

CHILE'S "PRIMEVAL SOUP": DISINFORMATION CONTROL POLICY FORMULATION

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This study analyzes the process of public policy formulation for disinformation control in Chile between 2020 and 2025, drawing on the multiple streams model as its main theoretical framework, complemented by public policy network approaches and agenda-setting perspectives. Through documentary analysis of bills, presidential decrees, and legislative records, a distinctive configuration of the Chilean policy landscape is identified, characterized by incrementalist proposals, conflicting framings, and significant institutional tensions between the executive and legislative branches. The findings indicate that, despite apparent consensus on the need to regulate disinformation, divergences persist regarding the appropriate instruments — particularly concerning the definition of the phenomenon and the constitutional limits of state action. The absence of a consolidated policy window and the fragmentation of the political landscape largely explain the failure to enact specific legislation during the period under analysis.

Keywords: disinformation; public policy; agenda-setting; Chile; digital regulation.

A "sopa primordial" do Chile: formulação de políticas de controle da desinformação

Este estudo analisa o processo de formulação de políticas públicas de controle da desinformação no Chile entre 2020 e 2025, utilizando como marco teórico principal o modelo de múltiplos fluxos, complementado por abordagens de redes de políticas públicas e perspectivas de formação de agenda. Por meio de análise documental de projetos de lei, decretos presidenciais e atas legislativas, identifica-se uma configuração peculiar da *primeval soup* chilena, caracterizada por propostas incrementalistas, enquadramentos conflitantes e tensões institucionais significativas entre os poderes Executivo e Legislativo. Os resultados indicam que, apesar do aparente consenso sobre a necessidade de controlar a desinformação, persistem divergências quanto aos instrumentos adequados — especialmente no que se refere à definição do fenômeno e aos limites constitucionais da atuação estatal. A ausência de uma janela de oportunidade consolidada e a fragmentação do fluxo político explicam, em grande medida, a não promulgação de legislação específica até o período analisado.

Palavras-chave: desinformação; políticas públicas; formação de agenda; Chile; regulação digital.

La "sopa primordial" de Chile: formulación de políticas de control de la desinformación

Este estudio analiza el proceso de formulación de políticas públicas de control de la desinformación en Chile entre 2020 y 2025, utilizando como marco teórico principal el modelo de múltiples flujos, complementado por enfoques de redes

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de políticas públicas y perspectivas de formación de agenda. A través del análisis documental de proyectos de ley, decretos presidenciales y actas legislativas, se identifica una configuración peculiar de la *primeval soup* chilena, caracterizada por propuestas incrementales, encuadres conflictivos y tensiones institucionales significativas entre los poderes Ejecutivo y Legislativo. Los resultados indican que, a pesar del aparente consenso sobre la necesidad de controlar la desinformación, persisten divergencias respecto a los instrumentos adecuados — especialmente en lo que se refiere a la definición del fenómeno y a los límites constitucionales de la actuación estatal. La ausencia de una ventana de oportunidad consolidada y la fragmentación del flujo político explican, en gran medida, la no promulgación de legislación específica durante el período analizado.

Palabras-clave: desinformación; políticas públicas; formación de agenda; Chile; regulación digital.

1. INTRODUCTION

Disinformation poses a growing challenge to modern liberal democracies, particularly due to its potential to distort public debate and undermine the integrity of electoral processes. Although the phenomenon is not new, it has taken on unprecedented dimensions with the widespread adoption of digital media and the professionalization of networks for the production and distribution of false content. There is a relative consensus in the literature that the systematic dissemination of disinformation can contribute to processes of democratic backsliding (Bennett & Livingston, 2021; Papada *et al.*, 2023).

Bennett and Livingston (2021, p. 3) define disinformation as false or distorted information intentionally disseminated to achieve political objectives such as “[...] discrediting opponents, disrupting policy debates, influencing voters, inflaming existing social conflicts, or creating a general backdrop of confusion and informational paralysis.” According to Fallis (2015) and Allcott and Gentzkow (2017), the defining feature of disinformation is its premeditated nature, making it a communication strategy aimed at manipulation. These forms of disinformation can be linked to the emergence of barriers in the formulation and implementation of public policies, potentially leading to institutional capture by interest groups.¹

In this scenario, Latin American democracies face specific vulnerabilities that make them susceptible to waves of disinformation. Unlike consolidated democracies, the region is characterized by: (i) following a pattern of democratic stagnation (Mainwaring & Pérez-Liñán, 2023); (ii) having limited access to political information (Lupu, Ramírez Bustamante & Zechmeister, 2020); (iii) exhibiting increasingly divided, confrontational, and polarized societies (Sarsfield, Moncagatta & Roberts, 2024).

Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced a trend toward autocratization, with average democracy levels in 2022 falling to their lowest since the 1990s (Papada *et al.*, 2023). Although Chile's inclusion reflects declining scores in indicators such as freedom of expression and judicial independence, rather than an imminent democratic breakdown, its situation is better characterized as institutional stress than as a trajectory toward autocracy. This regional

¹ See:

a. Adam J. Berinsky, “Rumors and Health Care Reform: Experiments in Political Misinformation”, *British Journal of Political Science* 47 (April 2017): 241–62.

b. Kathie M. d'I. Treen & Hywel T. P. Williams & Saffron J. O'Neill, 2020. “Online misinformation about climate change”, *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, John Wiley & Sons, vol. 11(5), September.

erosion may be compounded by the exploitation of racial and social divisions through disinformation on digital platforms, alongside structural vulnerabilities such as fragile institutions and heavy reliance on WhatsApp as a primary communication channel (Raderstorf & Camilleri, 2019; Papada *et al.*, 2023).

Chile, the subject of this study, still falls within the group of liberal democracies — the highest standard of democratic quality according to the V-Dem typology — but shows a trend of deterioration in the historical series spanning 2012 to 2022. Within this context, the country stands out for being the first in the region to institutionalize disinformation as a hybrid national threat through Decree No. 4 of 2020.² The decree served to complement and update Chile's national defense policy, established in 2017. It incorporated new challenges to be addressed, such as technological and cultural advancements and the need to adapt and create institutional frameworks capable of preventing, anticipating, or resolving these new problems.³

Given this context, this article seeks to answer the following question: how does the process of formulating public policies to control disinformation occur in Chile, and what are the political factors that influence the inclusion of this issue on the government's agenda? The objective is to describe and analyze what we call, following Kingdon (2003), the "*Chilean primeval soup*," with an emphasis on the political flow and the convergences and divergences among the actors involved.

We will explore the concept of the "*primeval soup*," drawn from Kingdon's work (2003), with the aim of analyzing the Chilean case and providing a theoretical account of the formation of the government agenda as an interactive process composed of the three flows outlined by the author. These are: the problem stream (social recognition of issues requiring government attention), the solution stream (development of alternatives by experts), and the political stream (dynamics of change in the political landscape). These flows interact in complex ways, mutually influencing the construction and prioritization of public agendas; in the formulation of public policies, multiple actors from different social levels interact strategically, including both traditional and non-traditional actors.

To this end, a qualitative analysis of documents — such as draft laws, enacted laws, decrees, and other regulatory instruments — was conducted. We also reviewed the minutes of legislative sessions and other sources of public information that aided in interpreting contextual relationships for the purposes of this study. It is worth noting that, to date, no public policy has been enacted in this area, but the prospective analysis seeks to understand precisely why this has not yet occurred. Conducting this research at the policy formulation stage is advantageous, therefore, because it allows for an exploration that avoids contemporary bias in cases of public policies that have already been adopted.

The article makes a theoretical contribution to the multiple streams literature. It demon-

2 "[...] esto es, actividades hostiles de origen interno o externo que combinan métodos y capacidades convencionales y no convencionales (campañas de desinformación, ciberataques, terrorismo (41), sabotaje, insurgencia, etc.), coordinadas o ejecutadas tanto por agentes estatales como otros grupos u organizaciones no estatales, manteniéndose, en general, bajo el umbral de agresión que conlleve una respuesta militar convencional por parte de los Estados afectados" (Chile, 2020). [... that is, hostile activities of internal or external origin that combine conventional and unconventional methods and capabilities (disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, terrorism (41), sabotage, insurgency, etc.), coordinated or carried out by both state actors and other non-state groups or organizations, generally remaining below the threshold of aggression that would trigger a conventional military response from the affected states].

3 "Estas actividades hostiles tienen el potencial de dañar la población e infraestructura crítica, desestabilizar los procesos políticos democráticos o debilitar la capacidad de respuesta de un Estado frente a amenazas a su soberanía, integridad territorial o independencia política." (Chile, 2020). [These hostile activities have the potential to harm the population and critical infrastructure, destabilize democratic political processes, or weaken a state's capacity to respond to threats to its sovereignty, territorial integrity, or political independence].

trates that solution stream fragmentation can itself function as a structural barrier to policy window consolidation. This barrier operates independently of the absence of a focusing event or an entrepreneur. When the solution stream is divided across incommensurable regulatory frames and the political stream is simultaneously polarized and constitutionally constrained, entrepreneurial coupling becomes structurally impeded regardless of individual effort. This finding extends Kingdon's (2003) framework by specifying the conditions under which the primeval soup remains persistently unsettled and complements Cairney and Jones's (2016) call for greater specification of the mechanisms that block stream convergence.

Finally, this article is structured as follows: the second section presents the theoretical framework and methodological procedures; the third section analyzes the context of disinformation in Chilean society and describes the regulatory instruments examined; the fourth section discusses the political developments surrounding Decree No. 12 of 2023; the fifth section presents the analytical discussion; and the sixth section presents the conclusions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. The Multiple Streams Model and Agenda-Setting

According to Kingdon (2003), the formation of the government agenda is a complex process that unfolds through the interaction of three fundamental streams. The first of these is the problem stream, which emerges when certain social issues come to be recognized as problems requiring government attention, influenced by indicators, significant events, and feedback from society. In parallel, the stream of solutions develops, where communities of experts work on developing alternatives and proposals that do not always directly correspond to specific problems but compete with one another in a dynamic environment of debates and formulations. The third element is the political stream, which encompasses changes in the political landscape, the national mood, shifts in the composition of political elites, and transitions between governments (Kingdon, 2003).

In this dynamic scenario, special moments known as "windows of opportunity" arise. These are critical and generally unpredictable periods in which the three streams converge. When they do, favorable conditions emerge for certain issues to rise to the top of the government agenda and enable policy adoption. It is within this context that public policy entrepreneurs operate. These are strategic actors who invest their own resources and capitalize on windows of opportunity to connect the three streams and promote their proposed solutions. They act as bridges between problems, solutions, and the political environment. In doing so, they catalyze the agenda-setting process and eventually capitalize politically on the success of their efforts (Kingdon, 2003).

However, agenda-setting is non-linear in nature and depends, in part, on both the issues demanded by society and those offered by the government. Lindblom (1980) argued that the influence of the issues offered would arise through indoctrination or competition among interested parties. Thus, the policy-making process does not appear to be predictable. Policy emerges from an unordered, complex, and uncertain process. It resembles a network of forces with no clear beginning and no definitive end. This process collectively produces what we call public policy (Lindblom, 1980; Souza, 2006).⁴

⁴ The incremental model, proposed by Lindblom (1980), posits that policies are developed through small adjustments (gradual changes) and that decisions are based on past experiences.

In this sense, Kingdon's model will be complemented by the public policy networks approach of Boussaguet *et al.* (2021), particularly regarding the analysis of actors and their configurations. These authors distinguish between two types of networks: thematic networks (*réseaux thématiques*), characterized by broad participation, low interdependence, and competition in the public sphere; and public policy communities (*communautés de politiques publiques*), formed by small decision-making circles with high interdependence and some degree of secrecy.

This addition is justified because Kingdon's model, while robust in explaining the temporal dynamics of agenda-setting, provides less detail regarding the configurations and interactions among the multiple actors involved in the process. The typology proposed by Boussaguet, Jacquot, and Ravinet (2021) allows us to identify not only the classic actors (multilevel government, public administration, and interest groups) but also atypical actors and their strategies of coordination, arrangements, cooperation, and conflict. This is because, in the formulation of public policy, there are multiple participants from different levels of society. These may include citizens, interest groups, legislators, members of the legal community, party elites, scientists, and other experts. According to Boussaguet *et al.* (2021), these actors may adopt strategic behaviors in response to the formulation of the problem.

Additionally, we will incorporate Knill and Tosun's (2020) perspective on agenda-setting as a complex and dynamic process that marks the beginning of the public policy cycle. The authors emphasize that not all issues make it onto the political agenda, requiring a combination of factors such as the mobilization of relevant actors, windows of opportunity, and the social construction of the problem. Knill and Tosun (2020) highlight that policy formulation is not a purely technical process but fundamentally political, where different interests and values are negotiated and balanced, considering aspects such as technical feasibility, costs, expected benefits, and potential impacts.

The authors also highlight the importance of considering aspects such as technical feasibility, costs, expected benefits, and possible impacts of the proposed alternatives during this phase of the public policy cycle (Knill & Tosun, 2020). In the analytical dimension, Boussaguet, Jacquot, and Ravinet (2020) consider various aspects, such as the actors involved, institutions, sociopolitical contexts, and international influences. These are analyzed through different methodological perspectives, such as the cognitive approach, network analysis, the multiple-stream model, and the international comparative perspective.

The public policy cycle is structured around key elements that include the setting of the government agenda, policy formulation, implementation, evaluation, and processes of institutional transformation and learning. This cycle faces significant contemporary challenges, such as globalization, the interdependence of policies, the growing complexity of public problems, the need for greater social participation, and multilevel governance (Boussaguet *et al.*, 2020).

2.2. Public Policy Networks and Actors

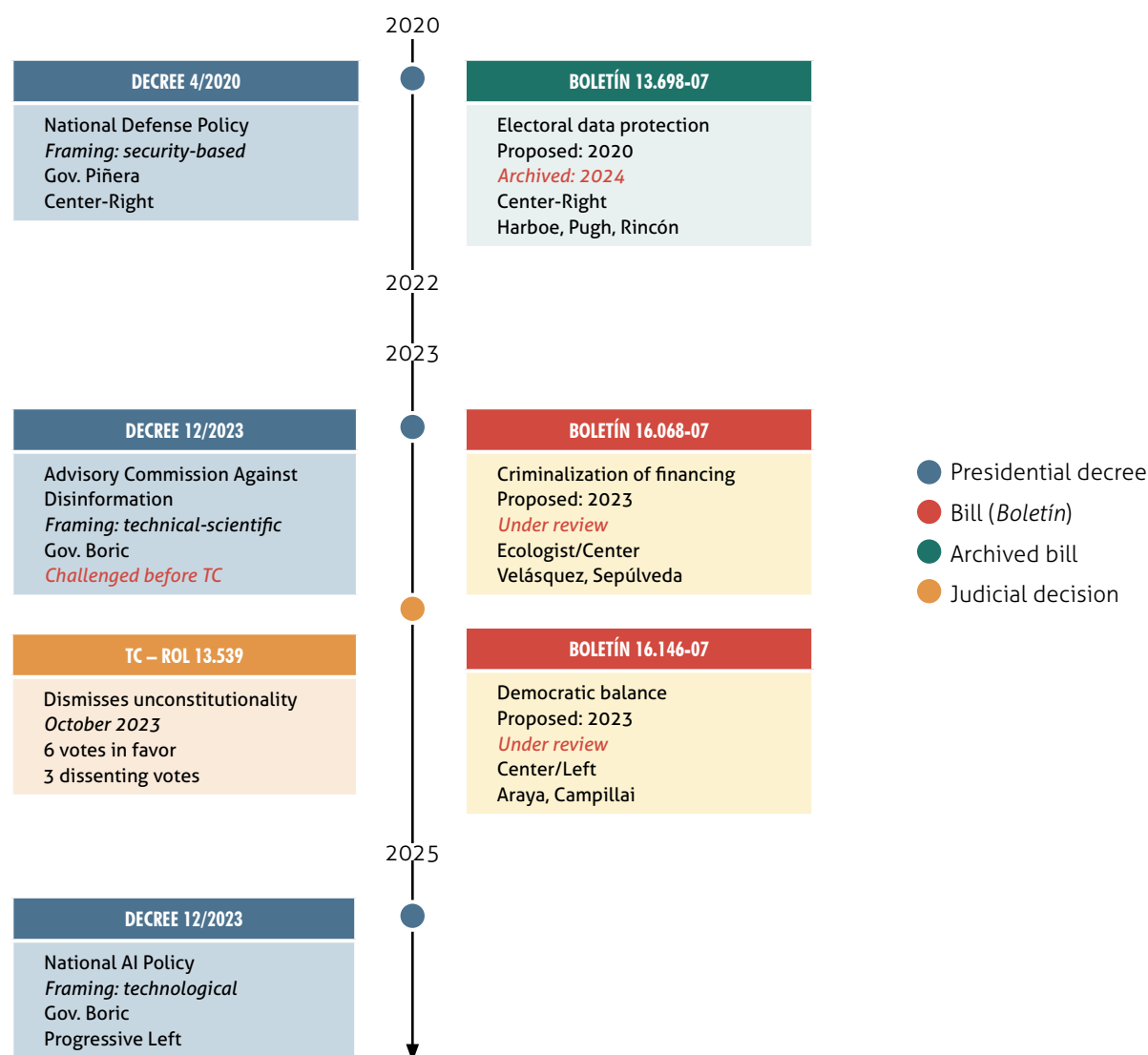
As outlined in the previous section, the analytical framework integrates Boussaguet *et al.*'s (2021) network typology to characterize the actors in Chile's disinformation policy arena. This typology distinguishes between two configurations. Thematic networks are broad, characterized by low interdependence, and competitive. Policy communities, by contrast, are small, highly interdependent, and relatively closed. The distinction proves particularly useful for assessing why entrepreneurial coupling has repeatedly failed. In a thematic network, no actor commands the centrality needed to broker a shared solution across competing frames. This network condition interacts with the MSF's political stream in ways that deepen, rather than merely reflect, ideological fragmentation.

Knill and Tosun (2020) underscore that policy formulation is not a purely technical process. It is fundamentally political, shaped by competing interests, institutional feasibility constraints, and the social construction of the problem. These dimensions are especially salient in the Chilean case. The absence of a consensual legal definition of “disinformation” reflects not a technical gap but a political one: different actor coalitions have invested in incompatible definitional frames, each privileging a different regulatory instrument.

2.3. Methodological Procedures

The study adopts a qualitative approach of a descriptive-analytical nature, structured as a single case study of Chile’s disinformation policymaking process between 2020 and 2025 (see Figure 1). Documentary analysis forms the central empirical axis, encompassing bills (*boletines*), legislative minutes, presidential decrees, and decisions of the Constitutional Court. The units of analysis include: *Boletín* (Bill) 13.698-07 (2020), *Boletín* (Bill) 16.068-07 (2023), *Boletín* (Bill) 16.146-07 (2023), Decree No. 4 (2020), Decree No. 12 (2023), and Decree No. 12 (2025).

Figure 1. Legislative and institutional timeline of disinformation policy in Chile (2020–2025)



Source: elaborated by the author based on documentary analysis of bills, presidential decrees, and legislative records (2020–2025).

Process tracing is employed as the guiding analytical strategy, following the theory-testing variant as formalized by Beach and Pedersen (2013), complemented by Collier (2011) and Mahoney (2012). In this modality, a causal mechanism is first deduced from existing theory and then subjected to empirical scrutiny: the goal is not to generate a new causal account but to assess whether observable evidence confirms that the constituent parts of the theoretically derived mechanism are present in the case under study.

The causal mechanism tested in this article is derived from Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework (2003) and takes the following composite form: (1) the fragmentation of the solution stream (produced by competing epistemic communities operating with incommensurable frames) prevents a dominant policy alternative from emerging; (2) this fragmentation raises the coordination costs faced by potential policy entrepreneurs, rendering them unable to couple the three streams simultaneously; (3) in the absence of successful entrepreneurial coupling, the political stream's ideological polarization and executive-legislative jurisdictional conflict neutralize any partial opening that might otherwise constitute a window of opportunity; (4) the joint operation of these conditions structurally impedes the consolidation of a policy window, explaining the non-enactment of specific legislation during the period under analysis.

The operationalization of each mechanism component followed an explicit mapping between theoretical categories and empirical indicators. The problem stream was traced through focusing events that progressively institutionalized disinformation as a public concern. The solution stream was operationalized through the three bills and two thematic decrees, each treated as a competing alternative circulating within the primeval soup.

The political stream was reconstructed through the composition of sponsoring coalitions, the ideological positioning of legislators, the Boric administration's executive strategy, and the constitutional challenge to Decree No. 12/2023. The absence of a consolidated window of opportunity was assessed by the failure of any entrepreneurial attempt to couple the three streams into a durable legislative solution during the period under study.

A note on the analytical scope of the MSF application is warranted here. The model is sometimes criticized for being so flexible that it can be applied to virtually any policymaking process — finding three streams, a primeval soup, and entrepreneurs in every case (Cairney & Jones, 2016). This article avoids that risk in two ways. First, the causal mechanism is specified in advance. It is then tested against observable evidence rather than being simply illustrated by it. The goal is to confirm or disconfirm whether each component is traceable in the Chilean record: frame fragmentation, elevated coordination costs, a neutralized political stream, and failed coupling.

Second, the analysis does not merely attach MSF labels to Chilean events; it uses the framework to generate a specific prediction — that the solution stream's fragmentation would block coupling even in the presence of multiple entrepreneurs and a receptive problem stream — and then assesses whether the documented sequence of events is consistent with that prediction. The Chilean case is thus used to test a particular configuration of the model, not to demonstrate that the model applies.

3. DISINFORMATION IN CHILE: SOCIAL CONTEXT AND REGULATORY INSTRUMENTS

3.1. The Phenomenon of Disinformation in Chilean Society

Disinformation has evolved from a marginal phenomenon into a systemic threat to democracy, characterized by the monetization of online attention and the professionalization of networks producing false content (Karpf, 2021). Cross-national evidence indicates that disinformation campaigns tend to intensify two to three years before episodes of autocratization (Sato, Wiebrecht & Lindberg, 2023). This pattern applies to the broader Latin American context but should not be read as predictive for Chile, which retains its classification as a liberal democracy.

The Chilean case is better understood as one of institutional stress and democratic erosion in specific indicators rather than as a trajectory toward regime change. In this context, Valenzuela, Halpern, and Miranda (2019) identified a democratic paradox specific to Chile. While social media fosters civic participation, it simultaneously facilitates the circulation of false information. Valenzuela, Halpern, and Araneda (2022) further documented a feedback loop: belief in false information reduces trust in professional media, increasing susceptibility to disinformation in subsequent periods.

Furthermore, the mass publication and sharing of false or distorted content can contribute to the widespread discrediting of once-traditional information sources, undermining trust in institutions and professional media outlets. Mistrust in traditional sources and institutions has likewise driven substantial changes in news consumption patterns (Jiménez-Yañez, 2020; Irarrazaval & Cruz, 2023). Low trust in traditional media is associated with the search for information on alternative channels, such as digital platforms. Facebook and Twitter, among others, have become key sources of news on public affairs for large segments of the population.

Rodríguez-Virgili, Serrano-Puche, and Fernández (2021), through focus groups, found that Chileans harbor a high level of distrust in traditional media and rely heavily on social media as their primary source of information. Despite this preference for alternative channels, participants demonstrated an awareness of the need to verify sources and compare information, highlighting a growing concern about the quality of the content they consume.

Longitudinal evidence from Chile further nuances these findings. Valenzuela *et al.* (2022) found that individuals who believed false information in 2017 showed lower media trust in 2018 and higher susceptibility to disinformation in 2019. The same authors caution, however, that this feedback loop is weaker than commonly assumed. It does not constitute a self-reinforcing downward spiral. Valenzuela (2024) adds that algorithms create opaque information environments. Yet most Chilean users retain awareness of how these mechanisms shape the content they consume.

3.2. The Bills

The bills reviewed to date are from 2020, the year in which disinformation was declared a hybrid national threat. There are, however, discussions and bills dating back to 2018. Among the three bills analyzed, one was shelved by the Senate and two have not yet been reviewed by the Senate Committee on Constitution, Legislation, Justice, and Rules.

The first bill to be analyzed is Bill (*Boletín*) No. 13.698-07, proposed in 2020 by Senators Felipe Harboe Bascuñán of the Partido por la Democracia (Party for Democracy), Kenneth Peter Pugh Olavarría (independent), and Ximena Rincón González of the Partido Demócratas (Democratic Party). All three are positioned on the center-right of the ideological spectrum. The bill's authors argue that the deliberate dissemination of false information can distort public debate, manipu-

late voters' opinions, and undermine the legitimacy of electoral processes.

The bill amends Law No. 19,628 on the Protection of Privacy and Organic Constitutional Law No. 18.700 on Popular Votes and Elections, establishing strict limitations on access to and use of personal data by political parties in electoral contexts. It also amends Law No. 19.733 on Freedom of Opinion and Information, introducing sanctions for deliberate propagation of false news capable of influencing electoral processes or political debate.

The bill also provides for monitoring and verification tools to ensure the integrity of democratic debate. It was shelved by the Senate in 2024 under Article 36 bis of the Senate Rules of Procedure, which provides for automatic shelving when a committee fails to rule within two years (Chile, 2025). The proposal establishes clear responsibilities for political actors and the media regarding the verification and dissemination of information, providing for sanctions in cases of deliberate propagation of false news that could influence electoral processes or political debate.

The second bill (*Boletín*) No. 16.068-07 was proposed in 2023 by Senators Esteban Velásquez Núñez and Alejandra Sepúlveda Orbenes, both members of the ecologically oriented Federación Regionalista Verde Social (Green Social Regionalist Federation). The bill seeks to address the financing of disinformation through criminal law.

Bill (*Boletín*) No. 16.068-07 proposes significant amendments to the Chilean Penal Code, specifically aiming to create a criminal offense that penalizes the financing of the creation, dissemination, and promotion of fake news or disinformation. The legislative proposal seeks to fill a significant gap in the current legal framework by establishing specific legal mechanisms to hold accountable not only those who create and disseminate disinformation but primarily the agents who finance these activities.

The bill establishes a framework of penalties that considers the severity and scope of the financed disinformation, as well as the impact it has on society. The proposed amendments to the Penal Code include the specific criminalization of the offense of financing disinformation, establishing clear criteria for its characterization and providing for penalties proportional to the severity of the conduct. It is currently under consideration in the Senate, awaiting review by the Committee on Constitution, Legislation, Justice, and Rules.

The third and final bill addressing disinformation was introduced in 2023 by Senator Pedro Araya, an independent who previously belonged to the Demócrata Cristiano [Christian Democratic Party], and Senator Fabiola Campillai, an independent with a history of political activism linked to the progressive movement who identifies ideologically with the left. Bill (*Boletín*) No. 16.146-07 proposes substantial amendments to Law No. 19.733 on Freedom of Opinion and Information and the Practice of Journalism.

It aims to update existing legislation to address contemporary challenges related to the spread of false information, establishing clear definitions of what constitutes disinformation and creating specific mechanisms for its identification and control. The proposal maintains respect for freedom of expression and the press as a fundamental principle but introduces elements of accountability and verification procedures aimed at ensuring higher quality and reliability in the information circulated in the media.

The proposed amendments to Law No. 19,733 include the implementation of new procedures for verifying information, the establishment of clear criteria for identifying false content, and mechanisms for retraction when necessary. The bill, which is currently under consideration, recognizes the complexity of the contemporary information environment and seeks to strike a balance between freedom of expression and responsibility in the dissemination of information, establishing stricter standards for the media and communications professionals. For a better overview of the bills examined in this section, see Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of bills and framings

BILL	PROPOSERS	PARTY AFFILIATION	SPECTRUM	FRAMING	APPROACH	LEGAL FRAMEWORK	STATUS
13.698-07 (2020)	Harboe, Pugh, Rincón	PPD / Independent / Democrats	Center-Right	Electoral data protection and electoral integrity	Preventive; international data protection standards	Laws No. 19.628, 18.700 and 19.733	Archived (2024)
16.068-07 (2023)	Velásquez, Sepúlveda	Federación Regionalista Verde Social	Ecologist/Center	Criminalization and criminal accountability	Punitive; focus on financing	Penal Code	Under review
16.146-07 (2023)	Araya, Campillai	Independents	Center/Left	Democratic balance and media accountability	Regulatory; proportionality	Law No. 19.733	Under review

Source: elaborated by the author based on documentary analysis of bills submitted to the Chilean National Congress (2020–2023).

Taken together, the bills and decrees analyzed reflect distinct institutional logics and competing regulatory frames — a condition whose analytical implications for the formation of the Chilean government agenda are developed in the discussion section.

3.3. Presidential Decrees

In parallel with the legislative proposals, the Executive Branch has issued three decrees that outline the contours of a public policy on disinformation. Chile's National Defense Policy, established by Decree No. 4 of 2020, constitutes a significant milestone in the institutional recognition of disinformation as a threat to national security. This document, drafted by the Ministry of National Defense through the Undersecretariat of Defense, introduces, for the first time and in a systematic manner, the issue of disinformation campaigns in the context of contemporary hybrid threats. Thus, this inclusion reflects a paradigm shift in the concept of national security, recognizing that both state and non-state actors can employ disinformation strategies to destabilize democratic processes and undermine trust in public institutions.

Furthermore, the decree emphasizes the need to develop specific capabilities to address threats in the information domain. Among these, disinformation stands out as one of the challenges requiring a coordinated state response. In this regard, guidelines are established to strengthen cyber defense and counterintelligence capabilities, as protection against disinformation campaigns is essential for preserving national sovereignty and the integrity of the democratic process in today's digital environment.

Complementing these initiatives, Decree No. 12 of 2023, issued by Chile's Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge, and Innovation, established a Ministerial Advisory Commission specifically focused on controlling disinformation on a temporary basis. This measure represents a significant institutional step forward in addressing this contemporary challenge.

The "Advisory Commission Against Disinformation" was conceived as a technical advisory body, bringing together experts from various fields of knowledge, including scientists, academics, and professionals with expertise in technology, communication, and social sciences. The main objective of this commission is to develop strategies based on scientific evidence to effectively control the spread of disinformation.

To this end, the Commission's main responsibilities included advising the Ministry on the development of public policies and strategies aimed at controlling disinformation, promoting digital and media literacy, fostering scientific research on the topic, and proposing verification and fact-checking mechanisms. In addition, the decree established an organizational structure that facilitates intersectoral collaboration and the integration of different scientific and technological perspectives, recognizing that controlling disinformation requires a multidisciplinary and coordinated approach.

In a more recent decree, published in January 2025, Chile's National Artificial Intelligence Policy, updated by Decree No. 12 of 2025, addresses disinformation along two axes. In the first pillar, it recognizes disinformation as one of the critical challenges of the digital age, establishing guidelines for the development of Artificial Intelligence systems aimed at detecting and analyzing patterns of false information dissemination.

In the second pillar, the policy establishes parameters for the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence in controlling disinformation, acknowledging the risks inherent in the technology itself regarding the amplification or generation of false content. Thus, it proposes the creation of governance and oversight mechanisms to ensure that AI tools developed for this purpose operate within well-defined ethical principles. These mechanisms must respect fundamental rights and promote transparency in verification and fact-checking processes, ensuring that the control of disinformation occurs in a reliable manner and in line with democratic values.

Furthermore, the document emphasizes the need to implement AI-based methodologies for the automated identification of potentially misleading content, while ensuring the preservation of the fundamental principles of freedom of expression and access to information. Finally, the document establishes strategic guidelines for the implementation and use of Artificial Intelligence, addressing aspects such as ethics in technological development, data protection, information security, and the socioeconomic impact of emerging technologies. Table 2 summarizes the decrees and their legal frameworks, followed by Table 3 with a comparative analysis of the regulatory logic:

Table 2. Summary of decrees and framings — decrees related to disinformation (Chile)

DECREE No. 04/2020	
Object	National Defense Policy
Proponent	Ministry of National Defense
Main Framing	(i) National security; (ii) Hybrid threat; (iii) Sovereignty and defense
Approach	(i) Defensive and reactive; (ii) Cyber defense; (iii) Institutional protection
Government	Conservative (security-based). State as protector.
Head of State	Sebastián Piñera (2018–2022) — Center-Right
Frameworks	National defense
Institutional	Defensive policy

Table 2. Summary of decrees and framings — decrees related to disinformation (Chile) (Continuation)

DECREE No. 12/2023	
Object	Advisory Commission Against Disinformation
Proponent	Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation
Main Framing	(i) Technical-scientific; (ii) Social problem; (iii) Multidisciplinary
Approach	(i) Collaborative; (ii) Digital literacy; (iii) Fact-checking
Government	Progressive (technocratic). Multidisciplinary vision.
Head of State	Gabriel Boric (2022–2026) — Progressive Left
Frameworks	Scientific vision
Institutional	Advisory structures
DECREE No. 12/2025	
Object	National Artificial Intelligence Policy
Proponent	Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation
Main Framing	(i) Technological and ethical; (ii) Digital challenge; (iii) AI governance
Approach	(i) Proactive and regulatory; (ii) Automated detection; (iii) Rights/technology balance
Government	Progressive (regulatory). State as ethical regulator.
Head of State	Gabriel Boric (2022–2026) — Progressive Left
Frameworks	Technological challenge
Institutional	Regulatory frameworks

Source: elaborated by the author based on Decrees No. 04/2020, 12/2023 and 12/2025.

Table 3. Comparative normative logic: protected interest, perceived risk, and regulatory body

INSTRUMENT	PROTECTED INTEREST	PERCEIVED RISK	REGULATORY BODY	DOMINANT FRAMING
Decree 4/2020	National sovereignty	Hostile external and internal actors	State/Armed Forces	Security-based
Boletín 13.698-07	Electoral integrity and privacy	Misuse of data by political parties	Electoral and data protection legislation	Data protection
Boletín 16.068-07	Public order and democratic debate	Hidden financiers of disinformation	Criminal justice system	Criminalization
Boletín 16.146-07	Freedom of expression and informational quality	Irresponsible media and false content	Self-regulation + legal accountability	Democratic balance
Decree 12/2023	Informational quality and public trust	Diffuse and unstructured disinformation	Experts and scientific community	Technical-scientific
Decree 12/2025	Digital rights and freedom of expression	Algorithms and AI as amplifiers	Technological governance and ethical regulation	Technological-ethical

Source: elaborated by the author based on documentary analysis of policy instruments (2020–2025).

4. INSTITUTIONAL TENSIONS: THE CASE OF DECREE No. 12/2023

The then-President of the Senate, Senator Juan Antonio Coloma Correa, a member of the Unión Demócrata Independiente Party situated on the right of the ideological spectrum, filed a petition with the Constitutional Court regarding the decree in question, arguing that it was unconstitutional. The central basis of the petition rests on Article 46 of the Chilean Constitution, which establishes the Senate's participation in the legislative process as a fundamental prerogative.

This constitutional provision, in accordance with other fundamental principles, stipulates that matters of this nature must necessarily be submitted by the Upper House (Senate) through a bill. The petition argues that the issuance of the administrative decree constitutes a violation of the principle of representative democracy, as it usurps legislative powers constitutionally assigned to the Senate.

Furthermore, the petition is also based on a violation of the principle of legal reservation, with specific emphasis on the violation of Article 19, paragraph 12, subparagraph 1 of the Chilean Constitution. The central argument maintains that regulating matters concerning the fundamental freedoms of opinion and information through a mere administrative instrument constitutes a violation of constitutional provisions:

It notes that a simple supreme decree cannot establish a system whose purpose is to create parameters or conditions for the exercise of the freedom to express opinions and inform, and whose central focus — “disinformation” — corresponds to a concept not provided for in any law, under the pretext of exercising its regulatory power to implement generic laws entirely unrelated to this phenomenon, such as the organic statutes of the aforementioned ministries (Constitutional Court, 2023, p. 8 [translated by the author]).⁵

According to Senator Juan Antonio's interpretation, the regulation, by its nature and impact on fundamental rights, necessarily requires the ordinary legislative process, through deliberation within the National Congress, specifically via a law requiring a qualified quorum, thus representing the highest expression of democratic sovereignty.

During the proceedings, the Comptroller General of the Republic, Ms. María Soledad Frindt Rada, noted the absence of legal provisions governing the creation of advisory committees. To that end, she argued that such a committee serves an advisory role rather than an executive one and that the advisory nature of committees is part of the public administration's toolkit:

[...] an advisory commission is an expression of collegiality in the public administration; it consists of the creation, by administrative act, of a commission that only advises, counsels, or assists the decision-making body, as it is unable to exercise public powers (Constitutional Court, 2023, p. 16).⁶

In addition to the statement by the Comptroller General of the Republic, President Gabriel

5 “nota que no puede un simple decreto supremo inaugurar un sistema cuyo objeto es crear parámetros o condicionamientos para el ejercicio de la libertad de emitir opinión e informar y cuyo eje central — la “desinformación” — corresponde a un concepto que no se encuentra previsto en ley alguna, bajo el pretexto de ejercer su potestad reglamentaria de ejecución sobre leyes genéricas alejadas del todo de este fenómeno, como son los cuerpos orgánicos de los ministerios ya aludidos” (Tribunal Constitucional, 2023, p.8).

6 [...] una comisión asesora es una manifestación de colegialidad en la Administración Pública, consiste en la creación por acto administrativo de una comisión que solo asesora, aconseja o asiste al órgano decisor, pues está imposibilitada de ejercer atribuciones públicas (Tribunal Constitucional, 2023, p. 16).

Boric Font requested the rejection of the petition before the Constitutional Court, arguing that the petition filed by the Senate contains significant inconsistencies with the established case law of the Constitutional Court, particularly regarding the parameters established for the analysis of constitutionality.

The argument put forward by the Senator contradicts fundamental jurisprudential principles, notably regarding the need for a categorical specification of the constitutional defect and the distinction between issues of constitutionality and legality. Furthermore, the document emphasizes that the petition ignores the analysis of legality already conducted by the Comptroller General of the Republic during the registration process for Supreme Decree No. 12.

This prior assessment of legality by the Comptroller General's Office constitutes a significant basis for dismissing the complaints filed by the requesting Chamber, since the review of legality has already been effectively carried out by the competent authority. This argument is based on the principle of reasonable deference and on the delimitation of the Constitutional Court's own jurisdiction, which must not supersede analyses of administrative merit or matters of mere legality already adequately examined by the competent bodies.

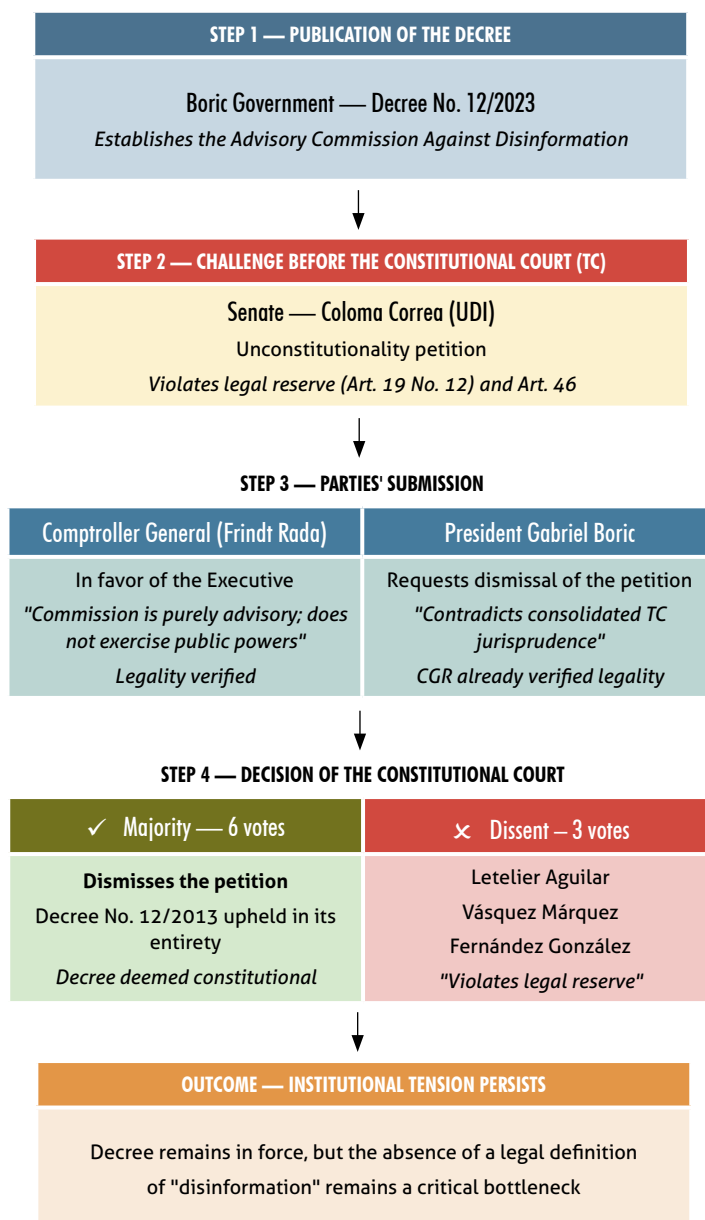
The Constitutional Court, in its final decision, ruled to dismiss the petition for unconstitutionality filed against Supreme Decree No. 12/2023 of the Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge, and Innovation. The decree in question, which establishes the Advisory Commission Against Disinformation and was published in the Official Gazette on June 20, 2023, was upheld in its entirety, as it was found to be in accordance with current constitutional provisions.

However, Justices Letelier Aguilar, Vásquez Márquez, and Fernández González issued three dissenting opinions. These justices, in the minority, ruled that the motion challenging constitutionality, filed by the President of the Senate, was admissible, signaling a constitutional interpretation that differed from that of the majority regarding the limits of the Executive Branch's authority in creating mechanisms designed to control disinformation.

The justices based their decision primarily on a violation of the principle of legal reservation, arguing that the creation of a commission with the authority to address issues related to freedom of expression and information must necessarily be established by law, not by administrative decree. The justices emphasized that, pursuant to Article 19, No. 12 of the Chilean Constitution, matters affecting fundamental rights require legislative deliberation, particularly through a law passed by a qualified majority, and cannot be regulated by a mere act of the Executive Branch.

The dissenting justices argued that the decree overstepped the constitutional authority of Congress, especially the Senate, whose legislative role was ignored. They further argued that the creation of a commission with the potential to impact fundamental freedoms through an administrative decree not only violated the principle of separation of powers but also undermined the democratic deliberative process that should take place within the Legislative Branch. See Figure 2 below for a clearer visualization of the process flows described in this section.

Figure 2. Constitutional dispute over Decree No. 12/2023: institutional process and decision of the Constitutional Court



Source: elaborated by the author based on TC Rol No. 14.539 (2023) and Decree No. 12/2023.

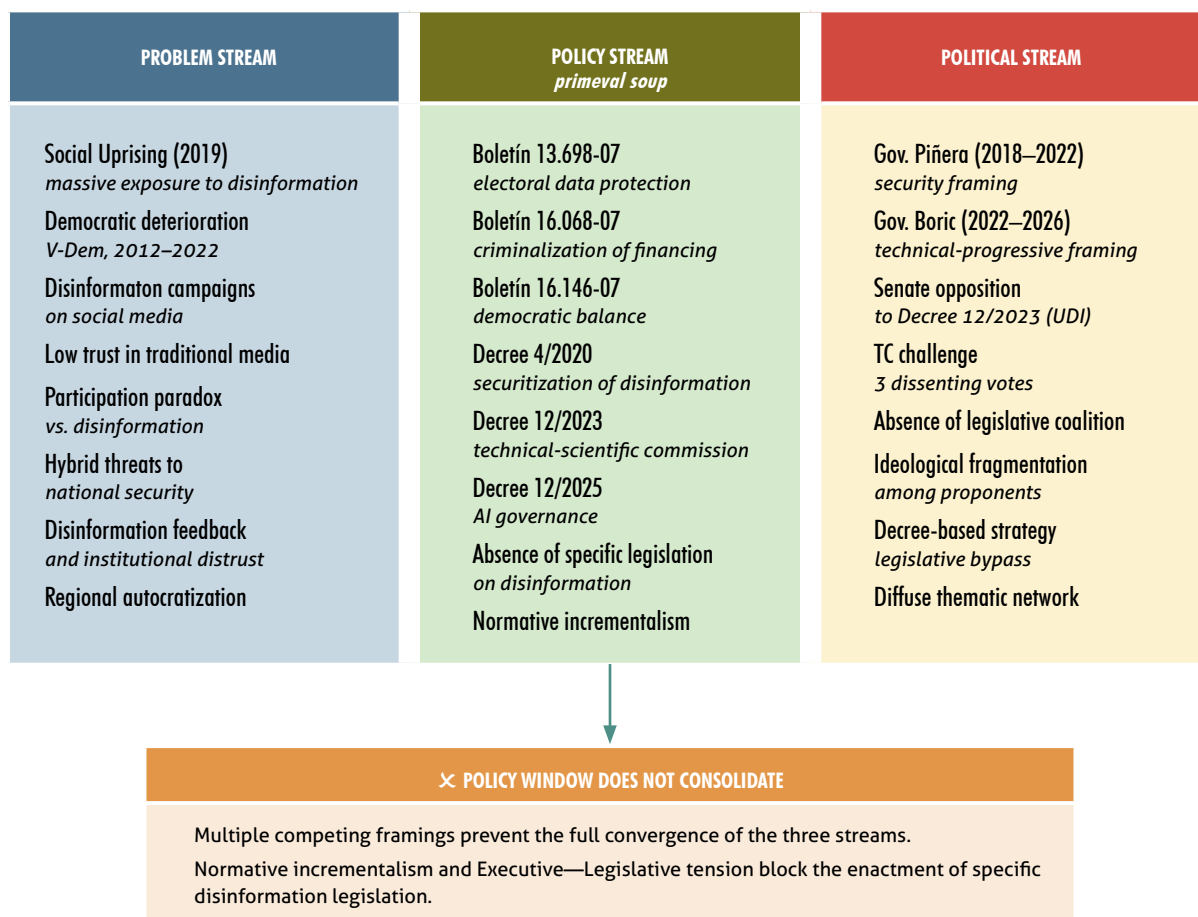
5. DISCUSSION: THE CHILEAN PRIMEVAL SOUP IN THE LIGHT OF THE MULTIPLE-FLOW MODEL

An analysis of the regulatory instruments and political developments examined in the preceding sections reveals a distinctive configuration of the Chilean primeval soup, characterized by three mutually reinforcing features. Before detailing them, it is worth making explicit the analytical logic of the MSF application and the causal mechanism it generates. The problem stream in the Chilean case is constituted by the progressive institutionalization of disinformation.

These focusing events established the issue on the governmental radar and activated legislative attention. The solution stream is represented by the three bills and two thematic decrees

analyzed, each embodying a distinct regulatory framing competing for traction within Kingdon's (2003) primeval soup. Figure 3 summarizes the application of the Multiple Flows model to the case study.

Figure 3. Multiple Streams applied to disinformation policy in Chile (2020–2025)

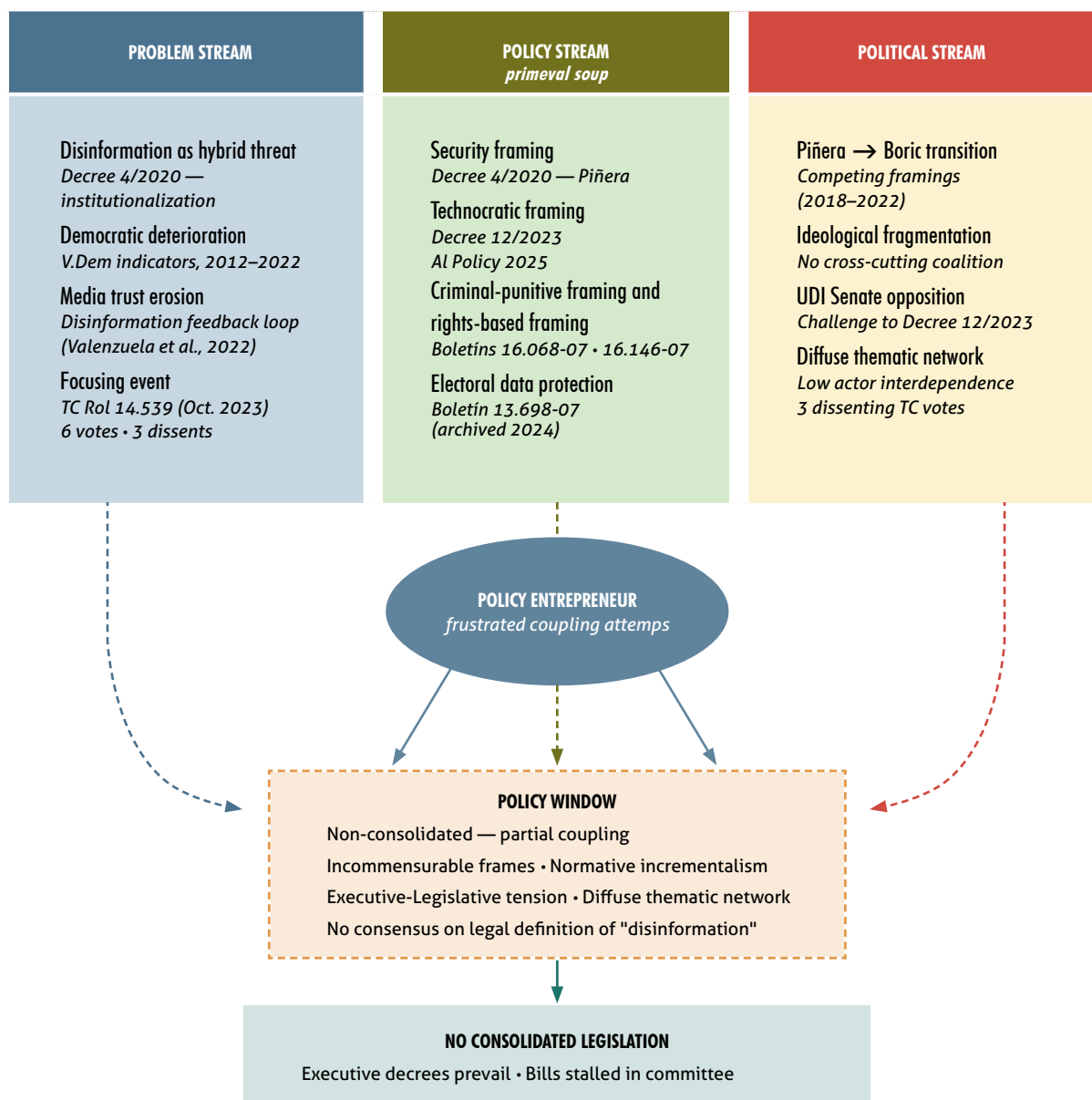


Source: elaborated by the author based on documentary analysis of bills, presidential decrees, and legislative records (2020–2025).

The political stream is shaped by three factors: the ideological fragmentation of the Chilean legislature, the Boric administration's reformist agenda encountering constitutional constraints, and the jurisdictional dispute dramatized by the challenge to Decree No. 12/2023. The analytical contribution of this framework lies in its capacity to explain a central puzzle. Despite the simultaneous presence of a recognized problem and multiple proposed solutions, no window of opportunity has consolidated. The three streams operate in parallel but have not yet converged around a shared policy design.

This result is consistent with what Cairney and Jones (2016) describe as a fundamental tension of the MSF. The model reveals the non-linearity of policymaking. Precisely because of this, it demands careful attention to the specific conditions under which coupling becomes possible. Figure 4 maps the three streams and the non-consolidated policy window identified in the Chilean case.

Figure 4. Multiple Streams Model applied to disinformation policy in Chile (2020–2025)



Source: elaborated by the author based on Kingdon (2003) and documentary of bills, presidential decrees, and legislative records (2020–2025).

The three regulatory frames that structure this competition can be summarized as follows. The security frame (Decree 4/2020) treats disinformation as a hybrid national threat and assigns responsibility to the executive and defense apparatus. The technocratic frame (Decree 12/2023; AI Policy 2025) reframes disinformation as an information integrity challenge amenable to algorithmic governance, with scientific advisory bodies as the preferred instrument.

The legislative frames divide further into a criminal-punitive variant (*Boletín 16.068-07*), which seeks to criminalize the financing of false content, and a rights-based democratic accountability variant (*Boletín 16.146-07*), which prioritizes press responsibility and freedom of expression. Each frame implies a distinct definition of the problem, a distinct set of legitimate actors, and a distinct preferred instrument — conditions that structurally impede the formation of a shared alternative within the primeval soup.

The first central feature of the Chilean case is the plurality of competing frames. The bills and decrees do not constitute a unified regulatory debate. Instead, they reflect the parallel activity of distinct epistemic communities, each operating within its own institutional logic. Academic researchers and constitutional jurists have approached disinformation through the lens of democratic and media trust. They frame the problem in terms of its systemic effects on political participation and institutional legitimacy. Empirically, they document a feedback loop: exposure to disinformation erodes trust in professional media, which in turn increases susceptibility to further disinformation (Valenzuela *et al.*, 2022).

Legislative specialists and parliamentary staff have worked within the incremental logic of amending existing statutes, particularly Law No. 19.733, without engaging the constitutional or technological dimensions raised by other communities. Their preferred vehicle is the modification of existing press law, which allows them to work within procedurally familiar terrain and avoid the qualified majority threshold that a standalone statute would require.

Technocrats within the Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge, and Innovation have approached disinformation as an information integrity challenge amenable to algorithmic governance, as reflected in Decree No. 12/2023 and the AI policy of 2025. Their community operates through scientific advisory commissions and international benchmarks rather than through legislative negotiation, producing proposals that are technically sophisticated but institutionally dependent on executive decree — precisely the instrument that proved constitutionally vulnerable.

These three communities — academic-juridical, parliamentary-incrementalist, and technocratic-executive — have circulated their preferred alternatives within distinct institutional venues, mobilized distinct networks of allies, and employed distinct definitional frames without building the cross-cutting relationships that would allow a shared solution to emerge. The absence of sustained dialogue between them is itself a structural feature of Chile's disinformation policy arena: no actor has possessed both the credibility and the institutional centrality needed to bridge the constitutional, legislative, and technological dimensions of the problem simultaneously.

Each community has generated internally coherent proposals that, when they reach the broader policy arena, prove difficult to reconcile: constitutionalists emphasize rights-based constraints on state action; legislative specialists prioritize institutional feasibility within existing legal frameworks; technocrats foreground scientific evidence and platform governance. The result is a solution stream that is rich in alternatives but fragmented across incommensurable frames.

The concept of framing employed here draws on the constructivist tradition within policy studies: as Entman (1993) argues, to frame is to select certain aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient, promoting a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, and treatment recommendation. When distinct epistemic communities operate with incommensurable frames, coordination costs rise dramatically, even in the presence of broad normative agreement on the underlying problem.

What Kingdon's concept of primeval soup captures is precisely this: proposals do not wait for problems to be defined before they begin circulating. In the Chilean case, distinct epistemic communities have developed and defended their preferred regulatory alternatives in relative isolation from one another — a condition that structurally impedes the emergence of a dominant policy alternative capable of attracting a cross-cutting coalition. This fragmentation of the solution stream — rather than any lack of ideas — is what prevents a viable legislative alternative from gaining traction.

This fragmentation of the solution stream connects directly to one of Kingdon's (2003) most

underexplored mechanisms in the Chilean case: the role of the policy entrepreneur. Kingdon argues that windows of opportunity do not open automatically — they require entrepreneurs willing to invest their political capital, expertise, and credibility to couple the three streams at the right moment. The Chilean case between 2020 and 2025 can be read, in this light, as a succession of frustrated entrepreneurship attempts.

The Boric administration acted as an executive entrepreneur when it issued Decree No. 12/2023, seeking to bypass a fragmented legislature by creating an advisory commission anchored in scientific authority rather than political consensus. The senators behind *Boletines* 16.068-07 and 16.146-07 attempted legislative entrepreneurship, each mobilizing their own framing of the problem — criminal accountability and press responsibility, respectively — to generate agenda salience.

Yet none of these actors succeeded in performing the defining function of the entrepreneur: coupling the problem stream, the solution stream, and the political stream simultaneously. The executive entrepreneur was blocked by the constitutional challenge; the legislative entrepreneurs were stalled in committee, their proposals unable to recruit cross-cutting coalitions. What this reveals is not a failure of individual actors but a structural condition: when the solution stream is fragmented across incommensurable frames, no entrepreneur can propose a single solution that resonates across all relevant audiences, and the window remains closed regardless of individual effort.

The second feature is normative incrementalism. In line with Lindblom's (1980) classical formulation, the legislative proposals analyzed mostly seek to modify existing legislation, especially Law No. 19.733, rather than create new regulatory frameworks. This incremental approach, while politically safer on sensitive issues, limits the scope of changes and may prove insufficient in the face of the complexity and speed of the digital disinformation phenomenon.

From a Kingdonian perspective, incrementalism in the solution stream is symptomatic of the absence of a dominant policy alternative: when no proposal has achieved sufficient traction to close off the debate, actors tend to hedge by attaching modest amendments to existing legislation, which are more easily defended as legally and institutionally feasible. In this sense, the very modesty of the Chilean bills — none of which proposes a standalone disinformation statute — is itself evidence that the primeval soup has not yet generated a viable, broadly accepted alternative.

The three legislative proposals under review (*Boletines* 13.698-07, 16.068-07, and 16.146-07) address electoral data protection, criminalization of financing, and democratic balance, respectively, yet none has succeeded in attracting the cross-cutting political coalition necessary to move a comprehensive bill through the Chilean Senate. The constitutional challenge to Decree No. 12/2023 further illustrates this dynamic. When the Executive attempted to bypass legislative inertia through a decree, no dominant alternative crystallized. The absence of shared definitional and normative ground between competing camps — security-oriented, criminal-punitive, and rights-based — ensured that no solution could emerge from the primeval soup.

The third feature is the tension between the executive and legislative branches. The Boric administration's strategy of advancing through executive orders reflects the perception of a potentially hostile legislature. This is a strategy consistent with what Kingdon (2003) describes as the use of the political stream by entrepreneurs who perceive a partial opening and act decisively before conditions change. The legal challenge to Decree No. 12/2023 confirms the risks of this approach and highlights that the political stream is permeated by conflicts of jurisdiction and ideological disputes that fragment the conditions necessary for the convergence of the three streams.

The Constitutional Court ruling and the three dissenting opinions illustrate a key dynamic. Executive action in constitutionally sensitive domains carries significant legitimacy costs. These costs can neutralize whatever window the entrepreneur sought to exploit. The Chilean case thus reveals a structural constraint on executive entrepreneurship in presidential systems. The legislature retains veto power not only through deliberation but through constitutional challenge. This means that an executive decree, even when legally upheld, cannot substitute for the political stream convergence that a durable policy requires.

These findings are consistent with the perspective of Boussaguet *et al.* (2021): the public policy network surrounding disinformation in Chile resembles a thematic network — broad, with low interdependence among actors — more than a consolidated policy community. This network typology is analytically significant beyond its descriptive value: it helps explain precisely why entrepreneurship has failed to produce stream coupling. In a thematic network, actors compete in the public sphere without building sustained, high-interdependence relationships that would allow a policy entrepreneur to break a shared solution.

There is no inner circle of decision-makers whose consensus could translate into binding legislative momentum. Instead, each framing camp — security-oriented, criminal-punitive, rights-based, and technocratic — operates as a semi-autonomous node. Each has its own institutional interlocutors and preferred instruments. An entrepreneur operating in this environment cannot simply connect the three streams. They must first consolidate the solution itself. This stream remains dispersed across actors who have not developed the interdependence necessary for mutual adjustment. The absence of a consensus-based legal definition of “disinformation” is the most visible symptom of this structural condition. It is not a cause but a consequence of the thematic network’s inherent fragmentation.

Taken together, the three features of the Chilean primeval soup (framing plurality, normative incrementalism, and executive-legislative tension) do not operate as isolated variables. They are mutually reinforcing within the logic of Kingdon’s own framework: the fragmentation of the solution stream forecloses the possibility of a dominant alternative emerging, which in turn makes incrementalism the only available path; meanwhile, the political stream’s ideological polarization and jurisdictional conflict neutralize the entrepreneurial efforts that might otherwise have opened a window.

What the Chilean case illustrates, therefore, is a particular configuration of the primeval soup in which the conditions for stream coupling are structurally impeded rather than merely delayed: ideas, proposals, actors, and institutional moments have all been present, yet the three streams have not aligned around a shared policy design. Whether a future focusing event will provide the external shock needed to restructure the political stream and enable entrepreneurial coupling remains an open empirical question.

6. CONCLUSION

This article analyzed the policymaking process for disinformation control in Chile between 2020 and 2025, drawing on Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Framework (2003). The Chilean primeval soup proves to be a rich and dynamic environment yet marked by fragmentation: multiple actors with distinct framings compete for attention and legitimacy, without a sufficiently broad window of opportunity having emerged for the convergence of the three streams and the enactment of specific legislation.

The findings indicate that, although a diffuse consensus exists regarding the need to address disinformation as a public problem, disagreements over the means (whether through criminal,

regulatory, or technological approaches) and over the constitutional boundaries of state intervention prevent the formation of a stable political coalition. The episode of Decree No. 12/2023 exemplifies these tensions, revealing how the political stream can both advance and block public policy initiatives.

The incremental character of the legislative proposals and the executive strategy of proceeding through decrees suggest that, in the absence of a consolidated window of opportunity, actors favorable to disinformation control have opted for partial solutions with limited institutional reach — which may prove insufficient given the pace at which the phenomenon evolves.

The article's reliance on documentary process tracing reflects a deliberate methodological choice. It is suited to the theory-testing variant of the approach (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). The formal record (bills, legislative minutes, constitutional petitions, and executive decrees) provides observable implications of the causal mechanism with institutional precision. Retrospective interviews would not improve this foundation and might compromise it through ex-post rationalization.

Future research could complement this foundation with elite interviews. These could focus on the informal dimensions of legislative negotiation and coalition-building that formal records do not capture. Such interviews would test whether the structural barriers identified here are also perceived as such by the actors involved.

Finally, the Chilean case offers a contribution to the Multiple Streams Framework literature and to the comparative study of disinformation governance. Theoretically, it demonstrates that solution stream fragmentation — when compounded by political stream polarization and executive-legislative jurisdictional conflict — can structurally prevent policy window consolidation even in the presence of a recognized problem, circulating alternatives, and active entrepreneurs.

This extends Kingdon's (2003) framework beyond its typical focus on focusing events and timing, specifying the conditions under which the primeval soup remains permanently unsettled. Substantively, it illustrates how democracies with high institutional quality may encounter significant difficulties translating problem recognition into policy response. This is particularly the case when that problem challenges established boundaries between freedom of expression, national security, and technological governance.

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