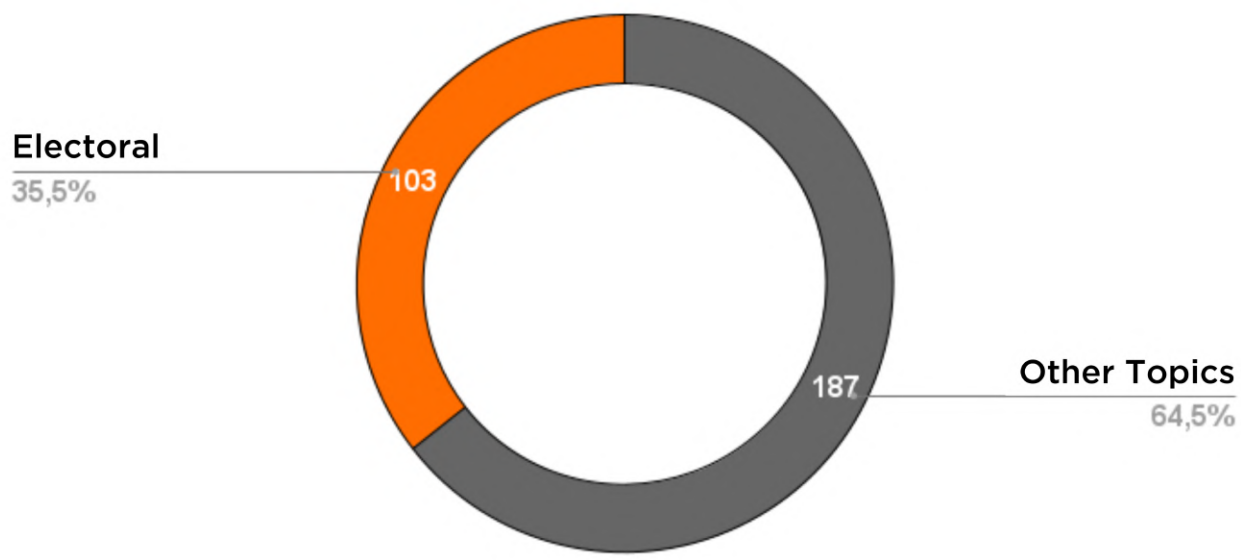
EVOLUTION OF TWEETS JANUARY - MAY 2024



HOW HAS THE ELECTORAL CONVERSATION DEVELOPED?

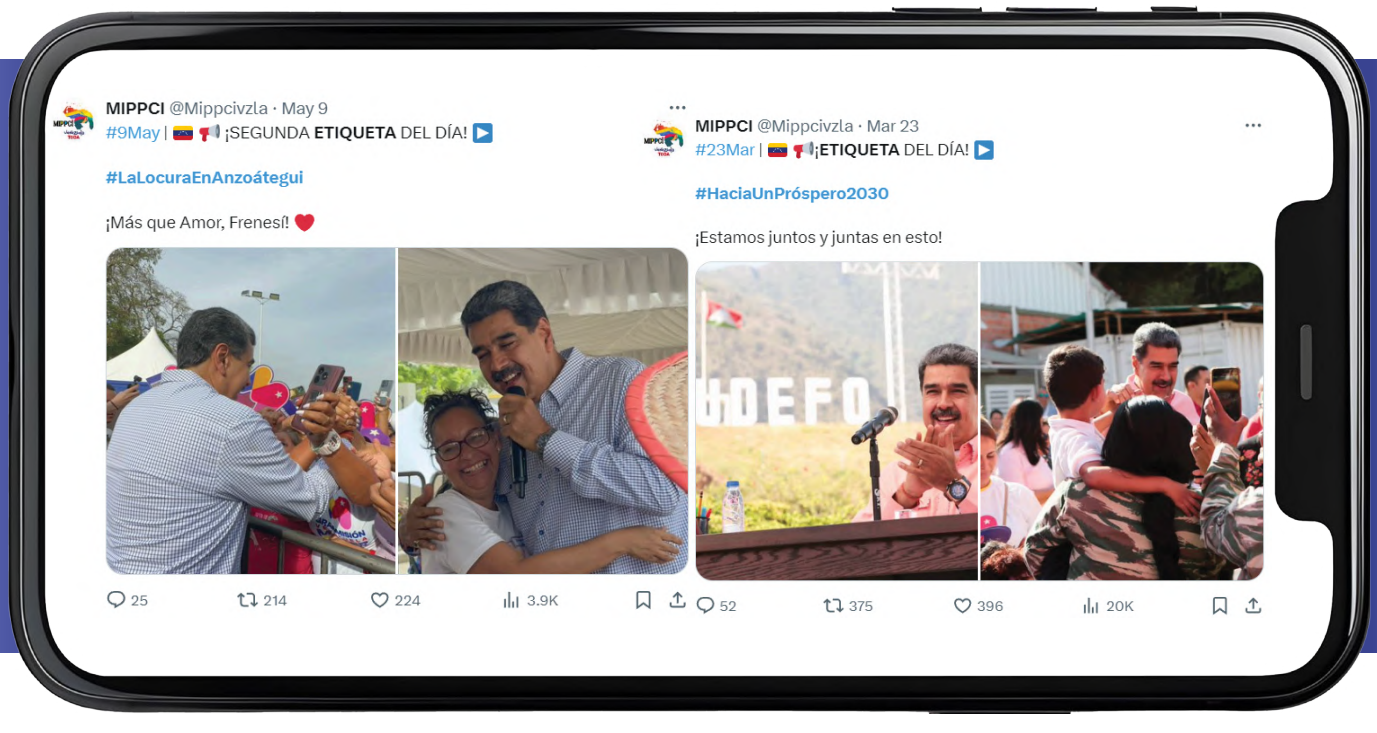
As in the general conversation, **Officialism has generated the most trends and electoral messages** with 90 hashtags and approximately 2,218,330 tweets; that is, **95.17% of the electoral messages come from Officialism.**

ELECTORAL TRENDS BETWEEN JANUARY AND MAY 2024 Vs. OTHER TOPICS



In other words, **of all the conversation in the first five months of the year, 35.5% of the trends and almost 32% of the messages have to do with the presidential elections** to be held on July 28.

MIPPCI has promoted the most trends with 63, almost all in support of Maduro's reelection **despite being a governmental entity.** These accumulated 87.39% of the messages, with more than 2 million tweets.

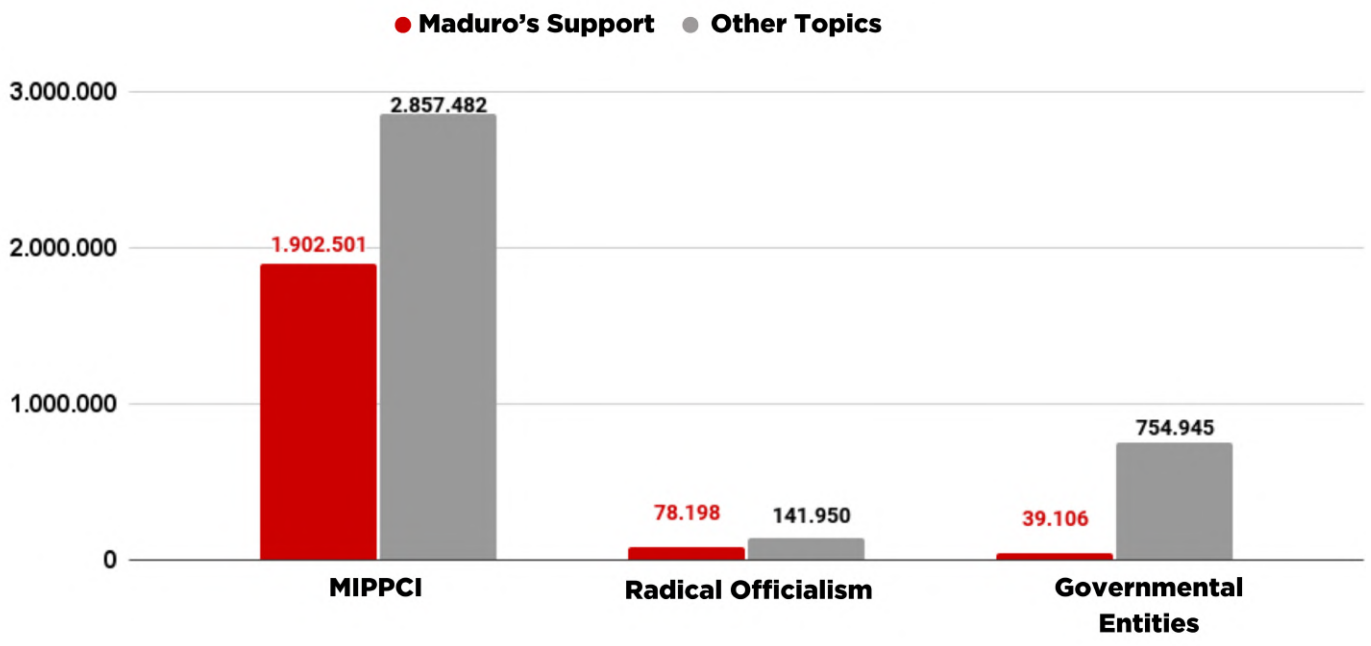


SUPPORT FOR MADURO'S REELECTION FROM ALL FRONTS

The campaign favorable to Nicolás Maduro is the most recurrent narrative between January and May 2024. With 75 trends and around 2,019,805 tweets.

MIPPCI leads the way with 59 trends that accumulated approximately 1,902,501 tweets; that is **94.19% of the messages in support of Maduro followed the communicational line promoted by MIPPCI.**

ELECTORAL TWEETS OF MADURO´S SUPPORT / JANUARY - MAY 2024



The governors of Sucre and Aragua state also participated in this conversation with 3 and 1 trend, respectively.

As well as two programs broadcast on public television: **"Con el Mazo Dando",** hosted by Diosdado Cabello (second actor with more trends and messages in support of Maduro with 14 that totaled 130,403 tweets appx.) and **"Con Maduro +",** the President's own program that has also promoted his pre-campaign (4 trends, 10,220 tweets appx.).

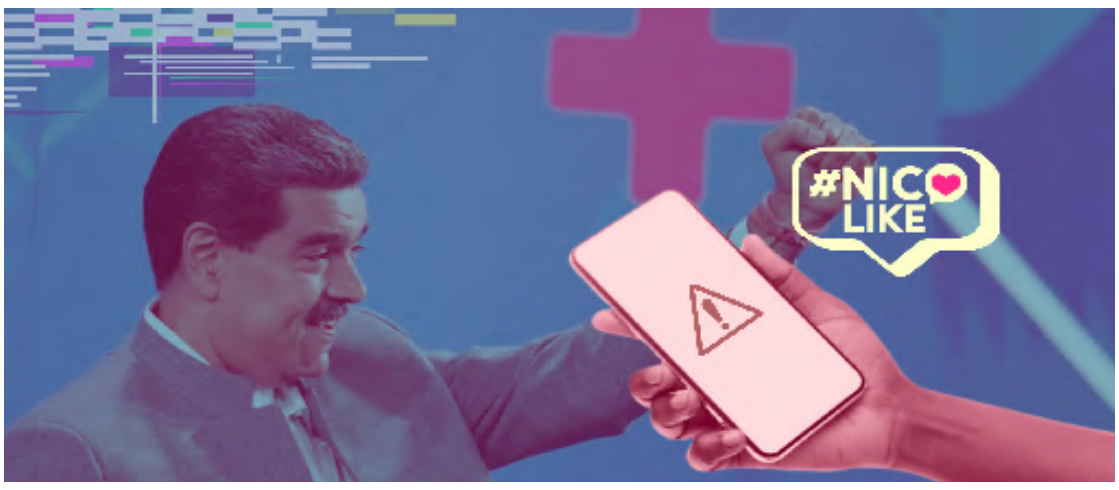
According to Article 222 of the General Regulations of the Organic Law of Electoral Processes, ***"national, state or municipal public bodies may not carry out electoral publicity and propaganda and, in this sense, may not disseminate messages aimed at promoting, sponsoring or favoring a certain candidacy or organization for political purposes".*** Despite this, since 2019 we have documented the use of public resources and institutions to promote propaganda for Maduro, his administration or even to disinform against his opponents.

In ["The power machine: how Maduro weaves his propaganda network"] we highlight how since 2023 the State has been dedicated to massively promote Maduro in his role as a candidate, rather than in his duties as President; detailing the strategies and means used by the regime to control the public narrative and consolidate its power.

Between January 2023 and April 2024, **MIPPCI generated 66 trends** (representing 10.77%) of the hashtags and 97.340% of the registered tweets (8,243,050 appx.) on Twitter or X in **support of Maduro.**

Government Entities such as the governor's office of Sucre, are in second place with 19.32% (17 trends) and 2.23% of tweets (188,728 appx.).

The radical Officialism, mainly Diosdado Cabello from "Con el Mazo Dando" also participated with 5.68% of the trends (5) and 0.37% of the tweets (30,998 appx.).

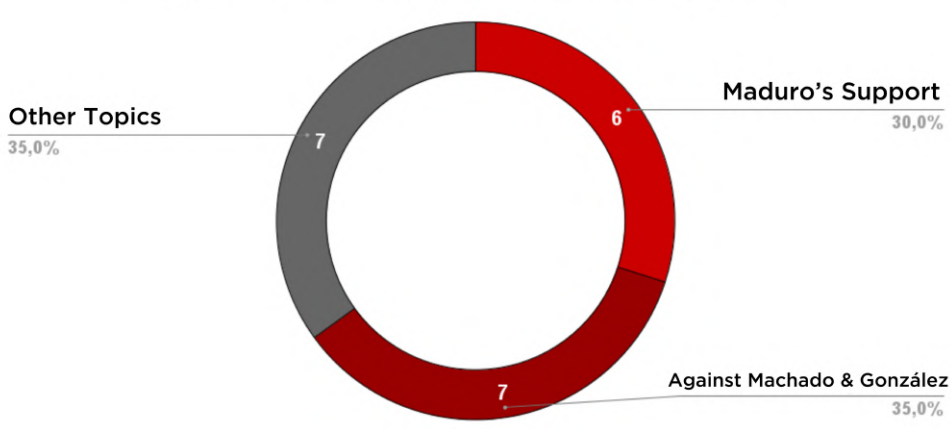


This strategy has evolved and adapted over time including new platforms; proof of this is "#NicoLike", a campaign based on a supposed digital banning of Maduro. **Manipulating and lying so that citizens replicate their content online at all costs.**

DIOSDADO CABELLO LEADS THE DIGITAL ATTACKS AGAINST MARÍA CORINA MACHADO

As in 2023, **the attack and disqualification trends against María Corina Machado come from Diosdado Cabello and his program "Con el Mazo Dando".** This narrative was the third most recurrent in the electoral conversation of the first 5 months of the year. In addition to Machado, **Edmundo González also received two trends against him** promoted by this actor.

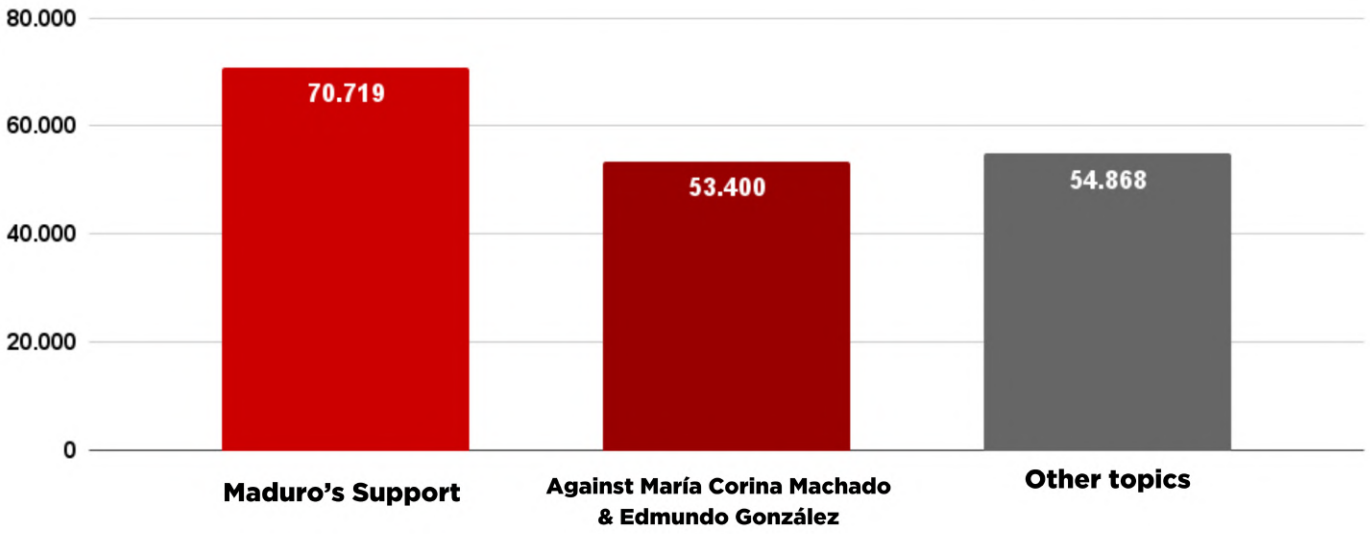
TRENDS PROMOTED BY CABELLO IN "CON EL MAZO DANDO" IN SUPPORT OF MADURO AND ATTACKS ON THE OPPOSITION



Cabello promoted 7 trends in total against Machado and Gonzalez and 6 trends in support of Maduro; dedicating more efforts to the defamation of the opposition (mainly during the conversation in the first 5 months of the year) than to the reelection campaign of its Presidential candidate.

However, at the message level, trends in support of Maduro managed to accumulate more tweets with around 70,719; while trends against Machado and Gonzalez accumulated approximately 53,400 tweets.

TWEETS OF THE TRENDS PROMOTED BY CABELLO IN "CON EL MAZO DANDO" IN SUPPORT OF MADURO AND ATTACK TO OPPOSITION



EXAMPLES:

MAR 27th

#NoChillesMasSabesQueNoVas,

16.000 tweets appx.

FEB 07th

#OseaLiteralNoVas,

13.400 tweets appx.

MAR 20th

#ChillasteMentisteYNoVas,

10.600 tweets appx.

Diosdado Cabello R @dcabellor · Mar 27

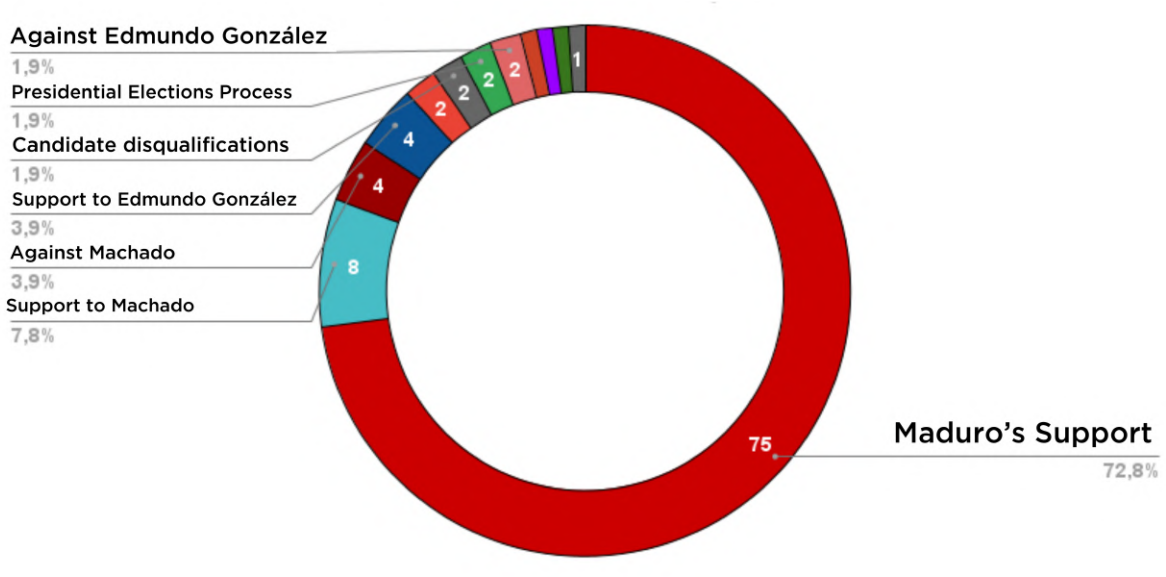
#NoChillesMasSabesQueNoVas a estas alturas todo está claro, se imponen las leyes, se impone la justicia, engañaste a tu propia gente y quieres seguir manipulando, cero posibilidades, nos encaminamos a unas elecciones el 28JUL y será el Pueblo quien decida. Nosotros Venceremos!

751 1.4K 1.7K 82K

THE DEMOCRATIC CONVERSATION RESURFACES WITH MARÍA CORINA AND EDMUNDO

In the Venezuelan electoral conversation in X between January and May 2024, María Corina Machado, winner of the Opposition Primary process to define a unitary candidacy for the Presidential elections, occupies second and third place as the most recurrent topics with **two very different narratives: attack and support.**

ELECTORAL TRENDS BY TOPIC



The support to Maria Corina Machado managed to position 8 trends and around 82,316 messages; they are divided into 6 promoted by her party, Vente Venezuela, and 2 by various actors ranging from civil society to several opposition parties.

In January we registered the highest number of hashtags (5) and messages (41,216 appx.), mainly rejecting the ratification of the political disqualification. While the remaining 3 trends were all positioned in March, supporting Machado's decision to appoint Corina Yoris as her alternative at the time.

WHAT ABOUT CIVIL SOCIETY?

Of the 290 trends positioned between January and May 2024, only 15 belong to civil society, totaling approximately 50,779 messages. In other words, only 5.17% of the trends and 0.7% of the messages come from citizens as social protest.

Alarming numbers, since they translate into approximately 113.73 times more messages from Officialism than from civil society during the same period.

THE MAIN REASONS FOR CITIZEN PROTEST

Economic demands, (6 trends, 31,187 tweets appx.): all refer to the lack of salary increase being led mainly by the teachers' union and various unions with hashtags such as: #BonoNoEsSalario, #ProtestaNacionalDelMagisterio and #MaduroMatoElSalario.

Service failures, (6 trends, 16,539 tweets appx.): 5 times #SinLuz was positioned to report the increasing service failures. The remaining hashtag talks about the drinking water situation in several states of the country.

Human Rights, (2 trends, 2,000 tweets appx.): one of the hashtags rejects the bill of the Law of Fiscalization, Regularization, Performance and Financing of Non-Governmental and Related Organizations (#SociedadInhabilitada), framed in the closing of the national civic space that we analyzed in #LupaElectoral. The second one makes visible the demands of the LGBTQ+ collective to maintain the work of NGOs in the country, especially in the face of the continuous attacks they receive (#VivanLasONG).

Politics (1 trend, 1,053 tweets appx.): #UnidadYVotoEsLaClave was promoted by several NGOs and citizens, regarding the importance of voter registration, participation in the upcoming elections and the need to report irregularities in order to perform or update such registration.

While organized citizens, NGOs and the teachers' union continue to lead the social protest, the increasing service failures in Venezuela and changes in the Twitter platform have affected the behavior of the socio-political conversation in different ways.

We recall the need to strengthen citizen activism to counter Maduro's manipulated version of Venezuela's reality on social media.

TIKTOK GAINS PROMINENCE IN THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONVERSATION

A survey published by More Consulting, with data from April 2024, showed that **around 70.8% of Venezuelans use digital media to consume political information.** In recent years, **TikTok has been increasing its popularity, especially among young audiences.**

HOW DOES THIS NETWORK WORK?

Unlike other platforms, in the **"For You" section, the algorithm suggests the most popular content, according to your interests.** The content does not follow a chronological order and users do not only see the publications of the accounts they follow.

In addition, **a video can trend weeks, or even months, after it was originally posted;** and the same content can stay there for an extended period of time or trend more than once. For this reason, the metrics for each post vary over time.

HOW DO WE MONITOR IT?

As of September 2023 we expanded our work to include TikTok monitoring and analysis for our studies doing several things like:

- **Daily monitoring of the top 10 trending videos** along with the most relevant metrics of the day in which they were positioned among the most popular content on TikTok.
- Due to the nature of the platform, with a greater focus on entertainment, rather than on more "sensitive" topics, **we divided the content into two groups: "political" and "non-political" publications.**
- Between September 29 and December 31, 2023, we registered 949 posts as trending in Venezuela, 315 are unique videos. That is, several were trending more than once.

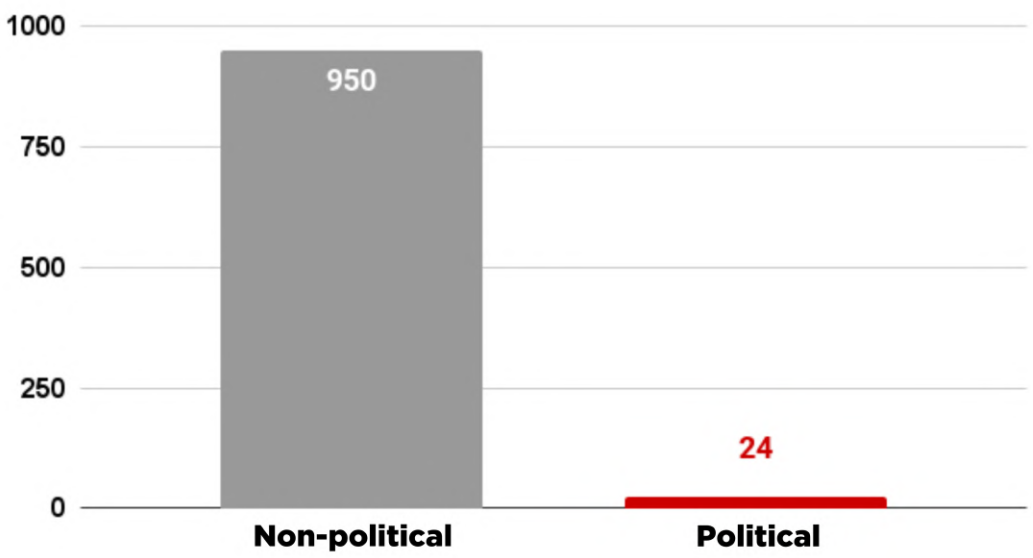
MAIN FINDINGS

From September 29, 2023, to March 4, 2024, according to our records, none of these trending videos had political content. They were mainly entertainment, with the most frequent themes being comedy videos, cooking recipes, music, series, dances, among others.

IN 2024 POLITICAL VIDEOS STARTED TO BE POSTED ON TIKTOK VENEZUELA

Between January and May 2024, we noticed a change. We recorded 1,380 contents as trending, 974 of them were **unique videos; 950 were non-political** but, unlike 2023, 24 videos were political. Once again, "entertainment" videos were the most present in the non-political narratives.

UNIQUE VIDEOS ACCORDING TO MAIN NARRATIVE / JANUARY - MAY 2024

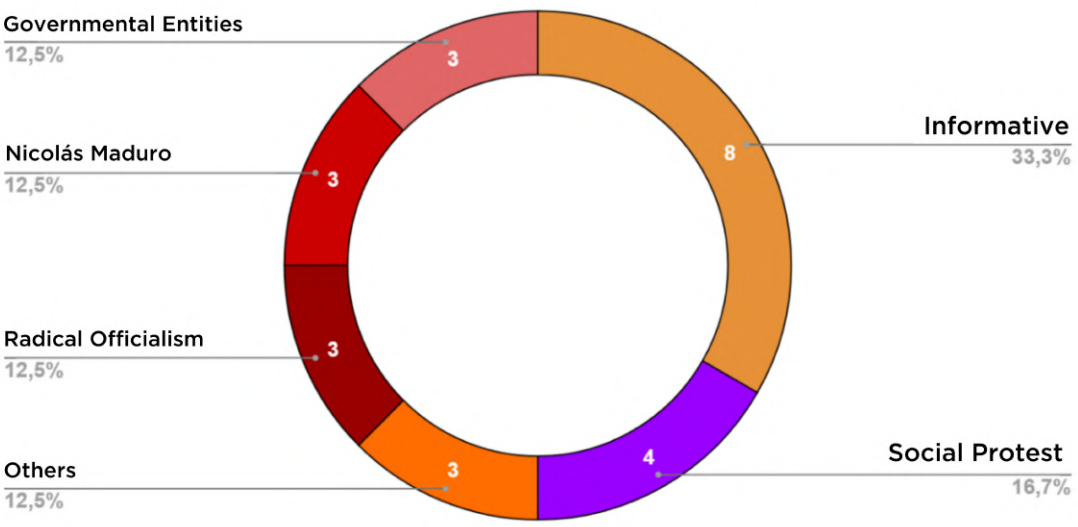


We analyze in detail the political publications as a trend in Venezuela:

Officialism accumulated the highest number of trending videos (9) with Nicolás Maduro, Radical Officialism and Government Entities each having three trending videos.

Informative content was in second place with 8 videos and citizen social protest in third place with 4.

POLTICAL VIDEOS BY SUBCATEGORY

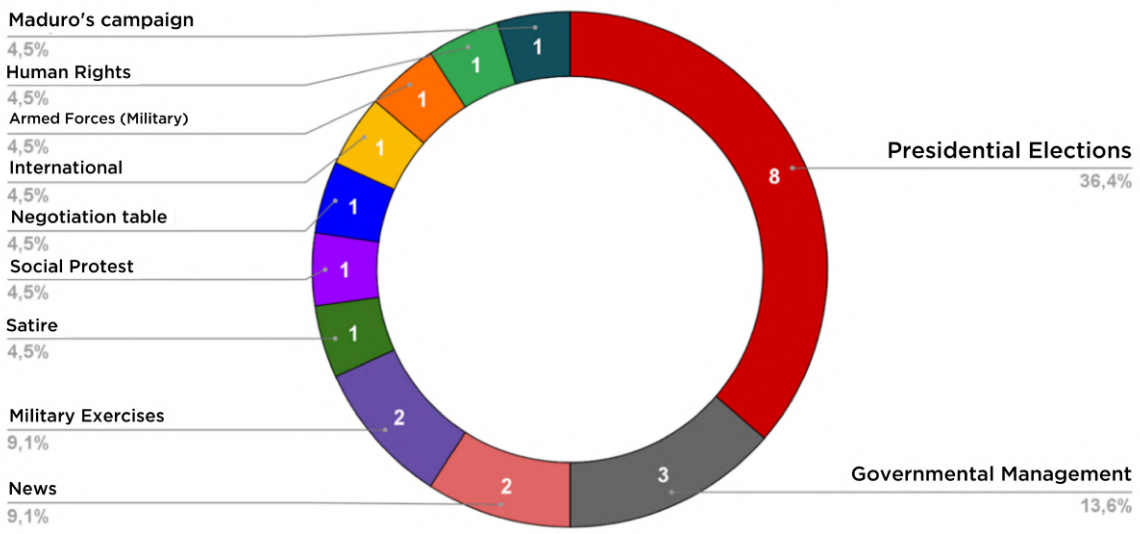


The three videos positioned by governmental entities **accumulated the highest number of reproductions** with 8,900,000 as of May 31. Followed by the informative videos with 7,217,200 reproductions and those of civil society with 6,446,400 reproductions.

WHAT WERE THE POLITICAL VIDEOS ON TIKTOK TALKING ABOUT?

We identified 11 different themes in trending political videos between January and May 2024.

MAIN TOPICS OF TRENDING POLITICAL VIDEOS



The **July 28 presidential election** was the main narrative with 8 videos. **For example:**

"Kilómetro Produce", conducting a street survey to Venezuelans asking them for whom they would vote on July 28. Published on March 14 but trended on April 9, accumulating up to May 31: 1,600,000 reproductions, 76,300 "likes", 5,569 comments and was shared at least 2,707 times.

The second place was "Governmental Management" with 3 videos. **Example:**

Video of the governor of the state of Carabobo, Rafael Lacava, promoting a new management initiative in the state called "Dracurider", with the intention of "improving the mobility of the inhabitants". The video was published on March 1st and became trending on April 24th. As of May 31, it accumulated 1,300,000 reproductions, 74,000 "likes", 2,315 comments and was shared at least 5,865 times.

In third place was "News" with 2 videos. **Example:**

Video of the German media Deutsche Welle (DW) in English narrating about a possible agreement between the government and the opposition in view of the presidential elections.

#ProData:

POLITICAL VIDEOS WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF REPRODUCTIONS:

1. **Descriptive video on the works carried out in the Agua Blanca swimming pools to receive tourists in Portuguesa,** published by @heizelelianaceballospsuv, mayor of said municipality. As of May 31, the video had 5,200,000 views.
2. **Video of Nicolás Maduro's announcement on salary increase,** published by the account @venezuelatodayes, a profile dedicated to sharing videos in favor of Officialism, especially Nicolás Maduro. It accumulated 3,300,000 reproductions up to the date of the study.
3. **Fragment of a news item indicating that Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores are negotiating their exit from power,** published by @uitimahora2024, an account dedicated to publishing supposedly "breaking news" content. By the end of May, the publication had 2,700,000 reproductions.

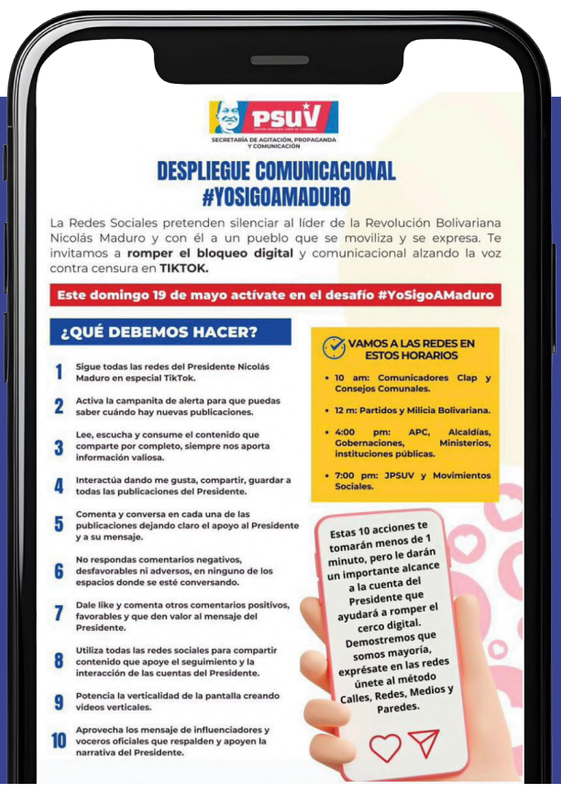
POLITICAL VIDEOS WITH THE MOST LIKES:

1. **Video mocking former President Donald Trump for saying that Venezuela will not be able to defeat the US,** published by the account @venefnb, a profile that promotes content of the National Armed Forces but is not an official account of the institution. As of May 31, it collected 137,800 "likes".
2. **Fragment of a news item indicating that Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores are negotiating their exit from power,** published by @uitimahora2024, the same video that occupies the third place with the highest number of views. As of the end of May, it had collected 121,700 likes.
3. **Video of military exercises by the DGCIM,** published by the official account of the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence

WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT GIVING SO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO TIKTOK?

TikTok has become the new platform preferred by the Venezuelan government, especially by Nicolás Maduro for campaigning, live broadcasts, challenges and "humorous" content on this network. **And this is no coincidence.**

This social network continues to increase its popularity, especially among young people. A survey published by More Consulting, with data from April 2024, showed that **TikTok is the second most used social network by Venezuelans to learn about political news.**



In ***"#FakeLikes: The manipulation behind the alleged banning of Maduro on social media*** we showed how the government reinforced its online campaign, mainly on TikTok, with the argument that it was suffering a "digital ban" by social media platforms.

This campaign seems to be linked to the fact that TikTok itself published a report called *"Covert Influence Operations"*, under the logic of "promoting transparency and sharing learnings with the industry" of social networks; in which it revealed **the suspension of 521 accounts operated from Venezuela** and targeting Venezuelan audiences **to amplify narratives favorable to Maduro's government and manipulate the public discourse in the dispute over the Essequibo.**

But this statement by Maduro is not only completely false, **it is the Officialism who through censorship and indiscriminate use of public resources floods social media with its campaign and narratives;** as we have shown throughout this report.

From January 2023 to May 31, 2024, the Officialism positioned 901 socio-political trends in X. **338% more than the rest of the actors in the conversation combined.**

Despite the fact that Maduro claims not to be able to advertise in networks, the Meta Ad Library contains at least 27 publications with official campaigns on Facebook and Instagram.

Although from September 2023 to February 2024 there were no official videos trending on this network, on March 12 we identified **the first video of Maduro within the most popular content of the platform.** As of May 31, at least 4 videos from the President's account have managed to become trending on TikTok Venezuela.

The only way to prevent the government's communication hegemony from continuing to expand to more digital spaces, which are one of the main windows for citizen denunciation, is, in addition to supporting the efforts of civil society, journalists and researchers to document and make visible the censorship and manipulation of information in Venezuela. To strengthen the links between content moderators of the platforms and independent civil society representatives of different specialties.

ProBox Team, 2024