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**What do Brazilian citizens use the Freedom of Information Law for? – a typology of FOIL requests.**

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## **Abstract**

By analyzing more than ten thousand requests based on the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) in Brazil, from 2012 to 2017, we provide the first quantitative descriptive summary of FOIL requests in Brazil. We have also created a typology of seven themes to group the topics and found evidence that the FOIL is mostly used for social monitoring. However, in general, the government is not transparent when it comes to providing basic information.

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## Introduction

In some approaches to democracy, elections fulfill the role of holding politicians accountable for their actions in power (Manin et. al 1999). Voters get informed about what politicians and governments have accomplished and chose to vote rewarding or punishing them, following their preferences. For politicians to be truly accountable to voters, government actions must be transparent. Thus, transparency has been increasingly promoted as a means of achieving accountability and improving democracy.

More recently, governments and organizations have been taking part in the open government movement, which features transparency as one of its four pillars, along with accountability, participation and innovation. Hence, the more transparent a government is, the more open it could be (Brockmyer & Fox, 2015).

Not coincidentally, the Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative, which has Brazil as one of its eight co-founders, was important for the approval of the Brazilian Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) considering that Brazil hoped to regulate access to information prior to the launching of the OGP (Guimarães, 2014).

It is thus relevant to evaluate how Brazilian commitment to transparency has evolved since then, and observe the challenges and effects of implemented transparency policies. In this paper, we try to understand what kind of information has been requested and responded through the FOIL, contributing to evaluate the extent to which the Law 12.527 / 2011 has increased transparency and could be considered a tool for social monitoring improvement.

To this end, we have analyzed more than 10,000 FOIL requests received by a total of 34 Brazilian state bodies, which include databases from different branches and levels of government. This work is part of a growing tradition within studies in political science that use quantitative methods to make descriptive inferences in order to summarize large volumes of data. From the statistical standpoint, our work can be considered an exploratory data analysis combined with probabilistic methods for inference (Gelman, 2003).

The literature on ideal point, for instance, has played an important role in describing ideologies of members of parliament (Poole & Rosenthal, 1997; Jackman, 2001), of justices of the United States Supreme Court (Martin & Quinn, 2002) and even of political actors in other countries (Leoni 2002, Feliu et al., 2010).

More recently, several papers have addressed the quantitative analysis of texts to summarize their content (Grimmer, 2010; Grimmer & Stewart, 2013; Moreira, 2016). These works, following the literature on ideal point, have mostly focused on the content of political actors' discourses, such as parliamentary speeches (Grimmer, 2010; Moreira, 2016). Likewise, there are analyses of documents other than speeches, such as party manifestos (Merz et al., 2016) as well as abstracts of scientific articles and newspaper articles (Blei, 2003). We are not aware, however, of any automated analysis of access to information requests, which is unprecedented in the literature.

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According to Grimmer & Stewart (2013), automated text analysis can be divided into two types: classification and scaling. According to the authors, "classification organizes texts into a set of categories" (p. 3). The present work deals precisely with organizing Brazilian FOIL requests into categories (themes and typologies).

The Brazilian FOIL, which came into force in 2012, has been the subject of several studies, most of them seeking to assess how the FOIL emerged (i.e. Angelico, 2015), how it is being implemented (i.e. ARTIGO 19, 2013, Controladoria-Geral da União, 2015; Michener et. al, 2018), or its effects (i.e. Pereira, 2016). However, there is no work, to the best of our knowledge, that has investigated the content of requests for information. In other words, what information do Brazilian citizens and organizations actually request to the Brazilian state, throughout its branches and levels of government? Are there differences between branches? Across levels of government? Little or nothing is known, except for specific qualitative analyzes, usually focusing on specific issues (i.e. Sakai & Berti, 2015; ARTIGO 19, 2016; Moncau et. al, 2015).

## The dataset

We analyzed more than ten thousand requests sent to dozens of public bodies of different branches and levels of government. Most of the requests databases were obtained through FOIL requests (Sakai & Galf, 2017). Few databases, such as the government of the municipality of São Paulo, were already available in the bodies' public websites.

Out of more than 200 requests of databases, made through FOIL, only 77 state bodies have provided some kind of information. However, more than half had to be discarded, because the files were not delivered in the appropriate machine-readable format: the open format. Thus, the 33 sets analyzed belong to bodies that adequately met the initial format criteria defined in our FOIL requests for their own requests databases.

**Table 1. Analyzed FOIL requests by branch and government level**

<b>Branch/Level</b>	<b>Federal</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Municipal</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Executive</b>	27%	14%	18%	60%
<b>Judiciary</b>	11%	2%	–	13%
<b>Legislative</b>	5%	1%	6%	12%
<b>Public Prosecutor's Office</b>	–	1%	–	1%
<b>Courts of Accounts</b>	4%	1%	8%	13%
<b>Total</b>	47%	20%	32%	100%

Source: authors

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Another challenge we encountered during the analysis was the different amounts of information requests that each database contained. Some had thousands of requests, while others presented only a few hundred. We decided to limit the analysis to a maximum of 500 requests per base, in order to assure equal treatment when analyzing requests made to different bodies.

## Methodology

In order to analyze the content of requests, we used a hybrid method of analysis. Firstly, we used non-supervised learning to categorize ordered themes, followed by a manual validation method of those categories, as suggested in Grimmer & Stewart (2013, section 6.4). In a subsequent analysis, after the categorization of the requests in typologies, we manually assembled the subjects within themes.

The supervised learning of requests typologies was carried out employing the algorithm known as Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA). LDA is a generative model that assumes there is a fixed number of topics, and documents are a mixture of topics. Each topic has a probability of generating each word of a document (according to the topics of the document). In practice, we work with the assumption that each document has a main topic (i.e. words with higher probability of occurrence). For example, a document from the topic “admissions” would have a high probability of generating words like “vacancies”, “date”, “position”, “test”, “result”, among others. When encountering such words in a document, one can infer that its topic is “admissions”. This is all done automatically by the algorithm, the topic also being determined by the algorithm, not by humans. This is why it is called unsupervised learning.

As expected, the categories of requests for information vary according to the competencies of each body. Even if in some cases there may occur similarities, since these are all public entities held accountable to society, requests for information sent to the Brazilian National Congress, for example, are quite different in nature from those sent to municipalities. Thus, we apply the LDA separately to the bodies, gathering under the same classification only analogous ones. For example, all requests for municipal executive governments were analyzed together. In the next section, we discuss in more detail how this process was completed, as well as the results found.

Based on the LDA classification of subjects mentioned on the requests for information, we assembled similar subjects and sorted them out under 44 themes. These themes, in turn, were grouped into a typology composed of 7 categories, from the manual analysis of the 44 subjects.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The number of subjects generated by the LDA was much higher than 44. However, given the impossibility of working with so many categories, we reassembled the topics in cross-cutting themes that could explain requests in more than one government branch, bearing in mind that these sets were consistent with the topics initially identified by the algorithm. We understood that this choice limited our macro analysis of the requests' contents, which was our goal, allowing the possibility to conduct a more detailed analysis with a focus on each theme.

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The typology is as follows:<sup>3</sup>

- **Basic information:** general information from each public body, such as servers or politicians contact information, opening hours, calendar, agenda.
- **Core-activity:** information regarding duties and assignments of the public bodies.
- **Social monitoring:** information on operating costs, wages and benefits, bids and contracts.
- **Services and taxes:** information on issuance of personal documents, licenses and certificates, income tax, basic services such as water and sanitation.
- **Admissions:** information on dates and call notices of civil service examinations, the number of available positions and public internships.
- **Administrative processes:** information on the body's administrative processes, in their full content (requests regarding legal processes of the judiciary branch are classified as "core-activity").
- **Other:** A variety of information that does not fit into any of the previous categories.

The typology was created with the purpose of organizing and comparing requests for information made to those public bodies, each with its own responsibility, so that quite different contents might fall into the same category. One of the typologies, for instance, "core-activity", may contain requests for information about internal proceedings, janitorial activities and lawsuits, because each request is related to the receiving public body's attributions. With this typology, we are able to evaluate if citizens use the FOIL to obtain information regarding that body's main attribution, regardless of it being to produce laws, to judge processes or to provide maintenance of public parks.

Out of more than ten thousand requests, nearly 70% were labeled under "social monitoring" (35%) and "core-activity" (34%).

**Table 2. Requests distribution by typology**

Typology	Requests	%
Social monitoring	3717	35%
Core-activity	3668	34%
Admissions	992	9%
Services and taxes	834	8%
Other	552	5%
Basic information	479	4%

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<sup>3</sup> See the appendix for the distribution of requests by typology, theme and government branch.

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Administrative processes	435	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10677</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: authors

In the following sections, we present and analyze the contents of each typology.

## Social monitoring

Working on the premise that transparency and access to information improve accountability and social monitoring, one of the central questions that guided our analysis was whether the FOIL was actually being used for those purposes. The topics in the following table were classified as social monitoring:

**Table 3. Requests by social monitoring themes**

Typology/theme	Requests	%
<b>Social monitoring</b>	<b>3717</b>	<b>35%</b>
1. Civil servants and funds	1990	19%
2. Administrative structure and information management	654	6%
3. Agreements, bids and public partnerships	521	5%
4. Budget, revenues and expenditures	445	4%
5. Other	64	1%
6. Minutes of meetings, councils and public hearings	43	0%

Source: authors

Theme 1, “civil servants and funds”, is the most requested topic of the sample, making up more than half of the requests on social monitoring. No other theme comes close to the 19% it shows. Given its importance, it could justifiably be considered a typology of its own. Nonetheless, we chose to maintain it as a theme within the “social monitoring” typology, for analyzing FOIL usage as a social monitoring tool.

Information on wages, benefits and funds (theme “civil servants and funds”) of politicians in office, judges and prosecutors is the most interesting theme for the citizens who made use of

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the FOIL. It was the most requested information in approximately one-third of the 33 public bodies, and in 88% of them it is among the three most requested subjects. In judicial agencies, “civil servants and funds” alone accounted for 37% of requests, and in executive branch agencies, 17%.

Other highly requested information under this typology was on the “administrative structure and information management”, which includes questions regarding departments and their functions, organizational charts, code of ethics and internal standards, rules for document printing, outsourcing of services, internal audits, document management standards, attendance control, information technology systems, quotas to fill positions.

Themes 3 (“agreements, bids and public partnerships”) and 4 (“budget, revenues and expenditures”) were also quite frequent. We can observe that a substantial part of this information is listed as active transparency information in the FOIL. Accordingly, the high rate of request on this theme can be understood as an indication of non-compliance with the FOIL – since these information should be made available on public websites but are not – and of its poorly executed enforcement. Assuming that citizens will make requests about what cannot be found in public websites, it can be expected that such information might not be properly publicized, either due to data inaccuracy, outdated, lack of clarity, format other than machine-readable, weak information, bad visualization tools, hampering its actual accessibility and effective transparency.

Other social monitoring information requested comprises taxes collected by the agency, property of the agency, public buildings costs, availability of meeting minutes, information on councils, housing and expropriations data.

## **Core-activity**

Within “core-activity”, requests vary significantly depending on government branch and level. While in the Judicial and Legislative branches they correspond respectively to requests regarding lawsuits and the legislative proceedings, in the Executive these requests are more closely associated with public policies for which each executive bodies is responsible: education, health, public safety, janitorial, among others.

Dividing requests by branch, we observed that in the Executive and Judicial branches, users were more interested in social monitoring through the theme of “civil servants and funds”, whereas in the Legislative branch, in Courts of Accounts and in the Public Prosecutor's Office, the outstanding theme concerned these bodies “core-activity”. In the case of the Courts of Accounts and the Public Prosecutor's Office, the most frequently asked questions referred to their monitoring and oversight of the Executive branch; “lawsuits and external auditing” is the most requested theme (7) within “core-activity”.

In the Legislative case, the main themes within the “core-activity” typology were “legislative proceedings, budget amendments and Legislative branch functions” and “current legislation”, which together made up an average of 38% of requests sent to this branch of government. Regarding the high frequency of requests on legislative proceedings, it is worth noting that in

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many cases there are search tools with considerable information already made available. Further investigation is required in order to understand the reason behind so many requests for publicized information. A sound hypothesis would be the user's difficulty in understanding the tool. Even though Legislative bodies' websites usually have tutorials and user guides, they are often aimed at those who already have a minimum knowledge on legislative processes, which therefore might restrict its use to experts.

**Table 4. Core-activity requests and themes**

Typology/theme	Requests	%
<b>Core-activity</b>	<b>3668</b>	<b>34%</b>
7. Lawsuits and external auditing	666	6%
8. Other public policies	519	5%
9. Legislative proceedings, budget amendments and Legislative branch functions	337	3%
10. Traffic and mobility	313	3%
11. Education	312	3%
12. Health, sanitation and social services	235	2%
13. Current legislation	215	2%
14. Judicial proceedings	195	2%
15. Databases and surveys	190	2%
16. Agencies	148	1%
17. Public security	106	1%
18. Housing, expropriation, land reform	79	1%
19. Economy	68	1%
20. Janitorial services	62	1%
21. State-owned companies	59	1%
22. Sports, culture and leisure	52	0%
23. Financial institutions	51	0%
24. Environment	40	0%
25. Defense and military	14	0%
26. Social security, pensions and insurance	7	0%



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Source: authors

Since each body has its own core-activity, themes within this category indicate somewhat to whom the request was sent. Hence, depending on sample differences, data reading must be done from the viewpoint of the concerned body: the high ratio of interest in processes of the Public Prosecutor's Offices and Courts of Accounts, as well as in Legislative branch functions, indicates poor transparency regarding the main activities of each of these branches. Through the analysis of Executive's requests by levels of government, the request themes concerning "core-activity" are very similar for state and local levels of government, but different from the federal government. The most striking difference among subnational level is regarding its federal jurisdictions: at local level there are many requests on "janitorial services", while at the state level we observe mainly "public security" requests.

At the subnational level, questions about traffic and mobility stand out. In this theme, information is requested about the number of traffic accidents and infractions, extension of bus lanes, public transport routes, installation and operation of traffic lights. It also suggests poor data transparency.

On the federal Executive branch, requests on core-activity reveal the citizens are mostly interested in monitoring the implementation of public policies. The five most requested themes in this area are "education", "agencies", "health, sanitation and social service" and "economy". Regarding "other public policies", requests for information on several themes that concerned core-activities of the Executive were assembled due to their lower frequency.

"Education" is the theme with the largest share of requests for information to the federal Executive branch. Among these, the largest number of requests is directed to federal universities and to the Ministry of Education. In the case of universities, there are requests for passing scores and entrance examinations results, courses bibliographies, number of students, quotas, evasion, programs implemented by the university, among others. Part of the requests are made by researchers who intend to use the data in academic papers, which sometimes require the university to have structured databases in order to provide such information.

Theme 16, "agencies", relates to requests sent to national regulatory agencies, responsible for overseeing and formulating rules for public services delivered by the private sector. Of these requests, 27% were sent to the National Agency of Sanitary Surveillance and 21% to the National Electric Energy Agency. These requests are comprised of technical doubts on issues such as labeling, product composition standards, import and export license.

Many of these requests would be considered "consultations" in other bodies, such as the Legislative and Judicial branches. "Consultations" correspond to requests in which the body is asked to give its opinion or assessment on a given hypothetical situation, in place of providing actual information produced or held by the public authority. In these particular cases, the body is not obliged to respond since it is not a request for information under the FOIL. It should be noted, however, that the boundary between what is an actual request for information and what would be a query is quite blurry; sometimes it will depend on the civil

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servant subjective interpretation when responding to requests. Furthermore, it is worth raising once more the question of whether this information should have already been made public in active transparency or in a FAQ page, so that any citizen could have easy access to them.

According to our sample, federal executive regulatory agencies seem to respond to this kind of “consultative request” very often. This reinforces the claim that there are no clear boundaries between mere consultations and actual requests for information, which makes its denial, on the basis of this allegation, a problematic case.

Undoubtedly, most requests for core-activity also reflect the citizen's interest in social monitoring, but within each government body's purpose, that is, the implementation of policy and effectiveness of their actions. Inversely, requests for information that concern the formulation phase of a given policy, which guides the intention of such policy, were considered within the social monitoring typology. Bearing in mind that, together, the typologies of social monitoring and core-activity account for almost 70% of requests, there is virtually no doubt that citizens use the FOIL primarily to monitor and oversee the government.

## Admissions

This typology contains the second most requested matter by FOIL users: questions about civil service entrance examinations and admissions to the civil service in general.

**Table 5. Admissions requests and themes**

Typology/theme	Requests	%
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>9%</b>
27. Civil service entrance examinations	954	9%
28. Public positions and internships	38	0%

Source: authors

In all branches, “civil service entrance examinations” were among the most requested themes, demonstrating the need for public bodies to improve their communication in this regard. Requests featured inquiries on the date of future civil service entrance examinations, the number of public servants close to retirement, filled and vacant positions. While in the Executive branch, examinations accounted for 7%, in the Legislative the result was 14% and in the Judicial, as well as in the Courts of Accounts, it was the third most requested theme, with 15% and 12% respectively. Within the Public Prosecutor's Offices, the rate was even higher, reaching 30% of all requests. However, this is mainly due to the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Piauí (MP-PI), for which 37% of all public inquiries were made regarding civil service examinations. The Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Rio de Janeiro presented a much lower rate, at 7%.

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It is clear that these defined categories are not mutually exclusive, so a request about admissions or core-activity can also have the purpose of social monitoring. Even though we considered the possibility of classifying the requests in multiple categories, we have decided in favour of a single category per request in order to simplify their interpretation and understanding. As it is not possible to know for sure the applicant's intentions when requesting information, it is likely that some requests were underestimated. Due to these methodological limitations, some questions about vacant positions, possibly due to the expectation of admission in public service, were classified as social monitoring.

For the state executive government of Minas Gerais, two-thirds of 58% of requests on civil servants and funds were precisely questions about servants in the area of education, largely related to the number of vacant positions for teachers in certain cities. These requests were related to a particular lawsuit in which the government was forced to dismiss a number of teachers hired irregularly. Although many applicants were interested in following up on the case, it is reasonable to assume that many would also be directly interested in the actual hiring process, which would classify those requests into "admissions". However, this sort of inference demands specific knowledge of each administrative context, which is unfeasible for a large scale and all encompassing quantitative analysis as ours, covering all available bases.. Thus, despite the presence of a manual check, the present analysis diverges from a qualitative one. We chose to classify each request objectively. If the request did not explicitly address civil service entrance examination, its processes and/or results, it would be classified as "civil servants and funds".

## Services and taxes

The fourth most requested typology through the FOIL was information regarding services and taxes. This category includes requests for information that should be in active transparency (i.e. public available independent of request), such as information on documents issuance, income tax returns, permits and certificates provided by the state. This comprises a range of services and obligations regarding citizens that, even if they existed prior to the FOIL, entail processes that are not clear to the population. In 8% of the sample analyzed, the information request tool was used to clarify doubts about these services

**Table 6. Services and taxes requests and themes**

Typology/theme	Requests	%
<b>Services and taxes</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>8%</b>
29. Permits, licenses and certificates	313	3%
30. Issuance and regularization of personal documents	171	2%
31. Taxes	158	1%

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32. Other	138	1%
33. Driver's license, fines e vehicle inspection	54	1%

Source: authors

Requests for services and taxes were sent to bodies responsible for these functions, mostly from the Executive branch, for which the typology came at third, with 11%. Considering the restricted public that tends to make use of FOIL requests, compared to the general public that needs state issued documents, this high rate indicates the inefficiency of specialized channels to settle these doubts.

External auditing bodies also scored a high request rate within this typology, particularly in theme 29, "permits, licenses and certificates". At the Federal Court of Accounts, this theme was the second most requested, amounting to 28% of its database, only bested by lawsuits and external auditing. The most common requests within this theme were on Clearance Certificates on Irregular Accounts and Trial Records, which again suggests a malfunction of specialized channels for providing such services.

## Basic information

The basic information category assembles requests about a body's functioning, civil servants or politicians contact information, calendar, agenda, etc. Usually, these requests are aimed at acquiring very simple data, the access of which should have already been facilitated through specific channels, as a dedicated contact section or organizational chart on the website.

**Table 7. Basic information requests and themes**

Typology/theme	Requests	%
<b>Basic information</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>4%</b>
34. HR consultations	158	1%
35. Contact information	122	1%
36. Visiting, courses and library	100	1%
37. Legislation	47	0%
38. Agenda	34	0%
39. Media	18	0%

Source: authors

This category of requests was quite frequent for the Legislative branch, especially in the Brazilian National Congress, accounting for almost a third of all information requested to the

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house (31%). Contact information of representatives and their offices was the main information requested, followed by the House and its committees voting schedules, agenda and session hours.

Contact information was the second most requested theme for the National Congress. Despite the high incidence of requests, this information can be easily found on the official website, in so far as it is easier to find both the telephone and email address of a representative on the website than sending a request for information - for which, in addition to the mandatory online registration, it takes time to get the response. Even if it is easy to find this information, given it is well structured on the House's website, the high rate of requests may indicate that it is precariously updated, since there are frequently turnovers among representatives.

Amidst Executive branch bodies, requests in this typology were distinguished. We observed intense FOIL use by civil servants and former civil servants alike, often requesting access to paychecks, time sheets, payment receipts, questions about remuneration, among others. In spite of a fundamental difference in the information flow – in this case within the body, since it is sent to its own servants, while contact information and agenda are public and of general interest – we have chosen to gather them under this theme because they are essential information. At the same time, they expose serious communication issues within the body, with either its internal or external public.

Even though there are requests on “HR consultations” sent to several government branches, in no other case it was as frequent as in the Executive branch, where it accounted for 2%. In other branches, it did not exceed 1%. However, among the Executive databases accessed, this theme showed a wide frequency fluctuation: it was not requested for the cities of Salvador and São Paulo, while reached 8% in the states of Alagoas and Rio Grande do Norte.

This frequency fluctuation across bodies may indicate the failure of some of them in providing satisfactory direct contact channels for their servants and ex-servants, making FOIL an alternative channel for information that one should not need to request in the first place.

## **Processes and other requests**

“Processes” is a single typology theme: “undefined administrative processes”. The category includes requests about processes with no clear content implied from the request. In other words, it is a kind of “others” category for administrative processes, lacking a defined content to readers outside of the agency’s setting. Such requests may relate to administrative disciplinary proceedings, salary payments, promotions and internal transfers of civil servants.

All requests categorized under this theme and typology were sent to Executive bodies, accounting for 7% of their entire sample. This rate declines to 4% if we include the remainder government branches. “Undefined administrative processes” were particularly

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requested to the state governments of Maranhão (17%) and Alagoas (16%), and to the federal government (8%).

Cases in which the information was granted only upon payment for hard copies were also frequent in “undefined administrative processes”. This theme fundamentally includes requests that referred to some other executive process, but did not specify which one. The state governments of Maranhão (49%) and Alagoas (44%) share almost all of them.

**Table 8. Administrative processes and other requests and themes**

Typology/theme	Requests	%
<b>Administrative processes</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>4%</b>
40. Undefined administrative processes	435	4%
<b>Others</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>5%</b>
41. Others	303	3%
42. Archive	171	2%
43. Maps, values and district demographic data	36	0%
44. Technical issues	30	0%

Source: authors

“Archive” requests stood out in the Legislative, figuring as the seventh most frequent theme, with 7%. Applicants sought historical information on the houses’ legislative work and on former representatives. The search for this information was particularly expressive for the National Congress, reaching third place as most searched theme, with 10% of all requests analyzed.

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## Conclusion

The Brazilian Freedom of Information Law, approved only seven years ago, regulated the access to public information in Brazil with the aim of promoting transparency and accountability in the country and, thus, rendering the process of social monitoring easier. Given its brief period of implementation, the existing literature on its effectiveness and impact is still insufficient. This paper seeks to contribute by proposing seven typologies, distributed across 44 themes, to organize more than ten thousand requests for information made to dozens of Brazilian state bodies, from different branches and levels of government.

The categorization was organized so as to interpret how the citizen is using the information request tool, if the FOIL is effectively contributing to social monitoring and oversight of government actions, while, at the same time, to identify any other unanticipated purposes the FOIL might be serving. The data presented corroborates the assumption that the FOIL is a tool of social monitoring: more than a third of the requests were categorized within the social monitoring typology, comprising the largest set of requests.

From this initial survey, more analyses regarding the quality of information shared through FOIL can be carried out. Namely, even if there is a demand for social monitoring information, can the citizen effectively get access to it through the FOIL? What are the useful data for social monitoring that should be actively made publicly available by the state?

Examining the transparency of the Brazilian state is an endeavor limited by its own lack of transparency: only the bodies that made their requests for information databases available in readable formats were included in this work. Thus, the Executive branch sample is more consistent than the one provided by the Public Prosecutor's Office, for example, of which only two databases could be used. Hopefully, in future analyses, Brazilian state agencies will have improved their requests for information readiness and responsivity.

From the standpoint of the selected bodies, this analysis contributes to identifying a number of information and technology management problems. Frequent demands on information that was already made available might indicate poor presentation or lack of information updates. So does the use of the FOIL as an alternative to traditional internal contact channels, to answer FAQs about public services, or even to tackle internal information flow shortcomings, such as human resources information for civil servants.

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## Annex: Distribution of requests by government branch

### *Executive branch*

<b>Typology/Theme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Social monitoring</b>	<b>2418</b>	<b>38%</b>
Civil servants and funds	1081	17%
Agreements, bids and public partnerships	466	7%
Budget, revenues and expenditures	398	6%
Administrative structure and information management	366	6%
Other (social monitoring)	64	1%
Minutes of meetings, councils and public hearings	43	1%
<b>Core-activity</b>	<b>2065</b>	<b>32%</b>
Other public policies	519	8%
Traffic and mobility	313	5%
Education	312	5%
Health, sanitation and social services	235	4%
Agencies	148	2%
Public security	106	2%
Housing, expropriation, land reform	79	1%
Economy	68	1%
Janitorial services	62	1%
State-owned companies	59	1%
Sports, culture and leisure	52	1%
Financial institutions	51	1%
Environment	40	1%
Defense and military	14	0%
Social security, pensions and insurance	7	0%
<b>Services and taxes</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>11%</b>
Issuance and regularization of personal documents	171	3%
Permits, licenses and certificates	160	2%
Taxes	158	2%
Other (services and taxes)	138	2%
Driver's license, fines e vehicle inspection	54	1%
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>7%</b>
Civil service entrance examinations	444	7%
Public positions and internships	38	1%
<b>Administrative processes</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>7%</b>
Undefined administrative processes	435	7%
<b>Other</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>3%</b>
Other	149	2%
Maps, values and district demographic data	36	1%
Archive	17	0%
<b>Basic information</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>2%</b>
HR consultations	120	2%
Agenda	4	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6407</b>	<b>100%</b>



# TransparênciaBrasil

## *Legislative branch*

<b>Typology/Theme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Core-activity</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>41%</b>
Legislative proceedings, budget amendments and Legislative branch functions	337	25%
Current legislation	215	16%
<b>Social monitoring</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>21%</b>
Civil servants and funds	187	14%
Administrative structure and information management	57	4%
Agreements, bids and public partnerships	24	2%
Budget, revenues and expenditures	17	1%
<b>Basic information</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>18%</b>
Contact information	122	9%
Visiting, courses and library	48	4%
Agenda	30	2%
HR consultations	20	1%
Media	18	1%
<b>Other</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>12%</b>
Archive	107	8%
Other	28	2%
Technical issues	19	1%
Permits, licenses and certificates	9	1%
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>8%</b>
Civil service entrance examinations	104	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1342</b>	<b>100%</b>

## *Judiciary branch*

<b>Typology/Theme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Social monitoring</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>53%</b>
Civil servants and funds	528	38%
Administrative structure and information management	151	11%
Agreements, bids and public partnerships	26	2%
Budget, revenues and expenditures	21	2%
<b>Core-activity</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>28%</b>
Judicial proceedings	195	14%
Databases and surveys	190	14%
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>10%</b>
Civil service entrance examinations	135	10%
<b>Other</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>8%</b>
Other	65	5%
Archive	42	3%
Technical issues	10	1%
<b>Basic information</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1%</b>
Visiting, courses and library	14	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1377</b>	<b>100%</b>

# TransparênciaBrasil

## *Courts of Accounts*

<b>Typology/Theme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Core-activity</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>44%</b>
Lawsuits and external auditing	627	44%
<b>Social monitoring</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>18%</b>
Civil servants and funds	178	13%
Administrative structure and information management	64	4%
Agreements, bids and public partnerships	5	0%
Budget, revenues and expenditures	5	0%
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>16%</b>
Civil service entrance examinations	233	16%
<b>Services and taxes</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>11%</b>
Permits, licenses and certificates	153	11%
<b>Basic information</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7%</b>
Legislation	47	3%
Visiting, courses and library	36	3%
HR consultations	17	1%
<b>Other</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4%</b>
Other	59	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1424</b>	<b>100%</b>

## *Public Prosecutor's Office*

<b>Typology/Theme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Core-activity</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>31%</b>
Lawsuits and external auditing	39	31%
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>30%</b>
Civil service entrance examinations	38	30%
<b>Social monitoring</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28%</b>
Administrative structure and information management	16	13%
Civil servants and funds	16	13%
Budget, revenues and expenditures	4	3%
<b>Other</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9%</b>
Archive	5	4%
Permits, licenses and certificates	3	2%
Other	2	2%
Technical issues	1	1%
<b>Basic information</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2%</b>
Visiting, courses and library	2	2%
HR consultations	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100%</b>

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