# [***Lula's challenges replace initial optimism with government in foreign press***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67SS-H0C1-JCG7-83PP-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

After a first positive reaction from the foreign press regarding the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT) to the presidency and the inauguration of his government at the end of 2022 and the beginning of this year, the foreign perception begins to show signs of attention on problems faced by the new administration of Brazil, in power for two months.

In a period of low visibility, there has not been just one subject that has concentrated the attention of the international press. Reports published last week, however, indicate the persistence of political, environmental and economic difficulties in Brazil, as well as challenges to be faced by the government.

In total, in the second week of March 37 texts with mention to Brazil were registered in the seven vehicles analyzed - a volume well below the weekly average of the International Interest Index (iii-Brazil), which is almost double the last collection. Most texts had a neutral tone (57%), while the volume of positive mentions was 17% and the percentage of texts with a negative tone was 27%.

One of the main highlights about Brazil in the international press was a report with a balance of the first two months of the new government in the French newspaper Le Monde, registering "the difficult first steps of Lula". "At the head of a shaken country, the leftist president maintained an intense agenda and benefited from an established form of union (...) but also raised disappointments and initial criticism," the text states.

Similarly, the environmental issue continues to have a strong influence on the external perception of Brazil. Instead of the optimism generated by Lula's victory, there are signs that the government is demanding action. One of them was a report in the British newspaper The Guardian about the rise of ***deforestation*** in the country.

"***Deforestation*** in Brazil's ***Amazon*** rainforest increased in February to the highest level ever recorded for the month, highlighting the scale of the challenge facing Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's government as it tries to undo the environmental destruction caused by far-right former president Jair Bolsonaro," the report said.

The same newspaper and the Portuguese newspaper Público also gave space to denunciations about ***deforestation*** in Brazil from the demand for collagen products in the rest of the world. An investigation "found that cattle raised on farms that cause ***deforestation*** were processed in slaughterhouses that serve international collagen supply chains," says the English newspaper.

Environmental challenges got attention also in the New York Times, which published a review of journalist Eliane Brum's book on the ***Amazon***, including criticism of the current government. "Under President Jair Bolsonaro, ***deforestation*** in the ***Amazon*** has increased by about 60%. His leftist successor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, promised when he took office in January to reverse this devastation; but, as Brum notes, it was he who gave the green light to Belo Monte during his previous administration, 'eloquent proof that every ideological hue sees the ***Amazon*** as a body to be dominated and exploited,'" she says.

As a slightly more positive counterpoint, the Spanish newspaper El País published two reports on important issues for the projection of Brazilian environmental diplomacy. One of them presents a report on projects to expand the supply of wind and solar energy, and that Brazil will be the leader in the region". It also published a praising profile of Txai Suruí, the "best known Brazilian environmental activist in the world".

Another relevant text addresses Lula's political movements for the equality of Brazilian women by mentioning the leadership of the Minister of Women's Affairs, Cida Gonçalves, and the other 10 ministries led by women, for the first time in Brazil's history.

Since the beginning of April 2022, iii-Brasil has collected and analyzed an average of 71 reports per week with prominent mentions of the country in the seven press vehicles analyzed.

Throughout the last 48 weeks, iii-Brasil registered on average 49% neutral tone reports, 34% negative tone mentions, and 16% positive texts about the country.

**Classification**

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**Person:** JAIR BOLSONARO (92%); LUIZ INACIO LULA DA SILVA (89%)

**Geographic:** BRAZIL (97%)

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