Election Revisionism:

How Disinformation Revolutionized the 2022 Philippine Elections

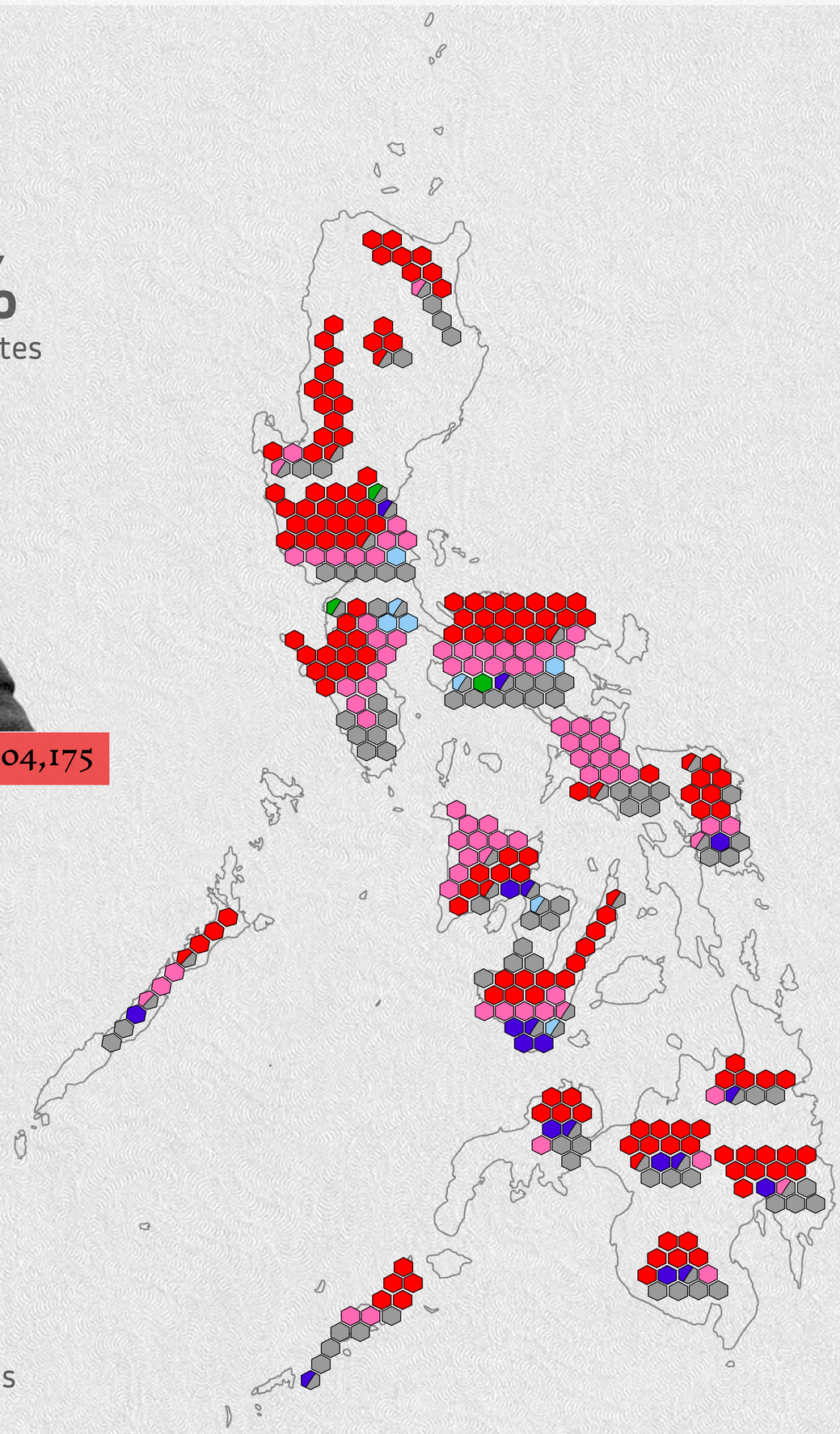
On May 9, 2022, the Philippines held their awaited 17th presidential elections. Despite being the son of former president, dictator, and kleptocrat Ferdinand Marcos Sr., candidate Bongbong Marcos had a landslide win with more than double the amount of votes of his closest rival, current Vice President Leni Robredo. Let's explore how the Marcoses climbed to the top political seat again with disinformation and the power of social media.

59%
of total votes

Bongbong Marcos 31,104,175

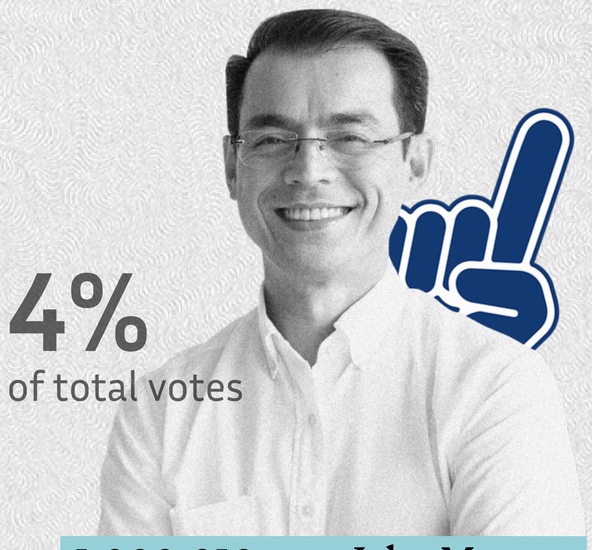
7%
of total votes

3,629,805 Manny Pacquiao



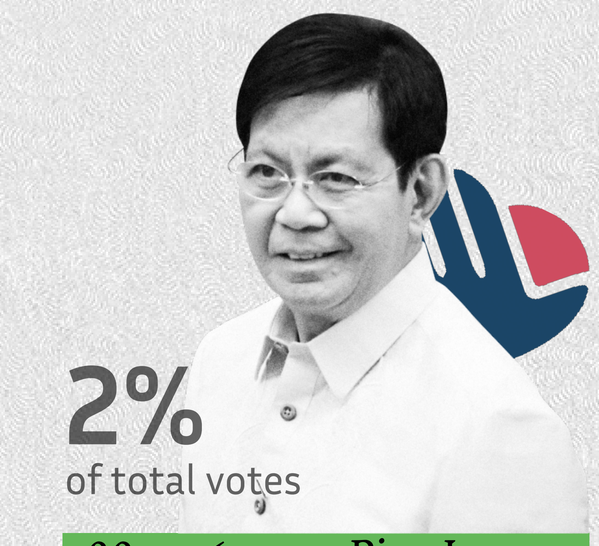
30%
of total votes

Leni Robredo 14,822,052



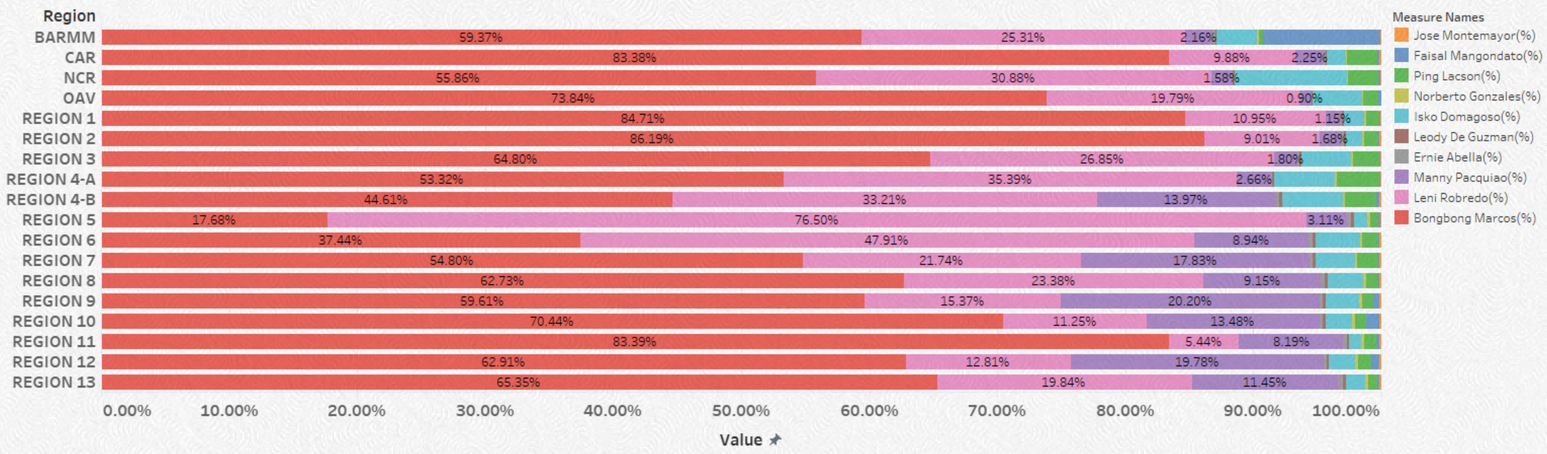
4%
of total votes

1,900,010 Isko Moreno



2%
of total votes

882,236 Ping Lacson



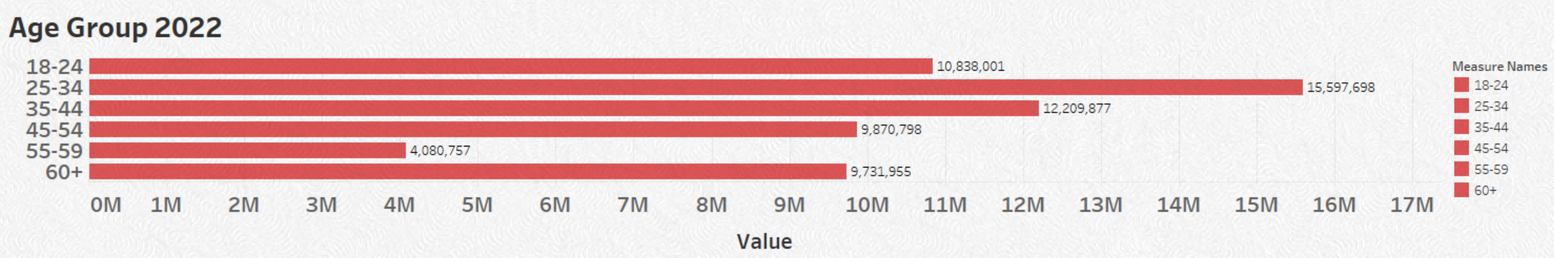
Among the 18 regions, Marcos and Robredo are consistently the top two. Robredo accounts for most votes in regions 5 and 6, while Bongbong takes the lead in the rest.

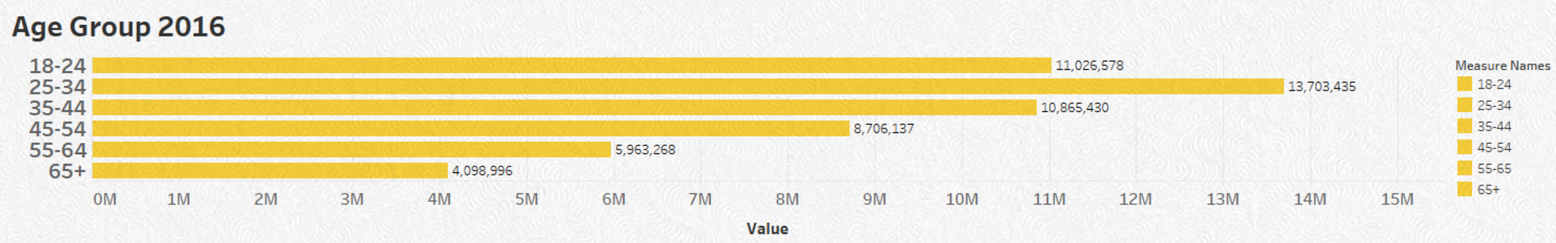
Faisal Mangondoto was BARMM's third most voted likely due to his strong stance on shifting to federalism as the ultimate solution to the Bangsamoro issue.

Source: PJDSC2022 Election Data set(2022)

Majority of voters in both 2022 and 2016 elections fall under the 25-34, 35-44, and 18-24 age groups.

The 2022 elections have significantly lesser voters in the 28-24, and more voters in the 60+ age group.

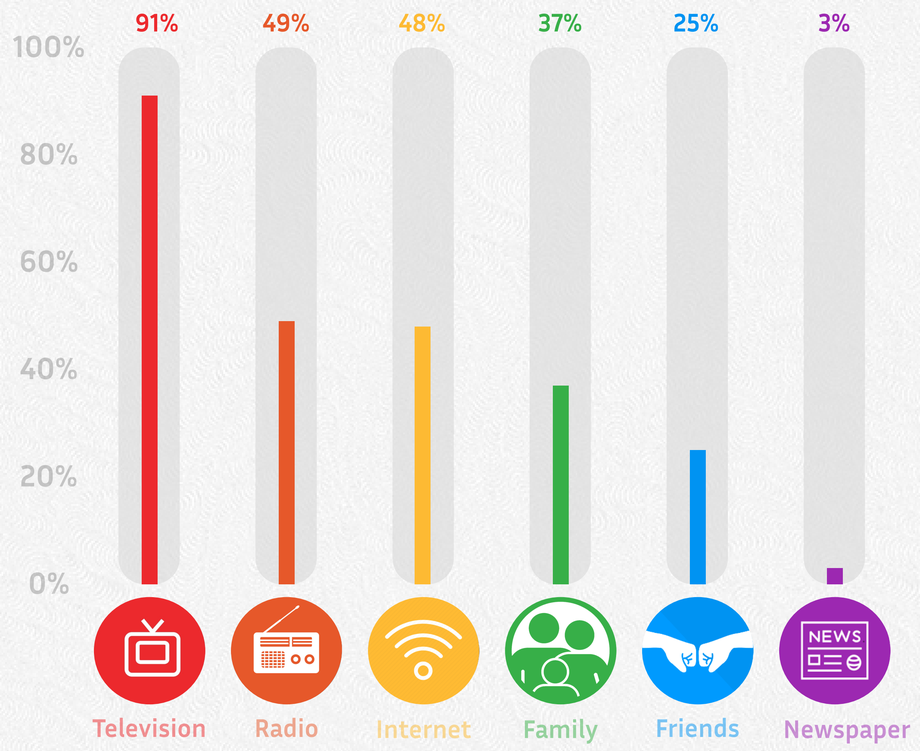




Source: GMA News(2021, 2022)

The 2022 election turnouts may largely be due to where voters get their information about the aspiring presidential candidates.

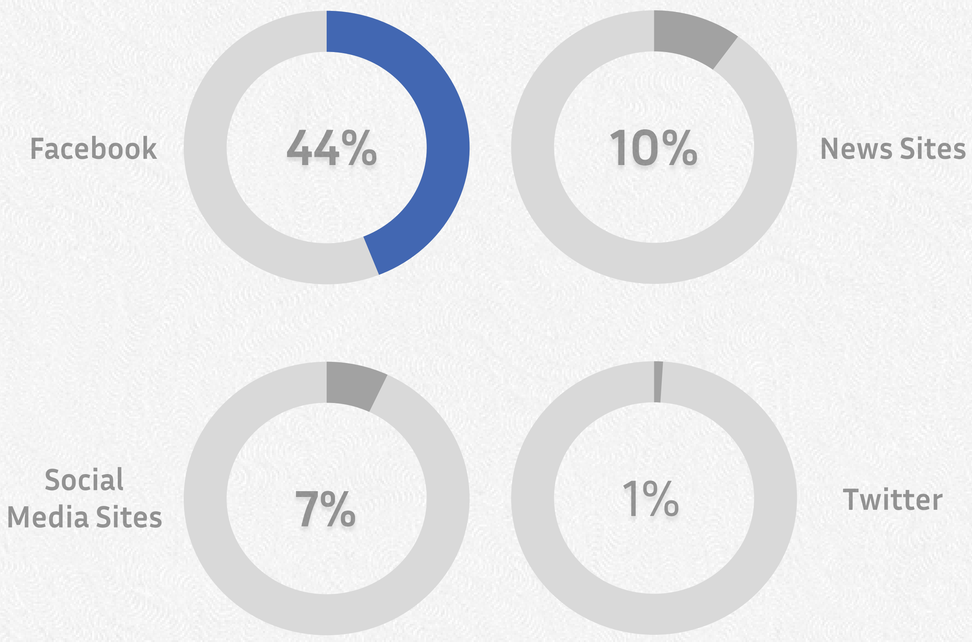
Sources of Information



Majority of the country's population rely on **TV channels**, **radio stations**, and the **Internet** as sources of information about the government and politics.

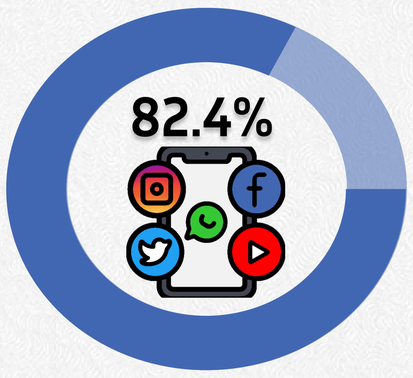
Source: Pulse Asia (2022)

Media Information



On the Internet, **Facebook** remains the leading source of information about politics.

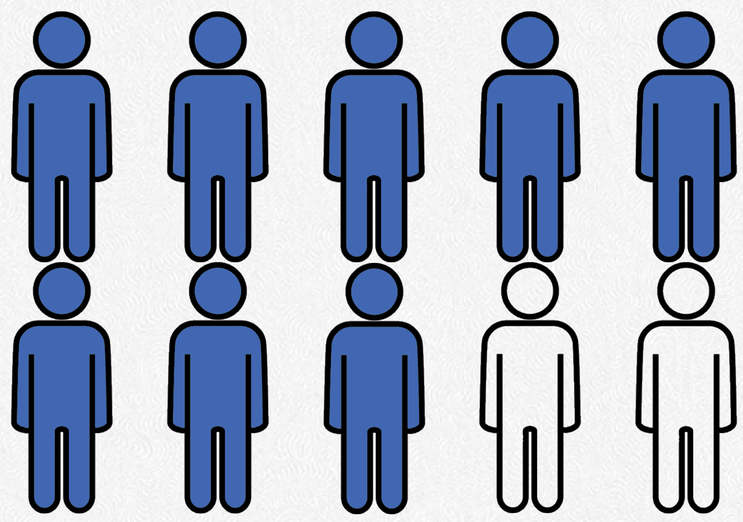
Source: Pulse Asia (2022)



In 2022, **92.05 million Filipinos** are **social media users**. That totals to **82.4%** of the entire population.

Source: datareportal (2022)

Filipino Facebook Users



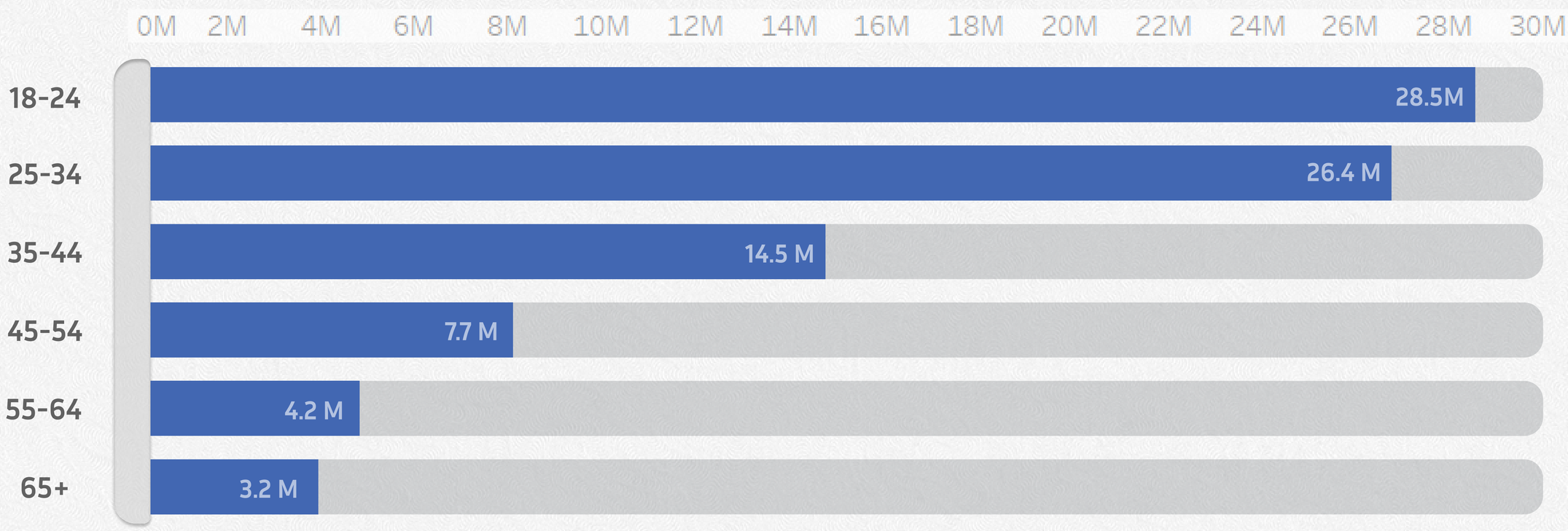
8 out of 10 Filipinos uses Facebook.

Data published in Meta's advertising resources indicate that **Facebook** had **83.85 million users** in the **Philippines** in early 2022.

Source: datareportal (2022)

On average, Filipinos spend **4.06 hours** using social media on a daily basis, which is more than twice the recommended amount.

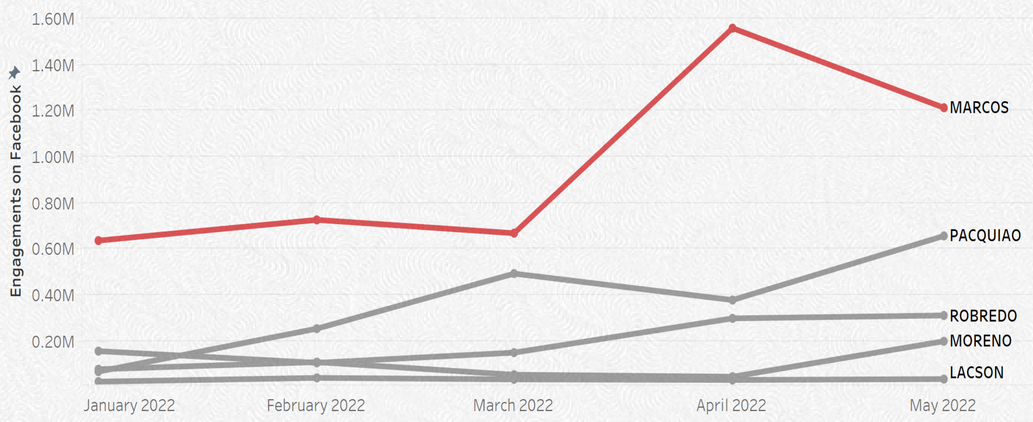
Source: Statista (2021)

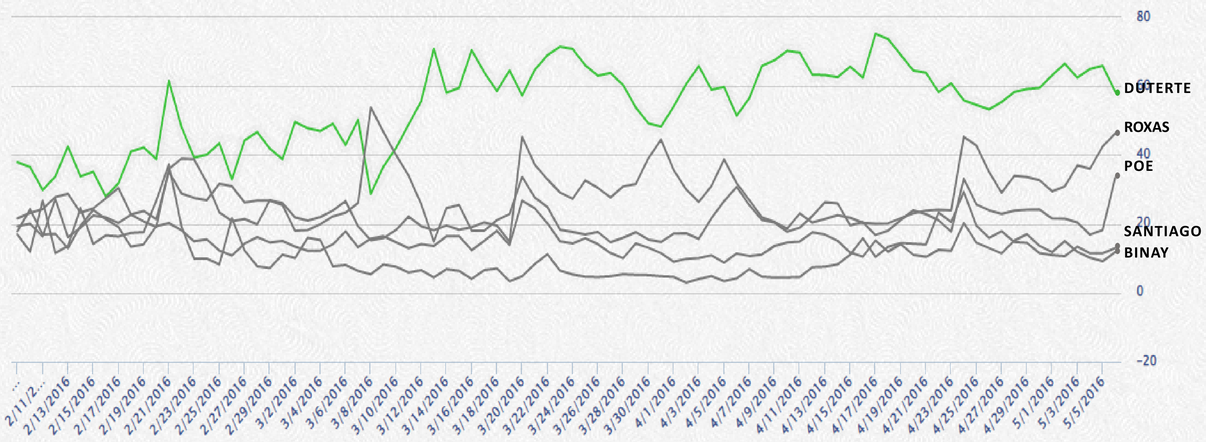


This graph shows the **number of Filipino Facebook users** who are above the age of 18 and are **legally allowed to vote**.

Source: Napoleoncat (2022)

Facebook Social Relevance for 2022 and 2016 Presidential Candidates





In the end, one of the biggest factors Marcos winning the election is due to his massive online presence on social media, especially on Facebook. Among the top 5 candidates, he remained a **significant lead** when it came to **engagements on Facebook**.

Source: Facebook (2022)

Another factor in Marcos's win is his **ties to former President Rodrigo Duterte**. On the Presidential 2016 election, we can also see the same trend for the camp of Duterte. A high social relevance can correlates a Filipino decision on selecting a presidential candidate.

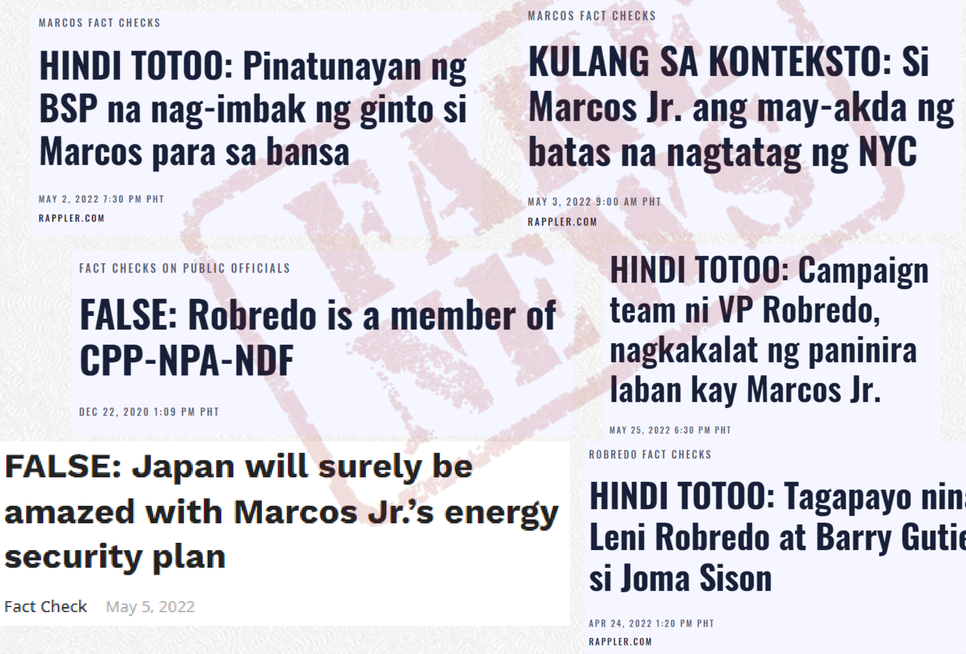
Sources: Facebook, GMA news (2016)

The Marcos Strategy: DISINFORMATION

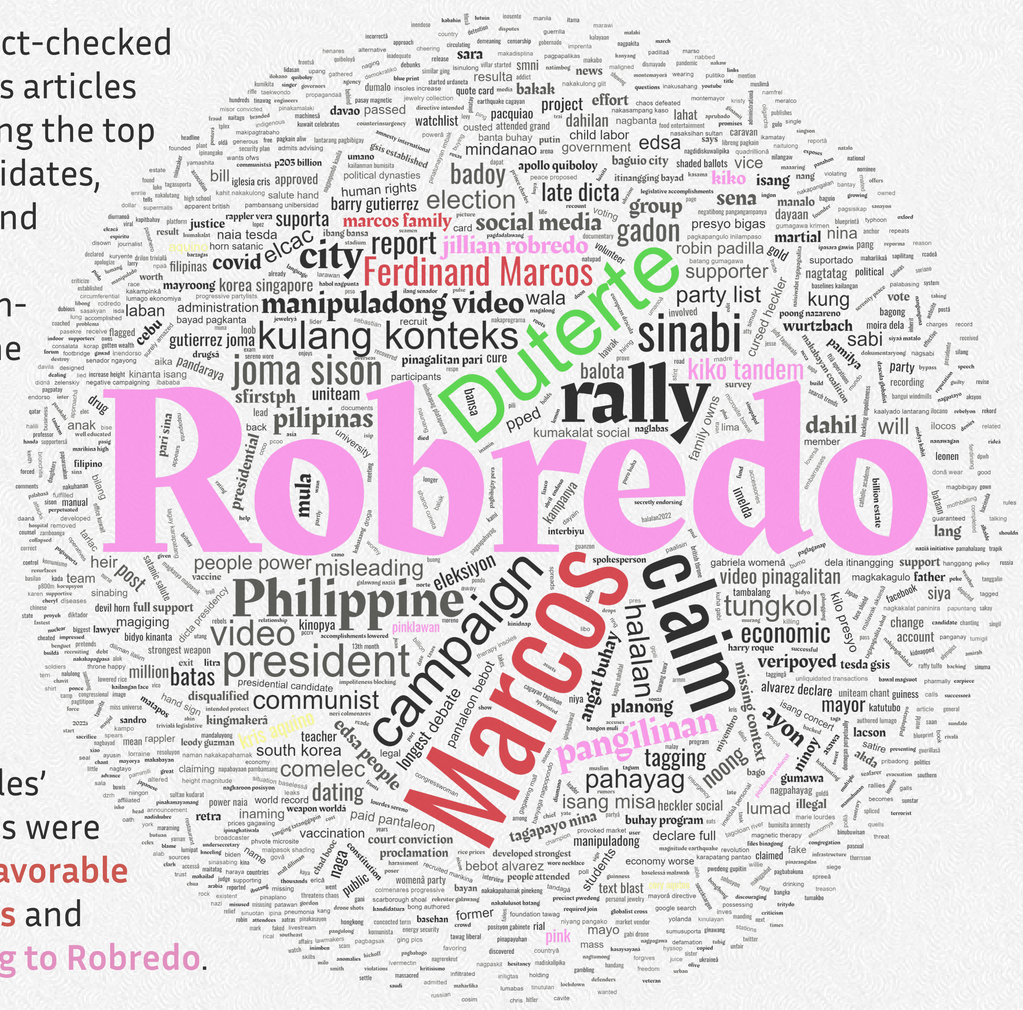
The amount of **propaganda** and **deliberate disinformation** produced and spread by a vast **network of social media activities** as part of a systematic effort to improve the Marcoses' image and clear the path for their return to Philippine politics.

Source: Rappler (2019)

Sample of headlines among the 500 fact-checked fake news articles from 2021 to 2022:



In 500 fact-checked fake news articles concerning the top five candidates, Marcos and Robredo were mentioned the most.


Robredo
Duterte
Marcos
Ferdinand Marcos
marcos family
jillian robredo
kulang konteks
joma sison
sinabi
rally
manipuladong video
social media
campaign
president
Philippine
claim
pangilinan
pahayag
tungkol
economic
video pinagalitan
misleading
people power
communist
kiko tandem
pilipinas
batas
million
elecac
city
report
election
badoy
late dicta
edsa people
comelec
south korea
dating
vaccination
court conviction
proclamation
bebot alvarez
text blast
tagapayo nina
isang misa
heckler social
lumad
illegal
buhay program
declare full
manipuladong
tagging
noong
ayon
mayor
lacson
akda
veripoyed
tesda gsis
alvarez declare
uniteam chant
guiness
planong
argat buhay
halalan
eleksiyon
pantaleon bebot
longest debate
kumakalat social
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news
snmi
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bakak
project
effort
dahilan
nagbanta
edsa
lahat
government
child labor
baguio city
shaded ballots
vice
isang
kiko
sena
group
gadon
robin padilla
presyo bigas
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uniteam
sfirstph
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government