



observatorionweb
por una internet sin discriminación

Online Antisemitism

Report 2019

Introduction

The Internet, and particularly social networks, reached society in a massive way in a very short period of time. As a result, in our lives we are constantly moving between the offline and online worlds rapidly. The line that divides these "worlds" is becoming thinner and we see more and more often how they converge and affect us.

As a consequence of the growth of the digital world, in recent years the so-called "hate speeches" have been increasingly taken into account by various entities: governments, Internet companies and civil society organizations; producing a great change, because until not so long ago, companies were against removing content from their platforms without a court order and today, on the contrary, they produce transparency reports indicating how much content they remove, which is counted in millions of postings per quarter. However, despite legislation and the use of artificial intelligence for this purpose, **a lot of online material with discriminatory content persists.**

This report reflects the results of the published content analysis during 2019 in many platforms. Furthermore, a comparison is made with the results obtained in the previous four years, which allows us to have a vision of the evolution of the phenomenon.

With the purpose to fully understand the results presented, it is necessary to consider some issues. Firstly, due to the large volume of information that can be found, the analysis is done on the content with the greatest impact and positioning in relation to the selected keywords linked the Jewish issues (more information in the methodological section).

Secondly, during the period studied some companies made changes in their policies, which generated a significant removal of content that modified the trends. This is also reflected in the report.

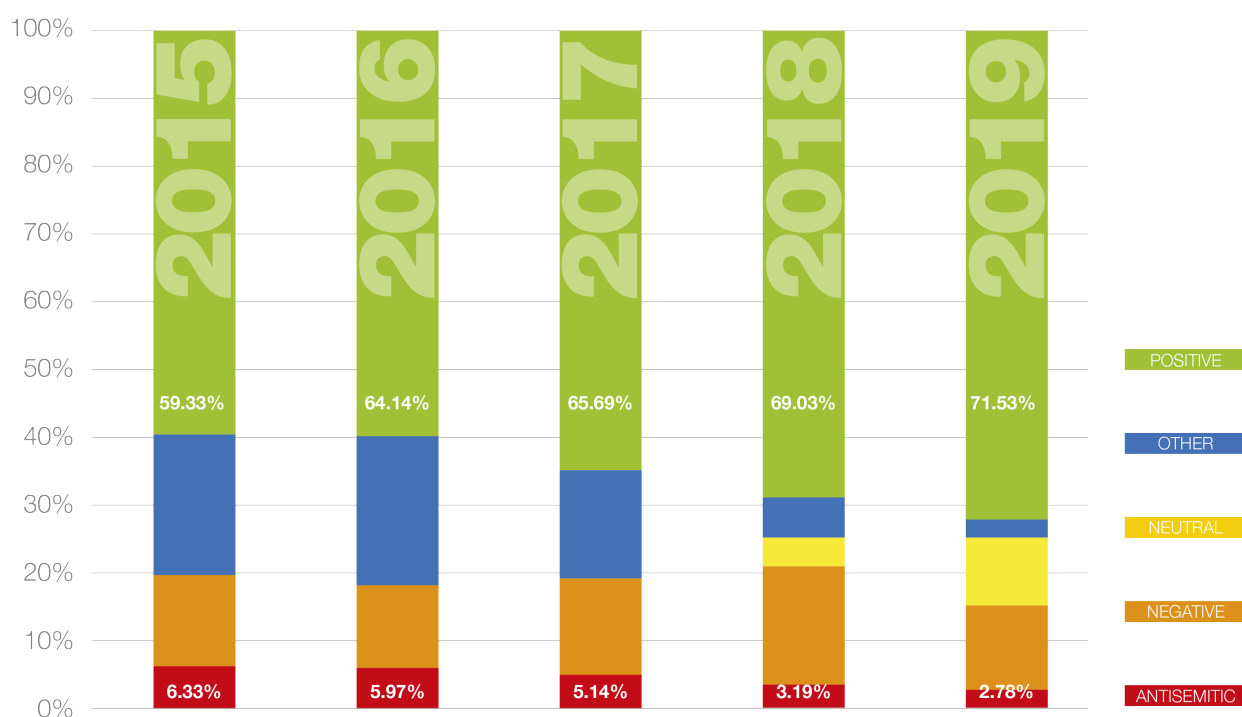
Finally, it is important to note that there may be a contrast between the results of this report and personal perceptions. While this report addresses platforms integrally, some people may have feelings that over- or under-dimension the amount of antisemitic content, due to the specific dynamics of each platform regarding the way they show content to each user. Furthermore, it may be distorted by the time difference between the reading of this report and the period of analysis.



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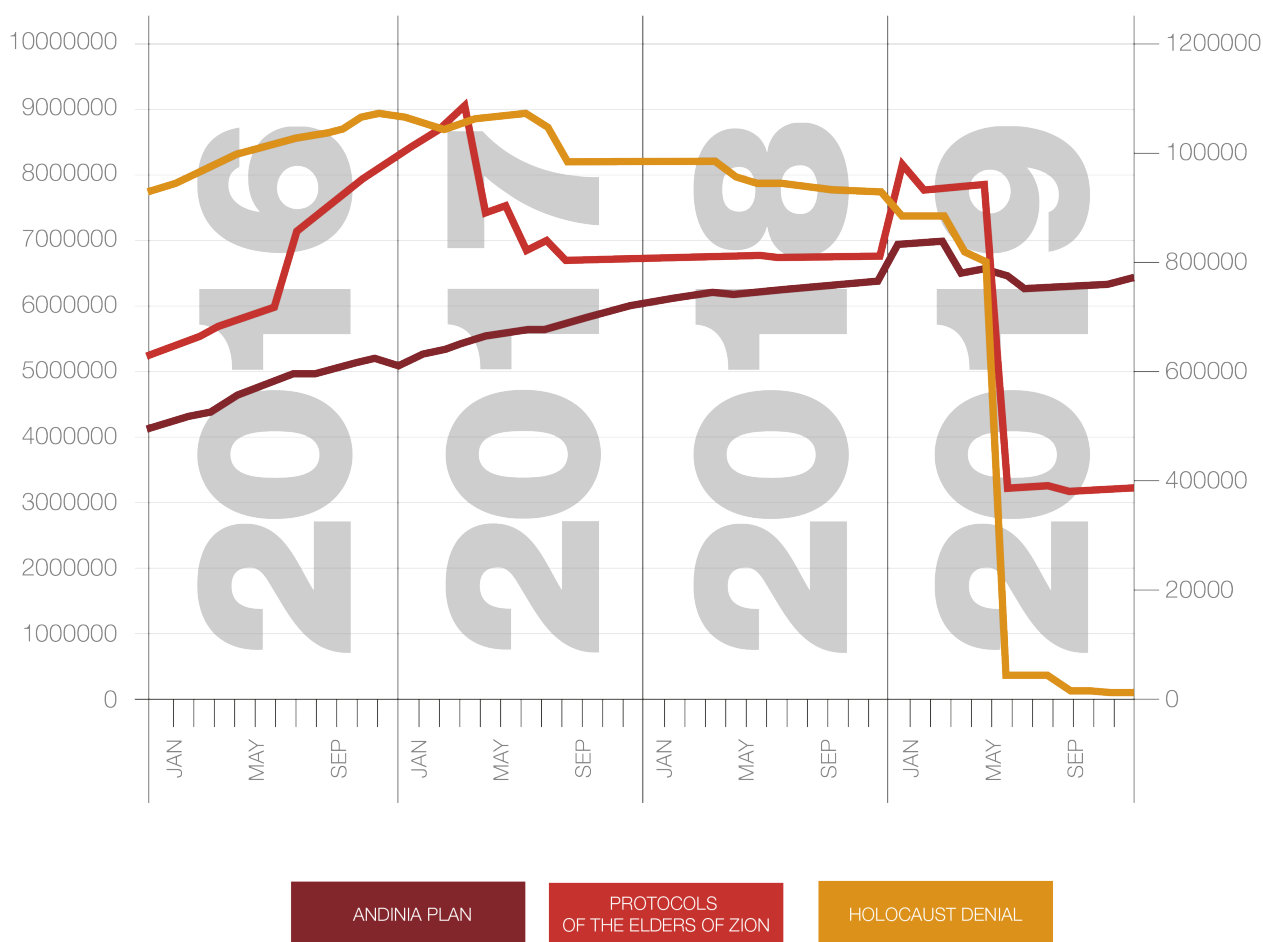


The Google search engine is the main tool used by users when searching for information. As regards the search for content linked to various Jewish issues, from 2015 to 2019 the amount of material with antisemitic content was reduced by 50% among the 10 first results, going from 6.33% to 2.78% on the total. The searches related to “Zionism” concentrate almost all the results considered antisemitic. During 2019, this content is mainly found in YouTube videos and websites.





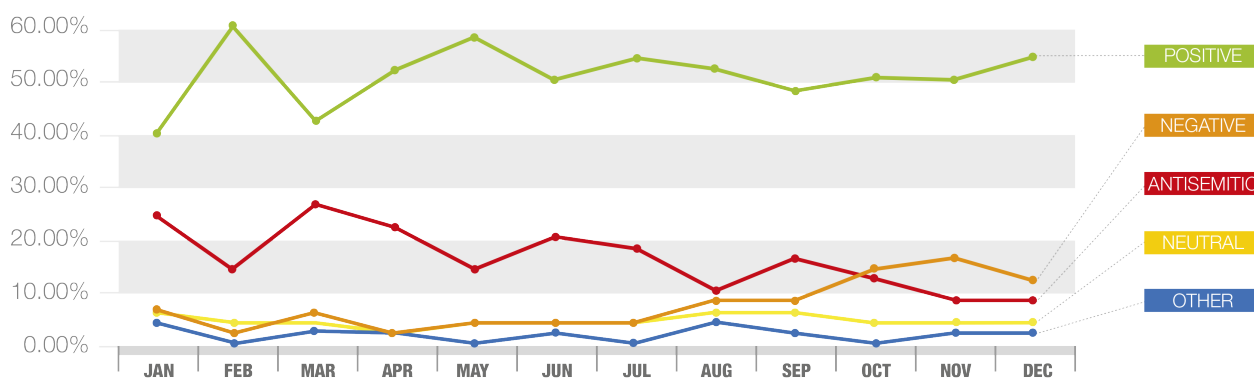
Since 2016, the evolution of YouTube antisemitic video displays and ratings have been analyzed from the Web Observatory. Until May 2019, there was an increase in the number of visualizations, which reached the 1% monthly. In June 2019, the company made a policy change regarding which are considered hate speeches¹ and a great quantity of videos were removed, which is reflected in the drop of visualizations. The only videos that do not change and remain online are those related to the antisemitic conspiracy theory known as “Plan Andinia”, which the platform does not consider them anti-Jewish² so far.



1. Official announcement of YouTube: <https://youtube.googleblog.com/2019/06/our-ongoing-work-to-tackle-hate.html>
2. The graph showing the displays over time was made with a double axis.

As regards the qualification of antisemitic videos made by users, **there is an increase of positive ratings**, ranging from the 82% of the total opinions in 2016 to an 87% in 2019. This shows that an important part of those who have antisemitic prejudices maintain an active participation.

In 2019, the 10 first results shown by the YouTube searches that contain words or concepts related to Jewish issues began to be analyzed. The 20% of this material has antisemitic content, while the 63.54% has “positive” content.



It is worth mentioning that the 62.5% of the antisemitic content was found in the first half of the year, decreasing during the second half in accordance with the policy change made by the platform.

Finally, almost the 80% of the videos with antisemitic content are related to the word ‘Zionism’.

Comments from readers in digital media

During the year 2019, comments were analyzed in **23 digital media of 7 countries:** Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica³, Panama and Uruguay.

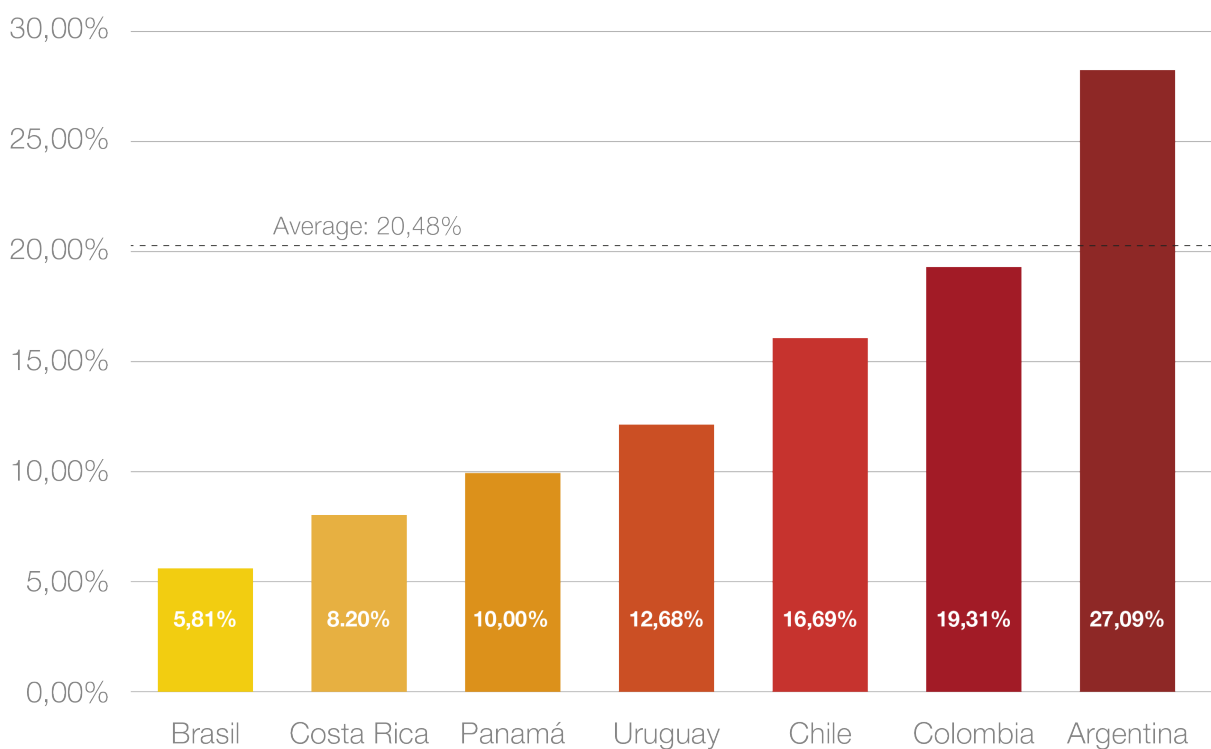
As shown in the following chart, Argentina registers two conditions that stand out from the rest of the countries:

- Newspapers with more users give more coverage to the mentioned issues.
- The participation on this issue in the comments sections is more active.

Country	Analized articles	Comment AVG.
Argentina	419	59
Brasil	153	30
Chile	215	32
Colombia	97	12
Costa Rica	58	8
Panama	120	1
Uruguay	252	8
Total: 1.314		General average: 21

3. The collaboration of the Anti-discrimination Web Observatory of Costa Rica is appreciated

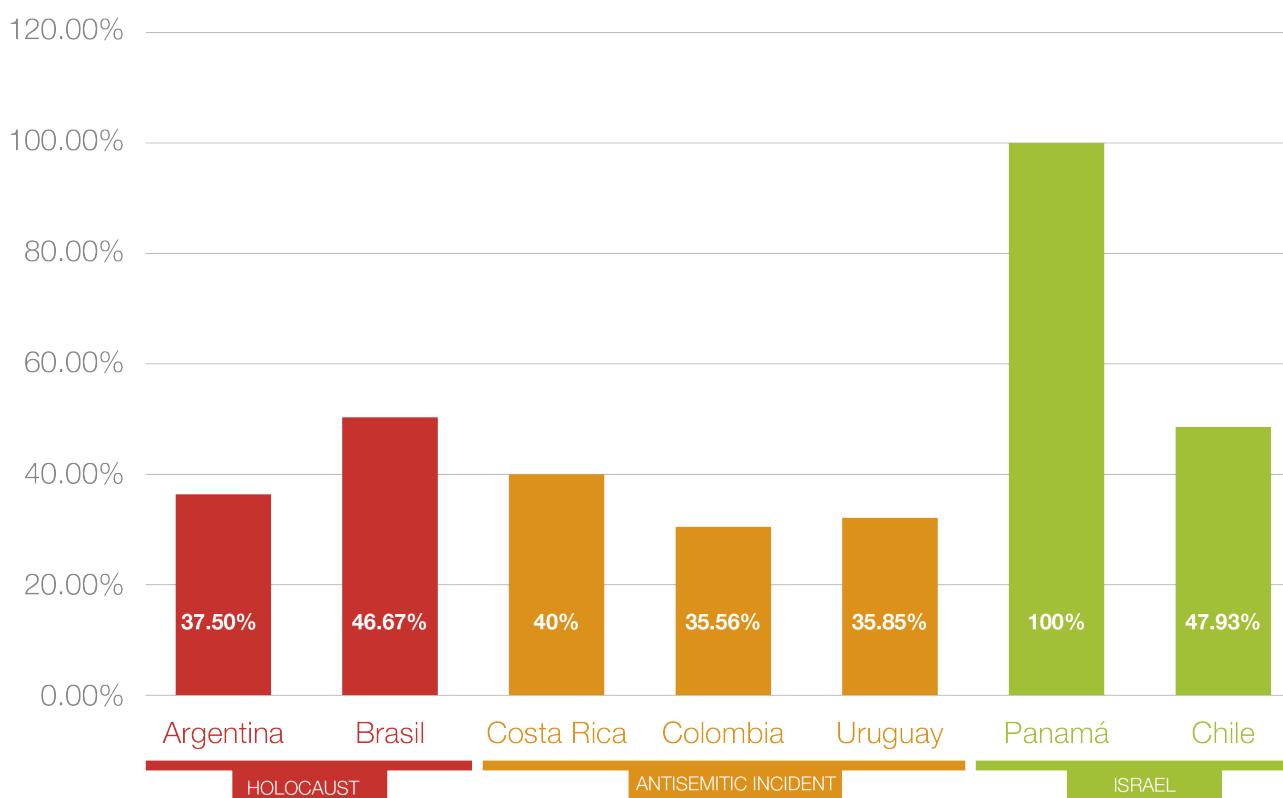
The 20,48% of the comments were antisemitic and the 24.67% were positive. As regards antisemitism, Argentina, with 27.09%, is the country with the highest amount of antisemitic comments. Brazil is at the other extreme, with 5.81%. Costa Rica (8.2%), Panamá (10%), Uruguay (12.68%), Chile (16.69%) and Colombia (19.31%) complete the list.




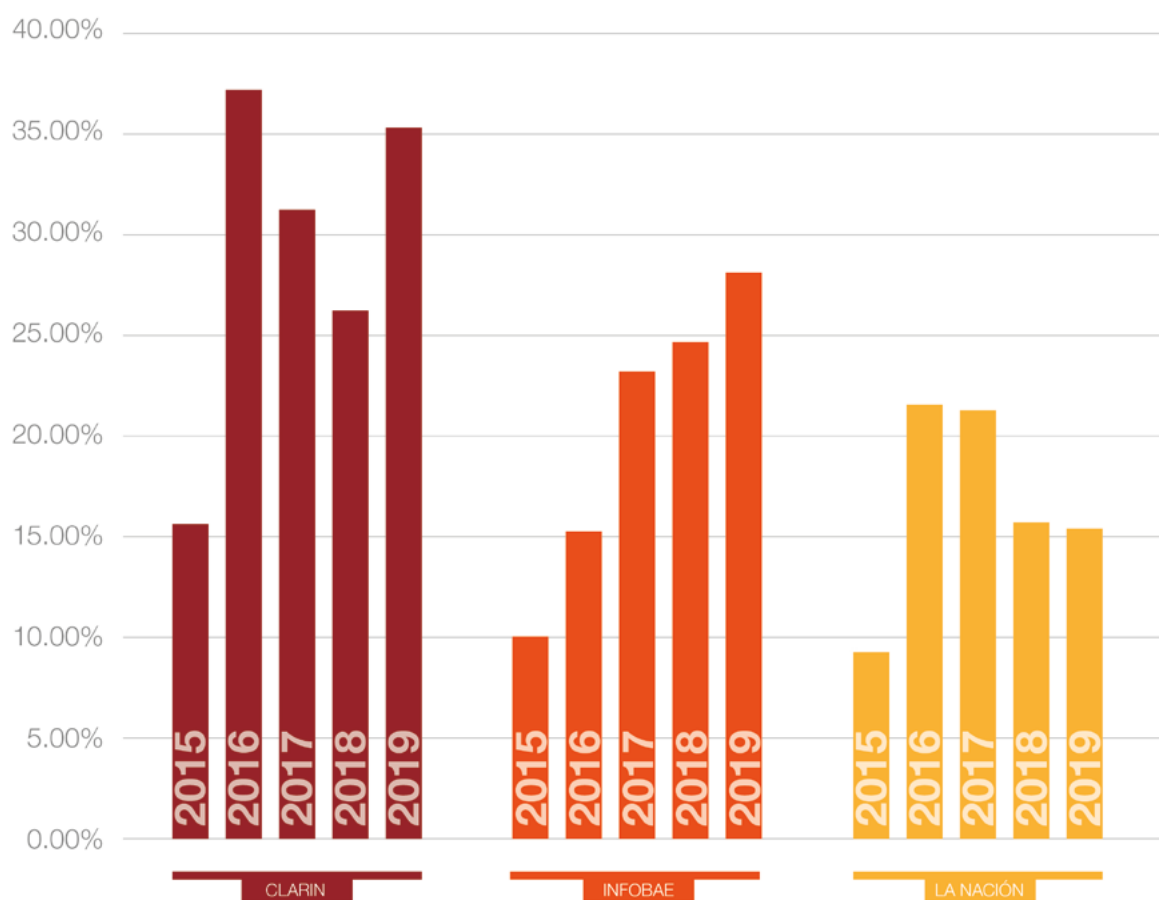
Note: the average number of comments is calculated based on the total number of comments.

Regarding the discursive typology, more than one third of the antisemitic content refers to the negation or banalization of the Holocaust (34.68%), and a little more than a quarter is related to Israel (27.75%).

When analyzing this issue by country, we find that in Argentina, Brazil and Costa Rica the negation/banalization of the Holocaust is the main speech; in Chile and Panamá it is related to Israel; and in Uruguay and Colombia it is found in articles on antisemitism (incident reports or opinion columns).



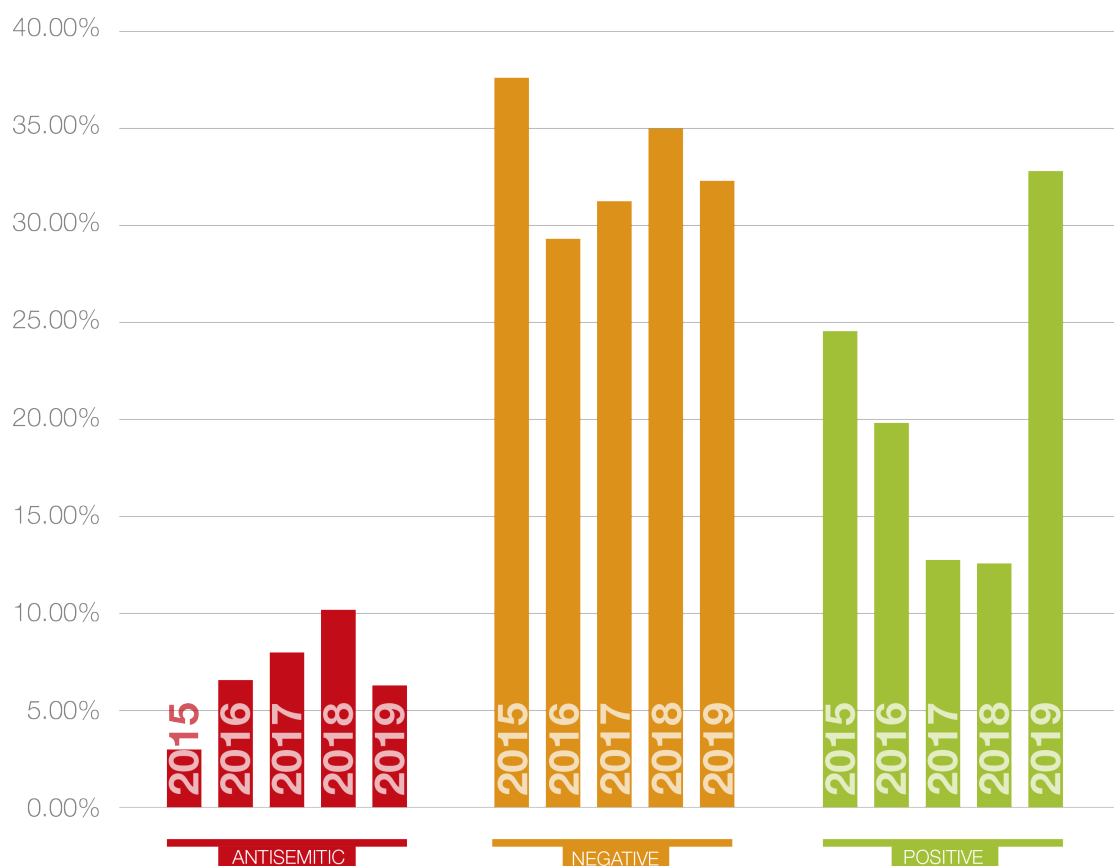
 In the case of Argentina, where this analysis has been done since 2015, Clarín continues to be the media with the highest average of antisemitic comments, with 35.28% that refer to Jewish issues. Infobae continues with an increase in comments of this kind, reaching to 28.20% in 2019, while La Nación had a similar result the previous year of the analysis, with 15.33%.





In the year 2019, a change of trend is perceived regarding the average of tweets with antisemitic content, ranging from 3% (2015) to 6.33% (2019), being its peak 10.17% (2018). It is motivated, among other factors, by a substantial increase of positive tweets, that registered a little more than 12% in the last two years and 32.67% in 2019. As regards the negative tweets, these oscillate in the range 29%-37%.

The tweets with antisemitic content are mainly related to the words “Zionism” and “Jewish”, while the negative to a “Zionism” and “DAIA” .

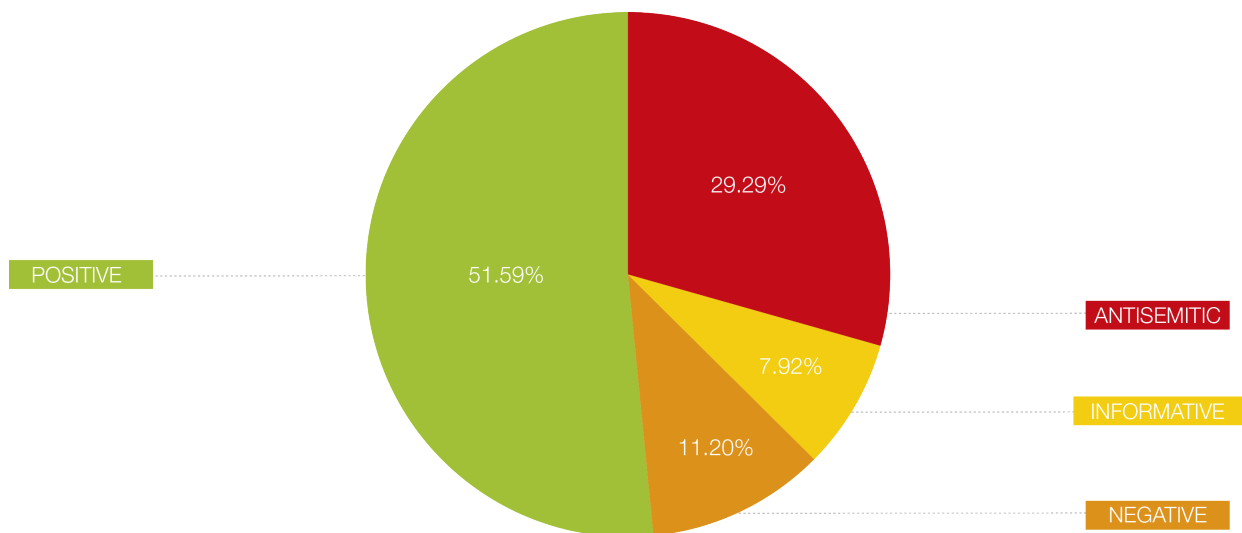


4. Delegation of Argentine Jewish Associations. The institution that federates the Argentine Jewish community.



Since many years ago, Facebook is the main social media with more than 2 billion total users by the end of 2019. Spanish is the second most used language on the platform, used by the 18% of users.

To analyze the content, we looked for relevant content about the issue, considering two variables: relevance of the user who publishes and users who publish frequently on the issues. Regarding the analyzed content during the mentioned period, more than half resulted positive, while the 29.29% has antisemitic content.





Regarding the concepts with greater amount of antisemitism, in the 65.24% of the posts that contain the term 'Zionism' and in the 39.8% with reference to 'Israel' there is antisemitic content.



Finally, taking into account the publication dates, February, April and August are the months with higher percentage of discriminatory material (almost half of the analyzed posts) while in June and by the end of the year the higher averages of positive content are found. The main antisemitic contents can be explained by two issues: in terms of temporality, those that correspond to the launch and failed landing of the *Bereshit* probe that Israel sent to the moon and the contemporaries with the election processes in Israel; months in which some users made systematic antisemitic postings.

Conclusions

Unlike the results obtained in previous years, during 2019 in the different measurements taken, there is a concept that concentrates most part of antisemitic content: Zionism. It is frequently used as a synonym of Israel and the Jewish people, referring in a virulent manner to the Middle East conflict, and outlining, to a lesser extent, some conspiratorial ideas related to old libels, in which supposed intentions of Jewish domination and management of the economic power are mentioned.

For several years now, there has been a debate about which negative expressions referring to Israel are simply legitimate criticism or discriminative. In this sense, the definition adopted by the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) about antisemitism can be of great value, not only to researchers but also to Internet companies and the courts. The explanations and examples found there clearly show when the attacks to Israel and the Zionism are antisemitic.

Secondly, as noted in the obtained results in Facebook and YouTube, in the second half of the year there is less content of antisemitic content. In the case of YouTube, this is largely explained by the company's change in policy regarding the content allowed on the platform.

In the case of Facebook, the explanation may be related to the transparency reports they publish on content removal, particularly on hate speech, which show an increase quarter after quarter. This may be in part the reason for this reduction, and there is clear evidence that companies have a key role in the dissemination of hate speeches. Stronger business policies, backed by appropriate government regulations, help to remove the hate speech.

In any case, the removal of these contents involves three issues: 1) implies that less users are exposed to this kind of discriminatory messages; 2) not because of the disappearance of these publications as a result of the removal by the platforms, the groups that promote hate and antisemitic attitudes disappear in equal measure and; 3) due to the removal of this content, it is impossible to quantify for this report.

Finally, it is remarkable the high level of antisemitism in the Web reflected in this study, even considering the large amount of content that was removed. This leads us to think that it is necessary, on the one hand, to strengthen the work of companies in the sector around discriminatory content moderation and, on the other hand, to give importance to continue to educate with diversity and respect to Web users.

Final Comments

While discrimination on the Internet is not a new phenomenon, there are still discussions about how to deal with this phenomenon. In this sense, the generation of metrics is essential to know the situation of antisemitism on the Internet and work accordingly. There is less and less doubt about the responsibility of all the persons involved.

It is the responsibility of the governments and international bodies to propose regulatory frameworks to guarantee human rights on the Internet, taking into account the tension between freedom of expression and non-discrimination, which also implies making sure that companies in the sector are in compliance with them. Moreover, it is important to educate in favor of diversity and coexistence, and in the responsible use of the information technology. An active and conscious society is essential for networks to be a hate free environment.

On their side, companies should improve the mechanism for early detection and an efficient removal of content that violates these principles. The permanence online of the content exposed in this report is unacceptable. The use of artificial intelligence is a fundamental ally in this sense. The creation of safe environments for children and teenagers are crucial. But this removal is not enough. It is also essential that these companies support and promote positive messages; as key players in terms of communication they should have an active role in it.

Finally, it is important for Internet users to have an active attitude against discrimination. It is therefore essential for them to know what to do in such cases, how to proceed, and how to report those contents. Indifference to any kind of hate speech does nothing but amplify those voices.

Methodological Section

For the elaboration of this report, information was used considering the language and the relevance of the information. Regarding the first thing, all the material is in Spanish, except for comments analysis in digital media of Brazil. Regarding relevance, key words are used related to Judaism and Israel. They are obtained from Google Trends, with the requirement of having high volume of searches and not being adjectival (for example: Israel, Jewish, Holocaust, Zionism).

Google and YouTube: the analyzed content refers to the main results of the searches of “key” words. The section of video views and ratings is elaborated using the videos identified as antisemitic.

Facebook and Twitter: we analyze content that has had an impact, considering the relevance of the users, if they repeatedly publish about the mentioned issues and if they had interactions with other users.

Comments in digital media: the following countries were intentionally selected: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama and Uruguay. The monitored newspapers are the following: BiobioChile, Clarín, CRHOY, Diario Extra, El Mundo CR, El Observador, El País, El tiempo, Emol, Estadão, G1, Infobae, La estrella de Panamá, La Nación, La tercera, Las 2 orillas, Mi Diario, Minuto30, Montevideo Portal, Prensa, Pulzo, Subrayado, UOL. They were selected for their relevance according to the rating elaborated by Alexa. A sample of comments from publications where the same keywords were found was analyzed.

Ratings: The definition of antisemitism elaborated by the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) is used.

The analysis presented in the report was carried out by analysts, not by a software.



About the web observatory

The Web Observatory is a joint initiative of the Latin American Jewish Congress (CJL), the Delegation of Argentine Jewish Associations (DAIA) and the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) that since the year 2010 has been working against discrimination on the Internet and in pursuit of the responsible use of technologies.

Educate on the responsible use of technologies and develop effective strategies to combat online discrimination.

We work from a multidisciplinary approach, together with governments, companies related to the Internet and other NGO monitoring the Web.

It elaborates the **Annual report of antisemitism on the Internet**, and about online discrimination to different groups.



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