

Brazil

Country Focus Report 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. An Introduction to the Enabling Environment

B. Assessment of the Enabling Environment

1. Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms
2. Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework
3. Accessible and Sustainable Resources
4. Open and Responsive State
5. Supportive Public Culture on Discourses on Civil Society
6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment

C. Recommendations

D. Research Process



A) An Introduction to the Enabling Environment

What we understand by an Enabling Environment is the combination of laws, rules and social attitudes that support and promote the work of civil society. Within such an environment, civil society can engage in political and public life without fear of reprisals, openly express its views, and actively participate in shaping its context. This includes a supportive legal and regulatory framework for civil society, ensuring access to information and resources that are sustainable and flexible to pursue their goals unhindered, in safe physical and digital spaces. In an enabling environment, the state demonstrates openness and responsiveness in governance, promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making. Positive values, norms, attitudes, and practices towards civil society from state and non-state actors further underscore the supportive environment.

To capture the state of the Enabling Environment, we use the following six principles:

SIX ENABLING PRINCIPLES



Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms



Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework



Accessible and Sustainable Resources



Open and Responsive State



Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society



Access to a Secure Digital Environment

In this Country Focus Report, each enabling principle is assessed with a quantitative score and complemented by an analysis and recommendations written by our Network Members. Rather than offering a singular index to rank countries, the report aims to measure the enabling environment for civil society across the 6 principles, discerning dimensions of strength and those requiring attention.

The findings presented in this report are grounded in the insights and diverse perspectives of civil society actors who came together in a dedicated panel with representatives from civil society to discuss and evaluate the state of the Enabling Environment. Their collective input enriches the report with a grounded, participatory assessment. This primary input is further supported by secondary sources of information, which provide additional context and strengthen the analysis.

Reporting period covered: July 2025 – July 2026

Brief Overview of the Country Context

The Brazilian political context during the period under review was marked by the approaching general elections scheduled for October 2026, which have become one of the main factors shaping the country's political and institutional environment.

The electoral process is taking place amid [the intense political polarisation](#) observed since 2018, centred on President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and the political movement associated with former President Jair Bolsonaro, [who remains ineligible and under house arrest](#). At the domestic level, the composition of the National Congress following the 2026 elections will be an important factor shaping the governability of the next administration. [Although the presidential race remains strongly polarised, the ability of the next government](#) to implement its agenda will depend significantly on its capacity to build legislative majorities and negotiate with Congress.

[The approaching elections have also intensified debates regarding electoral sovereignty](#), disinformation campaigns, [foreign influence](#), and the use of digital platforms to interfere in public debate. [These concerns have emerged alongside growing tensions in relations between Brazil and the United States](#). In the economic sphere, disagreements over possible trade tariffs, intellectual property protection, and criticism of the online payment system Pix have contributed [to the deterioration of bilateral relations](#). In the security sphere, [the designation by the United States of the Primeiro Comando da Capital \(PCC\) and Comando Vermelho as foreign terrorist organisations](#) generated a strong reaction from the Brazilian government and concerns regarding national sovereignty and the [possibility of unilateral extraterritorial measures](#). These episodes have broadened [debates on sovereignty, international cooperation, and public security](#). These diplomatic tensions have also acquired an economic dimension, particularly [following the imposition of additional U.S. tariffs on Brazilian](#) exports in July 2026, increasing uncertainty around bilateral trade and economic relations.

Environmental issues have also remained an important dimension of Brazil's broader context. [The country hosted COP30 in Belém in November 2025](#), placing climate change, forest protection, biodiversity, and Indigenous and traditional people's rights prominently on the international agenda. [Brazil has also recorded significant reductions in deforestation](#), particularly in the Amazon, and environmental degradation, [illegal mining](#), land grabbing, and [conflicts over territories continue to pose significant challenges](#). These dynamics remain particularly relevant to civic space given the role of civil society organisations and Indigenous

and traditional communities in environmental protection, territorial rights, and climate advocacy.

Taken together, these factors point to a context combining intense electoral polarisation, risks related to democratic integrity and civic space, diplomatic tensions, debates over sovereignty, and changes in the distribution of power between the Executive and Legislative branches. These dynamics contribute to an environment of growing political and institutional uncertainty that is likely to directly affect the conditions under which civil society organisations operate, making civic space monitoring particularly relevant during Brazil's 2026 electoral cycle.

B) Assessment of the Enabling Environment

PRINCIPLE SCORE

1. Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms

Score: ¹



Respect for and protection of fundamental freedoms in Brazil remained partially favourable during the period from July 2025 to June 2026. The country continues to [have a robust constitutional and legal framework](#) that guarantees the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly, and expression, as well as institutions that are generally capable of safeguarding the exercise of these rights. However, significant challenges remain regarding the effective implementation of these guarantees, particularly for civil society organisations, community leaders, and human rights defenders working on issues related to environmental protection, territorial rights, and the defence of historically marginalised groups.

[One of the main examples of the ongoing challenges regarding the protection of fundamental rights was the large-scale police operation carried out by the Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro in the Penha and Alemão complexes in October 2025](#), considered the deadliest operation in the state's history, with a total of 122 deaths. The operation had significant impacts on the civilian population and [raised concerns among national and international human rights organisations regarding the proportionality of the use of force](#) and the adoption of adequate measures to protect civilians. [The episode forms part of a recurring pattern in Rio de Janeiro's public security policy, characterised by highly lethal operations in vulnerable territories](#), as also observed in previous actions in other marginalised areas. This context is linked to the state's specific characteristics, including the presence of organised crime groups and militias, as well as the predominance, over the past decade, of security strategies centred on armed confrontation. These dynamics continue to raise concerns regarding the effective protection of the rights to life and physical integrity.

¹This is a rebased score derived from the [CIVICUS Monitor rating](#) published in December 2025.

This broader security model, marked by the recurrent use of excessive force in both police operations [and responses to social protests](#), also includes circumstances in [which security forces have carried out operations without the required judicial authorisation](#) or in disregard of established legal procedures, [particularly in contexts involving social movements and land occupations](#). These practices reflect patterns of institutional violence and structural racism that disproportionately affect marginalised communities and have implications for civic space, particularly the effective exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly.

Violations against Indigenous peoples and other traditional communities also remained among the main challenges affecting the protection of fundamental rights during the period under review. [Indigenous peoples continued to face critical levels of violence](#), particularly in the Amazon region, in a context marked by the expansion of illegal mining, the presence of organised crime, and land conflicts involving traditionally occupied territories.

[The 2025 Report on Violence against Indigenous Peoples in Brazil](#), published by the Indigenous Missionary Council (CIMI) in August 2026, recorded 258 Indigenous people killed in 2025, an increase of 22% compared to 2024. The report also documented 1,276 cases of violence against Indigenous property, including 210 cases involving invasions, illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of damage to Indigenous territories, as well as 169 territorial rights conflicts. These figures reflect the continued [vulnerability of Indigenous peoples, particularly those engaged in struggles for land demarcation and territorial rights](#). Indigenous organisations and human rights groups also reported an increase in [violence against Indigenous women and girls](#), including cases of sexual violence linked to the presence of illegal invaders in protected territories.

[The situation in the Yanomami Indigenous Territory has improved significantly](#) since the humanitarian crisis of 2023, particularly in relation to health indicators. In the first half of 2026, deaths from malnutrition fell by 75.7% compared to the same period in 2023, while malaria-related deaths fell to zero. However, despite [a significant reduction in illegal mining within the territory, the activity has not been completely eliminated and continues to pose risks to Indigenous](#) communities and their environment. Recent evidence also indicates that illegal mining networks have adapted to increased government enforcement, including by shifting their activities and routes to areas with less monitoring.

[This context of vulnerability also affected quilombola communities](#), riverine populations, extractivist communities, artisanal fishers, and other traditional groups, which remained exposed to threats, territorial invasions, and violence associated with land disputes and socio-environmental conflicts. [The report Conflitos no Campo Brasil 2025 \(Conflicts in the Countryside Brazil 2025\)](#), published by the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), indicated that, although the overall number of agrarian conflicts decreased, the number of killings in rural areas doubled compared to the previous year, demonstrating an increase in the deadliness of these conflicts. Reports also continued regarding the use of pesticides as a means of pressuring rural communities, restrictions on access to water resulting from high-impact economic activities, and episodes of intolerance and violence against Afro-Brazilian religious communities. Together, these factors demonstrate the persistence of an insecure environment for groups whose territorial, cultural, and collective rights remain under threat. When fundamental freedoms of association, expression, and peaceful assembly cannot be effectively exercised by parts of the population, this not only undermines democratic participation but also directly affects the ability of civil society organisations to operate, organise, and defend rights.

Regarding the protection of human rights defenders, communicators, and environmental defenders, the period was marked by important institutional advances, but also by persistent limitations in the State's capacity to prevent and respond to violence.

[The Program for the Protection of Human Rights](#) Defenders, Communicators and Environmentalists (PPDDH), established in 2004, was strengthened and restructured, particularly from 2023 onwards, [with the updating of its institutional framework](#), and the restoration of civil society participation mechanisms, and [the creation of the National Plan for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders \(PlanoDDH\)](#) in November 2025 represent relevant initiatives to strengthen institutional protection mechanisms. However, experts and civil society organisations continue to identify challenges related to funding, operational capacity, and coordination among different levels of government, factors that limit the effectiveness of these mechanisms, [particularly in Amazonian regions and areas affected by land conflicts. Indigenous leaders, quilombola leaders, environmental defenders, and defenders of land rights remained among the groups most exposed to threats, attacks, and killings.](#)

Practices of criminalisation and judicial harassment against activists and civil society organisations also continued during the period. Although no systematic policy of criminalisation led by the federal government was identified, [recent research has documented different forms of criminalisation](#), including judicial proceedings, administrative procedures, and bureaucratic mechanisms [used](#) against organisations and human rights defenders. These practices can impose significant financial, administrative, and reputational costs, while also creating intimidating effects that restrict freedom of association and the ability of civil society organisations to operate, organise, and advocate for rights.

Overall, the period analysed in this report demonstrates continuity in relation to the previous cycle. Constitutional and institutional guarantees for the exercise of fundamental freedoms remain largely preserved, allowing civil society organisations to operate relatively freely. However, the persistence of violence against human rights defenders, traditional communities, and vulnerable groups, combined with episodes of disproportionate use of force, limitations in protection mechanisms, and administrative and judicial pressures, prevents the environment from being considered fully favourable. Therefore, the assessment remains that Brazil has a partially favourable environment, characterised by the existence of relevant formal and institutional guarantees, but also by significant inequalities in their implementation and effective protection.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

2. Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework

Score:



The Brazilian legal framework, grounded in [the Federal Constitution \(Art. 5\)](#) and the [Civil Code](#), guarantees freedom of association without the need for prior authorisation or government licensing for organisations to operate. In addition, the Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organisations (MROSC), established by [Law 13,019/2014](#), reinforces the autonomy of these entities and sets clear rules for partnerships with the government. However, [the registration process at civil registry offices](#) is often described as [costly, bureaucratic, and slow](#). Specifically, [registry offices demand](#) constant revisions to minutes and documents without clear legal justification, and differing regional laws [prescribe](#) the imposition of registry fees and the requirement to undergo banking procedures—among other examples that constitute a concrete obstacle to the institutionalisation of these organisations. Furthermore, community-based organisations, those in outlying areas, or those addressing sensitive issues (such as LGBTQIA+ or environmental issues) face greater obstacles, including [institutional prejudice and selective criminalisation](#) during the registration process.

The [operational aspect](#) of civil society organisations faces challenges similar to those related to registration. There is a tension between the freedom and legal support guaranteed by law and the significant practical restrictions organisations face in their day-to-day operations. [There are also reports of barriers related to access to the financial system](#). Some organisations face excessive compliance requirements, repeated requests for documentation, and difficulties in opening or maintaining bank accounts. Although these measures are generally presented as financial risk management procedures, their disproportionate application may create additional administrative burdens, particularly for smaller organisations and those working on sensitive issues, limiting their operational capacity and access to financial services.

The regulatory framework allows for different organisational structures, ranging from collegial arrangements to more hierarchical formats. However, the need to comply with complex accounting rules and unfounded government requirements imposes significant barriers, especially for small organisations that lack the resources to hire accountants and other organisational management specialists. It is worth noting that the experts' analysis does not differ significantly from the situation identified at the beginning of this decade, [as outlined in a publication on the Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organisations developed by the Group of Institutes](#), Foundations, and Companies (GIFE). The report found that “negative perceptions concern the capacity of CSOs to comply with legal requirements: 37.59% of managers believe that CSOs face difficulties, while 53.39% believe that CSOs have the capacity to adapt.

A key issue in this operational dimension is the criticism of how [Law 13.019/2014—known as the MROSC \(Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organisations\)](#)—is enforced, as its application is viewed as significantly inconsistent across states and municipalities, leading to a climate of legal uncertainty across much of the country.

Still, with regard to organisational autonomy and protection against undue interference, Brazil's legal framework stands out positively. [The Constitution](#) guarantees freedom of association and protects organisations against state interference in their functioning, [while the MROSC](#) establishes a specific framework for relations between public authorities and CSOs, recognising their autonomy and their legitimate role in social participation and the implementation of public policies.

Despite the formal legal protection, the political and practical environment is marked by constant threats and attempts at control. The sector's stability is viewed as fragile due to political interference. Since 2016, there has been an increase in attempts to create control mechanisms over CSOs through provisional measures and bills. Notable examples of pressure in Congress include the [Congressional Inquiry Committee \(CPI\) on NGOs](#) and restrictive bills (e.g., [PL 4416/2019](#) and [PL 1659/2024](#)), which seek to monitor these entities directly or restrict international funding. Although there is currently no imminent risk of these bills being approved, their existence and continued processing illustrate the persistence of political initiatives that may negatively affect civil society organisations, echoing concerns raised by previous initiatives such as the CPI on NGOs.

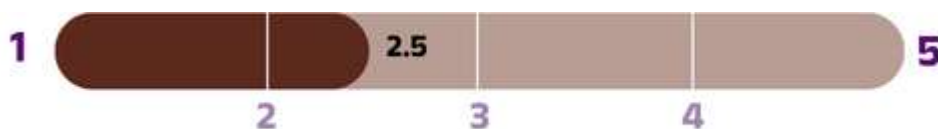
A view shared among experts is that there is a form of [bureaucratic criminalisation](#) through the initiation of retroactive accountability proceedings, which create uncertainty even without changes to the letter of the law. This legal uncertainty may increase the risk that smaller organisations suspend or even cease their operations, particularly when they lack the financial and technical capacity to respond to retroactive accountability proceedings. Another challenging factor in this regard has been the scrutiny of sensitive issues; that is, organisations working on sensitive topics (LGBT, feminist, environmental) face much greater scrutiny from public officials and private funders. Interference in the work of CSOs is not limited to government actions.

These practices directly affect civic space by undermining the legal security, financial sustainability, and operational capacity of civil society organisations to function fully, act independently, and fulfill their role in defending rights and participating in public life.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

3. Accessible and Sustainable Resources

Score:



Broadly speaking, the analysis of resource accessibility highlights that, although funding opportunities exist, effective access is marked by profound inequalities and structural barriers. Regional and thematic inequality—that is, [funding is uneven and contingent on the region \(with a strong concentration in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro\)](#) and the area of focus—illustrates this perspective. Furthermore, to make matters worse, small and medium-sized organisations face nearly insurmountable obstacles due to a lack of bureaucratic infrastructure to meet complex requirements, such as periodic audits and detailed financial reporting.

Another challenging aspect regarding access to resources is funders' preference for specific issues. Moreover, this bias in funding decisions is exacerbated by a notable reliance on personal relationships. This means that access to funding mechanisms often depends on relational capital or personal connections, which creates inequality for organisations located in outlying regions.

Regarding funding, recent evidence points to persistent financial sustainability challenges for Brazilian civil society organisations. [The 2025 World Giving Report](#) identified financial sustainability as a major challenge for Brazilian organisations, based on a survey conducted with 170 organisations between March and June 2025. International cooperation also remains an important source of funding for some segments of civil society: according to the [GIFE Census](#), it accounted for 15% of the resources of independent organisations surveyed in 2022, although its share had already declined significantly compared to 2018. This trend has become particularly concerning since 2025, as [changes in international cooperation priorities and reductions in development assistance](#) have increased uncertainty for organisations working on human rights, environmental protection, development and social justice.

More broadly, international cooperation remains a relevant source of funding for Brazil. [OECD data indicate](#) that the country received approximately USD 533 million in official development

assistance in 2024. Although this amount does not correspond exclusively to funding directed to CSOs, it helps illustrate the presence of international resources in the country and the relevance of this source to the civil society financing environment.

Also in this context, the implementation of the [Tax Reform](#), approved in 2023 and progressively regulated in the following years, is a source of some concern for organisations, as its new rules may result in an increased tax burden and reduced benefits for the CSO sector.

In terms of the Brazilian political landscape, there is also the trend of public funds being diverted to the implementation [of parliamentary amendments](#). Experts have noted a shift of resources that were previously accessed through transparent public calls for proposals toward the realm of political discretion. This change is viewed as detrimental to effectiveness, as funding becomes dependent on political relationships and local implementers, which can substantially distort the original projects, given that, in this scenario, there is a lack of transparency in the approval of funding as well as in the criteria for allocating resources.

Additionally, hierarchical relationships with donors make it difficult to accommodate specific needs; in other words, the dynamic between funders and civil society organisations (CSOs) is described as vertical and inflexible. There is little openness to dialogue or negotiation regarding the conditions for using the funds, which hinders the development of truly collaborative partnerships. More specifically, it is noted that funders often [exert influence](#) by imposing agendas, themes, and methodologies that are out of touch with local realities. Organisations frequently have to tone down their messaging or alter their strategic plans to align with donors' (sometimes shifting) priorities, thereby undermining the continuity of their initiatives.

Regarding funding conditions (and relationships with donors and peers), two complex factors come into play: excessive bureaucratic requirements and business management models ill-suited to the reality of these organisations. These demands consume time and financial resources that should be allocated directly to social impact activities, making project implementation nearly unfeasible for organisations that lack specialised teams. In other words, the obligations tied to funding require not only the fulfillment of programmatic activities but also complex and specific management skills, without the possibility of dedicated budget lines for such purposes.

In technical terms, there is a high degree of rigidity and a lack of flexibility in managing risks—a characteristic intrinsic to initiatives with a social focus and agenda—meaning that funding conditions rarely allow for adjustments to sudden changes in the local situation or to contexts of vulnerability and insecurity. Alongside this aspect of project implementation and the resources committed by funders, [strict accountability](#) does not tolerate the risks inherent in social work in these areas.

In Brazil, civil society organisations' ability to diversify their funding sources has remained limited, representing a significant challenge to their institutional sustainability. Although some organisations have sought to expand their resource mobilisation strategies through different mechanisms, including international cooperation, individual donations, private sector partnerships, and their own fundraising initiatives, the overall scenario continues to be characterised by dependence on a limited number of funding sources and short-term project-based financing. This situation particularly affects smaller organisations and those operating in areas or territories with limited access to funding networks, reducing their capacity to maintain permanent staff, plan long-term actions, and develop independent initiatives.

The stability and predictability of funding (for CSOs) were assessed, with particular emphasis on certain factors that, taken together, point to a challenging situation. Of particular note here

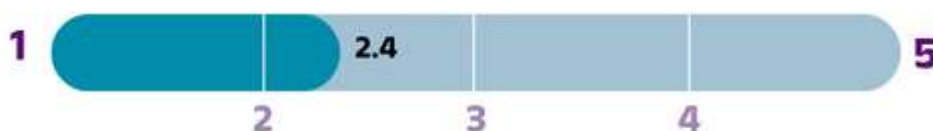
is the sporadic and short-term nature of funding transfers. Funding is predominantly provided through specific, short-term projects (usually one year), which hinders long-term planning and team stability. There are also difficulties in carrying out institutional development initiatives, as there are virtually no resources allocated to maintaining physical infrastructure or strengthening the organisations themselves. The lack of financial predictability, in turn, forces organisations to abandon the [CLT](#) (Consolidation of Labour Laws) framework and adopt “[pejotização](#)” or volunteer work by activists to compensate for the lack of funds; this creates an excessive workload and affects the mental health of professionals, thereby making working conditions precarious. [Data from the “Map of Civil Society Organizations” portal, developed by the Institute of Applied Economic Policies \(IPEA\), indicate that one-third of Brazilian CSOs that were created since 1901 have ceased operations due to these financial and management difficulties](#)—a situation many experts characterise as institutional “death.”

In summary, although there are various sources and funding opportunities available to civil society in Brazil, access to resources remains profoundly unequal, regionally and thematically concentrated, and marked by bureaucratic and technical barriers that particularly affect small and medium-sized organisations. Dependence on short-term funding, unpredictability of resources, and difficulties in diversifying funding sources undermine institutional sustainability and the capacity of CSOs to engage in long-term planning. At the same time, asymmetric relationships with funders, characterised by the imposition of agendas, methodologies, and requirements that are poorly adapted to local realities, can limit organisations’ autonomy and divert resources and efforts from their priorities. These challenges are compounded by limited access to public funding and the growing influence of political considerations in its allocation, as well as accountability and risk-management requirements that are often poorly suited to the nature of civil society work. Taken together, these factors create a funding environment that, despite the existence of diverse resources and mechanisms, still provides insufficient conditions to ensure the autonomy, sustainability, and long-term capacity of a large part of Brazilian civil society.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

4. Open and Responsive State

Score:



In the Brazilian context, the area of transparency has also seen significant regulatory advances with the solidification of important laws. While their practical implementation has improved as well, it is still marked by irregularities and difficulties in access for ordinary citizens. Transparency is regulated through globally recognised acts, such as the enactment of [the Access to Information Act \(LAI\)](#) in 2011 which established procedures for citizens and organisations to request public information and strengthened proactive and reactive transparency mechanisms, and the [General Data Protection Act \(LGPD\)](#) of 2018 which regulates the processing of personal data by public and private actors.

The practical challenges are related to [federal inequalities](#), in which the federal government (the Union) has a more robust compliance structure than other levels of government (states and municipalities). [In the 2025 municipal transparency assessment conducted by Transparency International](#), which analysed 329 municipalities across 11 Brazilian states, around 65% of the municipalities assessed were rated at the lowest levels of transparency. In addition, only 16.4% fully met the criteria related to the disclosure of public hearings and consultations on public works.

Another factor undermining a positive perception of transparency is the limited capacity of public institutions to provide meaningful responses to the public. The [Federal Government's Access to Information Panel](#), managed by the Office of the Comptroller General (CGU), monitors aspects such as compliance with response deadlines, omissions, and appeals within the Federal Executive Branch. [Studies by Transparência Brasil](#) have also identified qualitative challenges: an analysis of more than 48,000 requests submitted to federal agencies between 2021 and 2022 found that 20% of requests officially classified as “access granted” did not provide the requested information, while another 12% provided only part of it. Transparency

is also hindered by the use of overly technical or legal language, which can make information difficult for non-specialist audiences to understand. Another [publication by Transparência Brasil](#), in partnership with the Ombudsman's Office of the São Paulo State Public Defender's Office, released in December 2025, examines these language barriers.

In Brazil, there are [formal institutions and a tradition of councils and other collegiate entities](#). However, the prevailing view is that social participation is often symbolic or limited to initial consultations, with contributions failing to effectively influence public policy. One of the main points underpinning this assessment is the disconnect between form and effectiveness. Brazil has a [vast network of people's councils](#) (for women, LGBT individuals, Black people, and Indigenous peoples) at the municipal, state, and federal levels, as well as legal instruments for civil society engagement in public interest-related judicial proceedings such as [as amicus curiae](#) briefs and [public civil actions](#). On the other hand, the central criticism is that these processes rarely have decision-making authority. In most cases, they are merely informative or advisory, and their deliberations are frequently ignored by the government ([as noted in the case of the National Health Council](#)). Furthermore, the lack of “feedback” or genuine incorporation of proposals fosters a sense of discouragement and disengagement among grassroots communities, who mobilize to participate but see no tangible results.

At the same time, [participatory processes may reproduce inequalities in representation and access](#). Studies on national councils show that differences in income, education, gender, race, and region of residence [affect the composition of these spaces, raising questions about their capacity to include traditionally underrepresented groups](#). Thus, the formal existence of participatory mechanisms does not, in itself, guarantee equally accessible and representative participation for different segments of society.

Federal differences are also a factor affecting participation. Experts have acknowledged that the current federal government has reinstated participatory policies that had been abolished by the previous administration. However, participation remains uneven across levels of government, with significant structural challenges at the state and municipal levels. [A 2025 assessment by the Office of the Comptroller General \(CGU\)](#) of Social Assistance Councils across 25 states, the Federal District, and 69 municipalities identified weaknesses in civil society representation, training, transparency, technical and financial support, and coordination between councils at different levels. At the municipal level, [Transparency International's 2025 assessment](#) also demonstrates persistent [weaknesses in mechanisms for social participation](#) and public oversight at the municipal level.

This asymmetry is linked to two distinct challenges: (i) the scarcity of resources to implement and maintain social participation policies and mechanisms; and (ii) insufficient budgetary resources to implement policies decided through these participatory processes. In the latter case, the growing influence of Congress over [budget allocation and execution](#), including through congressional amendments, may limit the Executive Branch's capacity to implement policies developed through these processes.

Additionally, the mechanisms for [rendering accounts and holding the state accountable](#) for decision-making processes are insufficient, inconsistent, and often incomprehensible to civil society. Several points of analysis support this view: the absence of substantive feedback, superficial responses (when they occur), and bureaucratic complexity. That is, the government fails in its [duty of integrity](#) by not providing clear and detailed feedback on how organisations' contributions have effectively influenced public policies, by offering superficial, vague, or incomplete responses, which undermines the building of trust between the government and society, and by structuring the channels for questioning and monitoring decisions in ways that

are considered opaque and excessively bureaucratic. Furthermore, government accountability and reporting require highly specialised individuals to “decode” the information, rendering it inaccessible to citizens and smaller organisations.

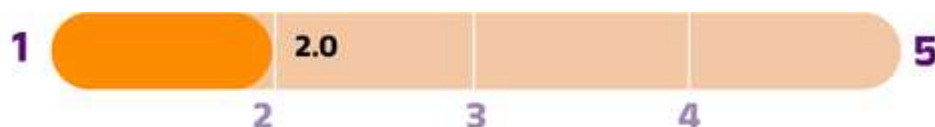
[As highlighted by the OECD \(2025\)](#), Brazil still needs to strengthen transparency and integrity mechanisms related to interactions between public officials and a wide range of interest representatives, including companies, business associations, NGOs/CSOs, trade unions, think tanks, research centres and other organisations involved in influencing public decision-making.

In summary, although the law guarantees the right to access, and transparency portals exist, effective access is hindered by technical complexity, a lack of clarity on the part of the government, and serious deficiencies at the state and municipal levels. Furthermore, participatory processes may remain inaccessible to many, particularly groups that are historically underrepresented in decision-making spaces. Recent research and [government initiatives have highlighted persistent challenges in ensuring more diverse and equitable representation](#) in participatory councils, including for people with disabilities and different regional, racial and social groups.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

5. Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society

Score:



Public discourse is characterised by [hostility, stigmatisation, and attempts to delegitimise](#) civil society organisations (CSOs) in Brazil. Public discourse is therefore permeated by narratives that label these organisations negatively, often treating them as “folkloric” or illegitimate.

Examples worth mentioning include media coverage of the pejoratively termed “[NGO Spree](#)” and the [Parliamentary Inquiry Commission \(CPI\) on NGOs](#) in the Amazon. The former focused on allegations of misuse and diversion of public funds allocated to CSOs through parliamentary amendments, including alleged use of intermediaries, inflated costs and fictitious services. The CPI, in turn, investigated the use of public and foreign resources by NGOs operating in the Amazon and was also marked by allegations concerning lack of transparency, foreign influence and the interests of external funders in the region. Although these investigations focused on specific organisations and alleged irregularities, their broader political and media framing has contributed to narratives that generalise such allegations for the CSO sector as a whole. As a result, field studies indicate that only [58%](#) of the population trusts these organisations, recording lower trust levels compared to employers and companies.

For all these reasons, the Brazilian public debate still does not provide an environment for pluralistic and respectful dialogue, but is marked by confrontations and the constant need for organisations to defend their own legitimacy before the state and public opinion. This context is also influenced [by persistent political polarisation](#), currently structured mainly around two political camps: on one side, the political camp led by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva; on the other, the political camp organised around former President Jair Bolsonaro and his allies, which maintains significant mobilisation capacity despite Bolsonaro’s ineligibility. This polarisation contributes to a more confrontational public debate and can make it more difficult for organisations seeking to promote dialogue and defend rights-based agendas to operate.

Hostile discourses may also affect the extent of civil society engagement, particularly [in a context marked by political scepticism and low expectations regarding participatory institutions](#). Recent research based on nationally representative survey data found an association between political scepticism and non-participation in participatory institutions in Brazil, while also showing that poorer and less educated groups tend to participate less in political engagement and participatory institutions. The study further notes that participation becomes less likely when individuals perceive that they have little capacity to influence political outcomes.

[Equality and inclusion](#) in the civic sphere (especially in institutional politics) still face structural barriers. Broadly speaking, although there have been [legal achievements](#)—such as [racial quotas in higher education](#)—the political reality remains restrictive, with women, [Black people](#), and the [LGBTQIA+ community](#) still underrepresented, for example, in legislative and executive positions. Conservative party structures reinforce the maintenance of a “male, white, and property-owning” power structure within political parties, [which resist proposed profound changes](#). An example of this is the existence of candidates who have no serious intent to compete in elections, but are [registered only to fill legal quotas](#), for example those for women and Black people. Fundamentally, the main factor that undermines a more just and egalitarian society and fosters an exclusionary environment is the persistence of [gender- and race-based political violence](#).

Thus, it can be said that structural exclusion predominates in institutions; even though the legal framework supports formal equality, practice shows that these rights do not translate into equitable opportunities for social participation and political representation. Consequently, the structure and culture of civic engagement are still viewed as exclusionary, marked by low trust in institutions and a still very limited understanding of citizenship.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment

Score:



The Brazilian government does not systematically block or shut down the internet for the purpose of controlling the population, maintaining an environment of greater freedom than that found in authoritarian regimes.

A point of convergence in the debate on the digital environment is that the greatest challenges to digital freedom do not come solely from the state, but rather from private platforms (Big Tech). [It has been reported that these companies exercise arbitrary blocking power](#), taking down profiles of quilombola organisations and social movements without transparent criteria. Furthermore, it is emphasised that protection against such interference is unequal, as [appealing to higher courts such as the Supreme Federal Court \(STF\)](#) to combat such arbitrary actions is an expensive and inaccessible process for most smaller organisations.

This perspective reflects a landscape of pervasive vulnerabilities that limit the effectiveness of digital rights, despite the existence of formal regulatory frameworks. [The General Data Protection Law \(LGPD\)](#) and even the [Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet](#), while necessary regulatory frameworks, are insufficiently enforced, ineffective, and inconsistent given the pace of technological innovation and the scale of the threats; furthermore, mechanisms for redressing digital harm are seen as slow and based on general criteria from [the Civil Code](#) that fail to keep pace with the fast-moving virtual environment.

[Cyberattacks and disinformation are also major concerns; the country faces frequent and continuous cyberattacks targeting public institutions](#) (such as universities) and civil society organisations, compromising the protection of sensitive data. There is also a proliferation of harassment, hate speech, and disinformation, fuelled by [“fake news”](#) factories.” It is evident that there has been little government action to prevent such attacks and mass disinformation, with the state failing to ensure adequate protection for civil society organisations (CSOs) and citizens.

Despite these challenges, the [Digital Statute of the Child and the Adolescent \(ECA\)](#), approved in September 2025, represents a significant example of state regulation in the digital environment. The law establishes rules and obligations for digital platforms and service providers to protect children and adolescents online, including measures to prevent and mitigate risks associated with digital products and services. It therefore represents an important step towards strengthening the protection of children's and adolescents' rights in the digital environment. Although its primary focus is the protection of children and adolescents, the regulation may also contribute to a safer, more transparent, and more accountable digital environment, which constitutes an important dimension of an enabling environment for the exercise of rights, public participation, and civil society engagement.

With regard to digital accessibility, Brazil shows high internet penetration rates in quantitative terms. Qualitative analysis, however, reveals [severe structural barriers that undermine the effective participation of civil society](#). Although 84% of Brazilians aged 10 and over use the Internet, [only 22% of Brazilians have satisfactory conditions for "meaningful connectivity."](#)

The quality of access to the digital environment is also compromised by [the significant correlation between illiteracy and digital literacy](#). Consequently, this low level of digital literacy makes the population more vulnerable to fraud, social engineering attacks (such as WhatsApp scams), and manipulation through misinformation. Furthermore, [internet use in Brazil](#) has become concentrated on social media and messaging apps, with low average proficiency in handling more complex tools or emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence. Consequently, functional digital illiteracy can be considered one of the main obstacles to a safe and prosperous digital environment.

Overall, Brazil has important regulatory frameworks and relatively high levels of internet access, but significant gaps remain in ensuring a safe, inclusive, and rights-based digital environment. The limited enforcement of existing protections, the growing power of private platforms, exposure to cyberattacks and disinformation, and persistent inequalities in the quality of access and digital literacy continue to create barriers, particularly for smaller civil society organisations and more vulnerable groups. While recent measures such as the Digital ECA represent positive steps towards strengthening digital rights protection, further efforts are needed to ensure that regulatory frameworks are effectively implemented and that all citizens and civil society organisations can participate safely and meaningfully in the digital environment.

C) Recommendations

Government

Reduce the operational and legal barriers that affect the work of civil society organisations through the effective implementation of the Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organisations (MROSC) across the different levels of government; the simplification of registration procedures, banking compliance requirements, and accountability processes; the simplification of registration procedures, banking compliance requirements, and accountability processes; and by reviewing disproportionate bureaucratic requirements imposed by notary offices and public agencies.

Strengthen transparency, civic participation, and accountability by ensuring that participatory processes include mandatory feedback mechanisms on how civil society contributions were taken into account; by improving the quality and accessibility of responses to requests for access to information; by simplifying public transparency systems; and by expanding the standardisation and transparency of participation and monitoring mechanisms at the federal, state, and municipal levels.

Protect the autonomy and operating environment of civil society by preventing legislative initiatives that impose disproportionate restrictions on CSOs, such as proposals that expand oversight of these organisations or restrict their access to international funding, as exemplified by PL 1659/2024; ensuring the consistent implementation of the MROSC across different levels of government, with proportionate and transparent registration, reporting, and administrative requirements; and strengthening mechanisms to protect organisations working on sensitive issues, such as LGBTQIA+ rights, women's rights, the rights of Indigenous and traditional peoples, and the environment, against selective criminalisation, institutional prejudice, and undue interference.

Promote digital inclusion and strengthen the democratic governance of the digital environment by expanding meaningful access to the internet; investing in digital literacy, cybersecurity, and combating fake news; strengthening the implementation of the General Data Protection Law (LGPD); and promoting greater transparency and accountability from digital platforms regarding their content moderation policies and the functioning of their algorithms.

International Community and Donors

Strengthen the financial sustainability of CSOs by expanding institutional, flexible, and long-term funding that covers operational and structural costs; reducing excessive administrative requirements; and recognising that organisational sustainability requires ongoing investments, not just project-based support.

Promote greater equity in access to resources by supporting organisations located outside major urban centres, community-based organisations, and groups working on historically underfunded or politically sensitive issues; simplifying selection processes; and expanding opportunities for organisations with limited institutional capacity.

Respect and strengthen the autonomy of supported organisations by adopting participatory practices in defining funding priorities and strategies; increasing transparency regarding selection criteria; fostering relationships based on trust and dialogue; and avoiding conditions that force institutional agendas to align exclusively with funders' priorities.

Support initiatives to strengthen democracy and combat disinformation by investing in public communication, citizenship education, efforts to counter disinformation, and the creation of positive narratives about the role of civil society organisations in democracy, as well as by supporting independent monitoring of civic space and digital rights.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

Strengthen collective advocacy strategies by expanding coalitions and networks to monitor legislative proposals, track public policies, defend the operating environment for civil society, and strengthen dialogue with public institutions at different levels of government.

Diversify institutional sustainability strategies by strengthening mechanisms for domestic fundraising, donation campaigns, membership programmes, collaborative partnerships, and capacity-sharing initiatives, thereby reducing dependence on one-time and highly conditional funding.

Invest in strategic communication and outreach to society, producing accessible content that highlights the impact of CSOs, counters misinformation and stigmatising narratives, and increases public engagement with collective causes and participatory processes.

Strengthen institutional capacities for operating in the digital environment by investing in digital security, data protection, cyberattack response protocols, systematic documentation of violations of civic space, and the collection of evidence on bureaucratic barriers, social participation, transparency, and digital inclusion.

Comparative Summary with the 2025 Report

Compared to the report produced in 2025, it can be stated that the assessments are convergent and complementary. Regarding Principle 2—Legal and Regulatory Framework—the perspective remains that there is a contrast between the robustness of the legal framework and operational barriers. Consequently, the trend of recurring bureaucratic criminalisation persists. The principle addressing Accessible and Sustainable Resources also remains marked by profoundly unequal access, in addition to the structural hierarchical tension between grantees and funders, which even implies a sort of “commodification” of organisations, insofar as they are subjected to agendas and guidelines external to their activities and organisational mission. Principle 4—Open and Responsive Government—celebrates advances such as the LAI and the LGPD, but points to a “chasm” in transparency at the state and municipal levels. Furthermore, the analysis maintains that participation remains largely symbolic because, despite the existence of advisory councils, contributions from civil society rarely influence final decisions. Government accountability is still considered insufficient, and government responses are described as vague or superficial. Under the principle of Public Culture and Debate (5), there was broad agreement that the environment

is still characterised by hostility, stigmatisation, and the delegitimisation of CSOs. Still on this topic, the dimension of equality and inclusion is considered restrictive due to the underrepresentation of women, Black people, and LGBTQIA+ individuals in positions of power, as well as the persistence of political violence. Finally, regarding the principle that invites us to analyse the Safe Digital Environment (6), Brazil is evaluated positively for not engaging in systematic state-imposed blocking, but is criticised for its inaction in the face of the power of Big Tech companies. Accessibility also continues to be rated as deficient, since elements such as inclusion, digital literacy, and connectivity quality are still in their infancy across most of the country.

D) Research Process

Each principle encompasses various dimensions which are assessed and aggregated to provide quantitative scores per principle. These scores reflect the degree to which the environment within the country enables or disables the work of civil society. Scores are on a five-category scale defined as: fully disabling (1), disabling (2), partially enabling (3), enabling (4), and fully enabling (5). To complement the scores, this report provides a narrative analysis of the enabling or disabling environment for civil society, identifying strengths and weaknesses as well as offering recommendations. The process of drafting the analysis is led by Network Members; the consortium provides quality control and editorial oversight before publication.

For Principle 1 - which evaluates respect for and protection of freedom of association and peaceful assembly - the score integrates data from the [CIVICUS Monitor](#). However, for Principles 2–6, the availability of yearly updated external quantitative indicators for the 86 countries part of the EUSEE programme are either limited or non-existent. To address this, Network Members convene a panel of representatives of civil society and experts once a year. This panel uses a set of guiding questions to assess the status of each principle and its dimensions within the country. **The panel for this report was convened in May.** The discussions are supported by secondary sources, such as [V-Dem](#), the [Bertelsmann Stiftung Governance Index](#), the [RTI Rating from the Centre for Law and Democracy](#), and other trusted resources. These sources provide benchmarks for measuring similar dimensions and are complemented by primary data collection and other secondary sources of information available for the country. Guided by these deliberations, the panel assigns scores for each dimension, which the Network Members submit to the Consortium, accompanied by detailed justifications that reflect the country's specific context. To determine a single score per principle, the scores assigned to each dimension are aggregated using a weighted average, reflecting the relative importance of each dimension within the principle. This approach balances diverse perspectives while maintaining a structured and objective evaluation framework.

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