
A 1st Year to Forget: 80% Distrust Brazil's Bolsonaro

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Brazilian far-right President Jair Bolsonaro began his term in January 2019 with a 49 percent popularity rating, however, after a year of poor economic performance, violence and unpopular neoliberal reforms the president's support has dropped almost 20 points, according to a survey conducted by the Datafolha consulting firm Wednesday.

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According to the poll, 80 percent of Brazilians distrust Bolsonaro's statements and 43 percent would never believe him. While more than 36 percent of the population openly disapproves of his policies.

Since the re-democratization in 1985, only Fernando Collor has been less popular than Bolsonaro in his first year in government. Likewise, 53 percent assured Datafolha that Bolsonaro does not behave according to the promises made during his inauguration.

"Jair Bolsonaro's first year showed that both the President and part of his team used lies and fallacies as everyday instruments of government," a columnist for UOL News Leonardo Sakamoto wrote.

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As his first year leading Brazil comes to an end, his popularity has dwindled due to his recurrent violent comments and approach to diplomacy.

The far-right leader has been known to make controversial statements about homosexuality, women, and the environment, in addition to defending Brazil's past dictatorship and maintaining a strong antagonism with the press.

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A third of the government's cabinet ministers are military, a key pillar in Bolsonaro's project as he strongly believes that "democracy only exists when the Armed Forces want it."

His military speech went over the edge when he ordered the "commemoration" of the 55th anniversary of the 1964 coup that overthrew President Joao Goulart and plunged the country into one of the darkest periods of its history.

The economy, meanwhile, is no different from the other poorly conducted areas, Brazil must create two million jobs to return to the 2014 level.

"There is no process occurring that could indicate that Brazil will return to economic growth or at least stability," Adhemar Mineiro, an economist with the Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socio-Economic Studies, told the France 24.

In other underperforming issues, the government's worst evaluated areas are the fight against poverty, with only 14 percent of Brazilians approving Bolsonaro, and health care, with only 15 percent rating it positively.

Datafolha interviewed 2,948 people in 176 different municipalities between Thursday and Friday and produced a survey which, they said, has a margin of error of two percentage points.
