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Brazil

The first major electoral victory against Big Tech came from Brazil, from us!

- IV Online magazine - 2026 - IVP622 - November 2026 -



Publication date: Saturday 7 November 2026

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What the Brazilian working class, especially our younger segment, achieved over this past month will be remembered as one of the greatest electoral victories in history. [1]

It was never part of the script that a grand coalition consisting of fascists, the agribusiness sector, transnational corporations, the financial sector, organized crime and militias, faith scammers, sports betting companies, soccer clubs, and the Big Tech companies would be defeated by popular mobilization. This is all the more remarkable given that it followed a government fraught with limitations, and a first-round campaign that felt like Lula had “already won" without much mobilization.

Make no mistake: we defeated fascism at the ballot box not because of the political consultants working for Lula, the Workers' Party (PT), or figures like Janones, but rather through the self-organization of the working class. From the very first moment following the setback in the first round, committees, WhatsApp groups, social movements and collectives sprang up across every corner of Brazil, uniting to strategize and engage in the day-to-day reality of the class struggle.

In a way not seen for a long time, labour unions opened their doors, becoming hubs for popular organization. People gathered after work to brainstorm ways to win over votes and how to reach out to those who hadn't been sufficiently convinced to head to the polls in the first round. Carpools and crowdfunding efforts were organized to ensure that everyone could cast their vote.

While social media, which had been the primary focus of Lula’s first-round campaign, played a role, this was not the sole factor in shifting votes. In fact, had we relied on social media alone, we would have suffered yet another defeat. The direct influence from Trump and the Big Techs, most notably Meta, was overwhelming. The takedown of profiles and posts, the restriction of reach, discriminatory advertising pricing (Bolsonaro’s campaign had to pay less per ad and Lula’s was restricted for sometime to spend money on META’s platforms), and all manner of arbitrary actions on platforms through which most Brazilians shop and consume information combined with a Superior Electoral Court (TSE) held captive by Jair Bolsonaro’s appointees André Mendonça (the "terribly evangelical" one) and Kassio Nunes Marques (a friend of Vorcaro and Flávio Bolsonaro), created a monster that, until now, had won every election it has competed in. From the Brexit vote and Donald Trump’s two election campaigns to Bolsonaro’s victory in 2018, the exponential growth of far-right parties across Europe and Latin America to, finally, the crossroads where we find ourselves today following the second round of the elections it is likely that this marks the first major defeat for the Big Techs.

It was on the streets, at universities, within our local territories and workplaces through the daily face-to-face interactions between people that we managed to escape this monster and rebuild human networks for political engagement and debate.

We, the youth, have shown once again why we are the "loose piece" in this system and a source of great danger to those in power. Within hours the streets of Niterói in Rio de Janeiro were occupied without the need for any sound trucks, fueled solely by the power of our own fury. In just a few more hours, that same desire spread through universities, Federal Institutes and schools: a cry of hope from those who have very little, yet demand everything.

Looking ahead, we cannot allow this momentum to dissipate once Lula takes office once again. We know based on the last few decades, and especially on the most recent administration, that the conservative governance practiced by Lula is fraught with contradictions.

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The coming months and years will not be easy. Many of Lula's own proposals are not in our favor - not to mention the far-right agenda held by the majority in the National Congress. The good news is that we possess the antidote: ourselves. A self-organized working class is the answer and mobilization is the path forward. The class consciousness built up over the recent period must serve as our fuel and our tool to secure victories in the time ahead. Let us reach the next election with clear restrictions on how Big Tech companies operate in Brazil, with universal fare-free public transit provided by a federal public transport company, a fairer distribution of electoral resources, a higher minimum wage, a shorter workweek, freedom of association for unions and strengthened universities and schools.

Let's fight this together! Defeat fascism and make our victories on the streets!

4 November 2026

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[1] Photo: President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva celebrating his electorial victory after the 2006 elections. Marcello Casal Jr.

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