

# A Lie Can Travel: Election Disinformation in the United States, Brazil, and France | Center for Democracy & Technology

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In 2016, Russian hackers released hacked emails from Democratic officials, rocking the U.S. presidential election. In 2017, a similar hack-and-leak operation released thousands of documents on Emmanuel Macron, just hours before the start of the French election period media blackout. In 2018, while Brazilians were voting for president, Jair Bolsonaro's son circulated a misleading video that falsely implied that voting machines were converting votes from Bolsonaro to his rival. The day after the 2020 U.S. presidential election, driven by false claims about felt-tip markers ("Sharpies") used to mark ballots, protesters descended on an election office in Arizona waving markers—and guns.

Around the world, election disinformation—false or misleading information about electoral processes, election outcomes, political parties, political candidates, and the perceived legitimacy of election officials—appears to be taking hold.

In many countries people are dissatisfied with how democracy is working. Less than half of people in the U.S., Brazil, and France report having confidence in their national government. And less than half believe that votes in their countries are counted fairly "very often." (In Brazil, that number has dropped from 21% in 2014 to just 14% in 2018.)

[...]

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