

Los Eco-Ilógicos

A look inside the sprawling online network that spreads climate misinformation to Spanish-speaking communities around the world

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Graphika



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Executive Summary

Ahead of the 2022 U.S. midterm elections, reporters, researchers, and lawmakers have sought to understand the spread of false and misleading information among U.S. Spanish-speaking communities online. These efforts have focused on topics including [immigration](#), [COVID-19](#) vaccines, and [electoral fraud](#), but relatively few have examined how the same dynamics impact Spanish-language conversations about climate change.

Green Latinos, with support from Friends of the Earth, commissioned Graphika to study how false and misleading narratives about climate change reach U.S.-based Spanish-speaking communities online. Our analysis aimed to understand how these narratives spread through the online ecosystem of Spanish-speaking Internet users, the groups and individuals who seed and disseminate them, and the tactics these actors employ.

Through this analysis, we identified a sprawling online network of users across Latin America and Spain that consistently amplify climate misinformation narratives in Spanish. While some of these accounts focus specifically on climate-related conversations, the majority promote ideologically right-wing narratives, some of which touch on climate change. Accordingly, the most influential accounts in this network are users with a libertarian or right-wing outlook who command a large, international Spanish-speaking audience across multiple social media platforms.

Through this analysis, we identified a sprawling online network of users across Latin America and Spain that consistently amplify climate misinformation narratives in Spanish.

The actors in this network appear to act primarily as an amplifying force for climate misinformation, often translating content from English-language sources rather than originating the narratives themselves. Many of the narratives we identified also overlapped with existing online conversations unrelated to climate change, such as COVID-19 misinformation or conspiracy theories about a secret ruling organization of totalitarian, global elites.

Our findings challenge previous assumptions about the online ecosystem of Spanish-speaking communities in the U.S. Earlier discussions with coalition members and our initial hypothesis assumed the existence of coherent and distinct U.S.-specific Spanish-speaking communities focused on individual topics, such as immigration, health, and climate change. Our analysis shows the reality is more complex and that Spanish-language online communities operate outside of – and across – traditional offline boundaries such as language and geography.

This report is non-exhaustive and benefited from previous studies by the academic and open-source research communities. We hope our findings can contribute to a better-informed understanding of how false and misleading information about climate change and other topics spread among Spanish-speaking communities online. Below is a summary of our key findings:

- 1 Our Twitter-based network analysis did not identify a coherent network of U.S.-based accounts propagating false and misleading climate narratives in Spanish. Instead, the map revealed an international network of distinct geographical communities across Latin America and Spain. Some of the accounts that comprise these communities focus on climate change conversations, but the majority focus more generally on ideologically right-wing narratives.

Spanish- language
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- ② Actors spreading Spanish-language climate misinformation in this network can be sorted into two categories: those with a libertarian or right-wing outlook that command a large, international audience across multiple social media platforms and those that focus specifically on climate misinformation but have smaller followings.
- ③ Both groups of actors use a range of tactics, techniques, and procedures to spread climate misinformation online. These include translating material from English-language sources, coordinated content sharing, recruiting like-minded users to grow their networks, leveraging coded language to avoid content moderation, and funneling users to alternative platforms.
- ④ The network spreads a variety of climate misinformation narratives. These narratives often blend into one another and overlap with conversations unrelated to climate change, including COVID-19 misinformation and pre-existing conspiracy theories. Prominent examples range from claims that climate change is insignificant or a hoax to assertions that “global elites” engineered the climate crisis to consolidate government power and reap financial rewards.

Methodology & Network Analysis

Methodology

To capture the U.S. Spanish-speaking communities involved in conversations of climate denialism and misinformation on Twitter, we created a map based on content-sharing patterns. First, we collected four climate misinformation key terms and one hashtag that appeared in a high volume of tweets delivering conspiratorial content denying or questioning the realities of climate change. These terms were “alarmismo climático” [climate alarmism] “manipulación climática” [climate manipulation], “fraude climático” [climate fraud], “engaño climático” [climate

↓ Graphika’s network [map](#) of Spanish-language accounts engaging with climate misinformation on Twitter



hoax], and #geoingeniería [#geoengineering]. We used these terms to surface influential accounts that engaged with them and then used those accounts to create a Twitter network map of their followers.

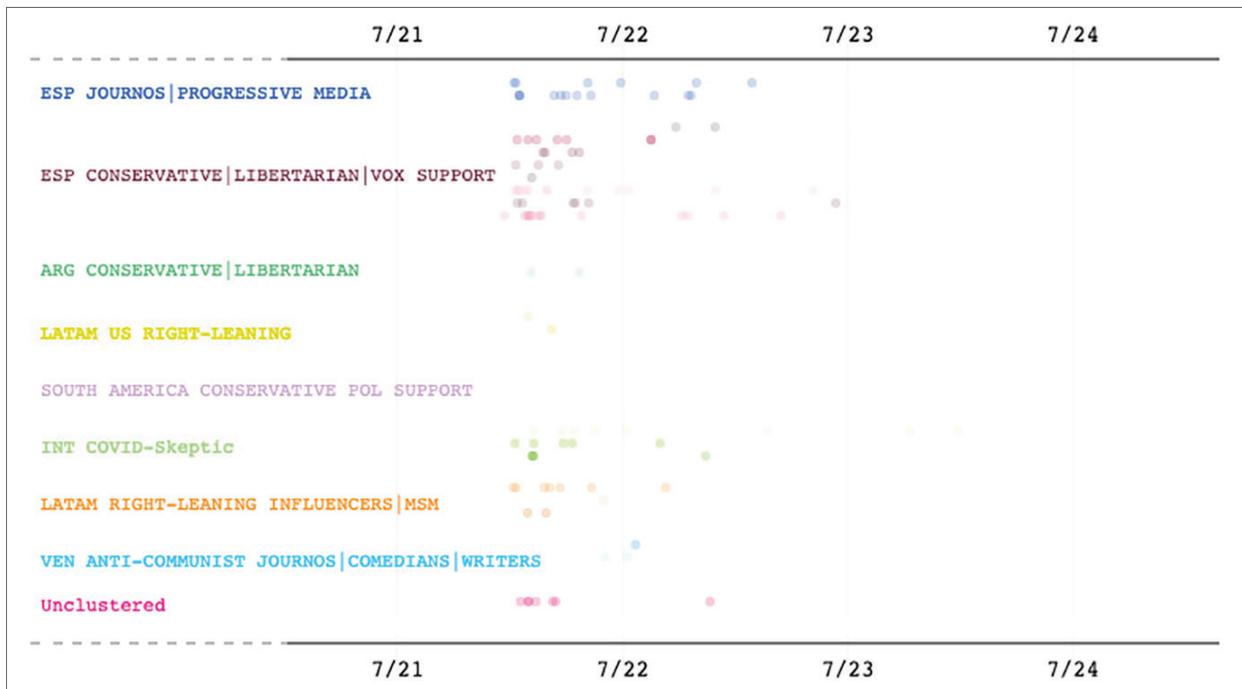
The resulting product was a small map of 2,080 accounts divided into eight geographically distinct Spanish-speaking groups that consistently espoused right-wing ideologies. The map's diffuse nature suggests there is no core community of accounts exclusively focused on sharing climate denialism and misinformation content in Spanish. Instead, disparate accounts across countries with significant Spanish-speaking populations engage with a broader right-wing agenda that includes a range of climate change misinformation.

The map also provided further insight into additional key terms used with specific narratives dismissing the seriousness of climate change and opposing climate action. Using these additional key terms and those we used to build the map, we surfaced related content on other platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, to understand how these narratives and the actors who spread them manifest beyond Twitter.

Network Analysis

The Twitter-based network map of Spanish-language accounts engaging with climate misinformation reveals an international landscape of geographically distinct Spanish-speaking groups that overwhelmingly espouse right-wing ideologies. This international network does not necessarily seek to influence Spanish-speaking audiences in the U.S., and neither are many of the groups focused solely on climate change narratives. However, the international breadth of the network and the links between communities, including diaspora communities based in the U.S. and those in their countries of origin, make the network an essential conduit of Spanish-language climate misinformation to U.S.-based Spanish-speaking audiences.

The accounts and groups not focused specifically on climate misinformation often engage with the topic in response to news events.



The accounts and groups not focused specifically on climate misinformation often engage with the topic in response to news events, such as extreme weather events or government announcements about policies to fight climate change. For example, activity across the network spiked in late July this year when a fire [raged](#) near Ateca in Aragon, Spain, for five days. An [article](#) reporting that a company working on reforestation projects in the area started the fire became one of the most shared articles in the network, including by accounts that only occasionally spread climate misinformation. Activity in the network responding to the fires began with climate deniers in Spain, who used the article to dismiss claims that extreme climate conditions make wildfires more common. Like-minded Spanish-speaking clusters of accounts across our network, including from the U.S., then amplified this narrative further.

Our map comprises eight main groups. The two largest groups, [ESP Conservative Journos | Pundits | Catalan Independentists](#) and [ESP Conservative | Libertarian | Vox Support](#), are based in Spain and comprise conservative and libertarian accounts that amplify support for the far-right Spanish party Vox. Vox has explicitly [incorporated](#) climate denialism into its policy platform. The two groups make up almost 30% of our map. Right-leaning,

↑ The above chronotope represents as a dot each tweet from the network that shared the article about the origins of the fire near Ateca, Spain. The dot distribution reveals that clusters of accounts in Spain shared the article most frequently, but COVID-skeptic and right-wing Latin American users also shared it.

anti-communist, and libertarian accounts based all over Latin America make up the rest of the groups in the map. Argentina-based accounts in the **ARG Conservative | Libertarian** group disproportionately represent the Latin America accounts and comprise 10% of the map. While some individual nodes in the map correspond to U.S.-based accounts, we found no geographically distinct cluster of U.S.-based accounts significantly engaged in Spanish-language conversations about climate denialism on Twitter.

Segment	Tags	Number of nodes	Percent of map	Density
> ESP Conservative Journos Pundits Catalan Independentists		166	7.98	1.05%
> ESP Conservative Libertarian Vox Support		613	29.47	3.68%
> ARG Conservative Libertarian		215	10.34	1.15%
> LATAM US Right-Leaning		121	5.82	1.09%
> LatAm Conservative Support		101	4.86	1.21%
> INT COVID-Skeptic		270	12.98	4.72%
> LatAm Right-Leaning Influencers Conservative Support		273	13.13	0.33%
> VEN Anti-Communist Journos Comedians Activists		197	9.47	1.38%
> Unclustered		124	5.96	0.17%

Another group of interest is the **LatAm US Right-Leaning** group, containing Spanish-language accounts distributed across Latin America. This group primarily follows U.S.-based, right-leaning, English-language accounts, like Florida Republican Governor [Ron DeSantis](#), Fox News host [Tucker Carlson](#), Texas Republican Senator [Ted Cruz](#), and far-right cable news channel [One America News Network](#) (OANN). Unlike Spain-based accounts, Spanish-language accounts based in Latin America and the U.S. are more likely to engage with English and Spanish-English bilingual content.

The **INT Covid-Skeptic** group comprises accounts based all over Spanish-speaking countries whose primary common interest is conspiratorial content regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccine mandates, and criticism of public health bodies. The **INT Covid-Skeptic** group illustrates the overlap between communities peddling climate misinformation and communities focused on other misinformation or conspiratorial content.

↑ The above table shows the breakdown of the Spanish-language climate misinformation map by group

Influential Actors

This section highlights the most influential Spanish-speaking actors we identified spreading climate denialism and misinformation content online. The actors fall broadly into two categories. The first category comprises actors who are right-wing or libertarian in ideology, have large international audiences, but only sporadically produce climate-related content. These actors often translate U.S. English-language right-wing content into Spanish and have a broader reach among Spanish-speaking U.S. audiences. The second category comprises users who focus on climate denialism and misinformation narratives but have modest followings and a limited reach among U.S.-based Spanish-speaking audiences.

Libertarian/Right-wing Messaging Focus

The Epoch Times en Español

The Epoch Times is [owned](#) by the Epoch Media Group, which has ties to the Falun Gong religious movement and outwardly opposes the Chinese Communist Party. Reporters have described the Epoch Times as an “[unreservedly pro–Donald Trump](#)” outlet that uses a savvy social media strategy [based](#) on aggressive algorithmic manipulation to spread right-wing narratives. The outlet claims to operate in 22 languages, including through its Spanish-language arm, Epoch Times en Español. Epoch Times en Español invests heavily in video content and has a presence on YouTube and most other major social media platforms. Video content typically emulates traditional broadcast news programs and employs native Spanish-speaking anchors to amplify right-wing narratives about U.S. and global politics.



↑ A Facebook [post](#) from account [The Epoch Times en Español](#) shared an Epoch Times article claiming that natural climate cycles rather than carbon dioxide emissions cause climate change

For its [climate coverage](#), Epoch Times en Español seemingly relies on content from its parent site, The Epoch Times, which it [translates](#) into [Spanish](#). While climate coverage is only a small fraction of the Epoch Times en Español’s total content production, the outlet’s large multi-platform presence makes it an influential actor in the network.

Libertad Digital [Digital Liberty] and esRadio

Libertad Digital and esRadio make up a libertarian media operation based in Spain founded by right-wing Spanish pundits [Federico Jiménez Losantos](#) and [Luis Herrero](#). The outlets are active across [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) and also operate a digital magazine focused on economics called Libre Mercado [Free Market]. The operation is a prolific producer of content that promotes a right-wing viewpoint and has shared climate misinformation. The operation typically delivers this content as [original radio programming](#) and [content translated from](#)

non-Spanish-speaking climate deniers. Part of the media operation’s original programming includes Losantos’ daily radio show, “Federico a las 7,” which regularly promotes climate misinformation narratives that are then shared on the esRadio YouTube channel.



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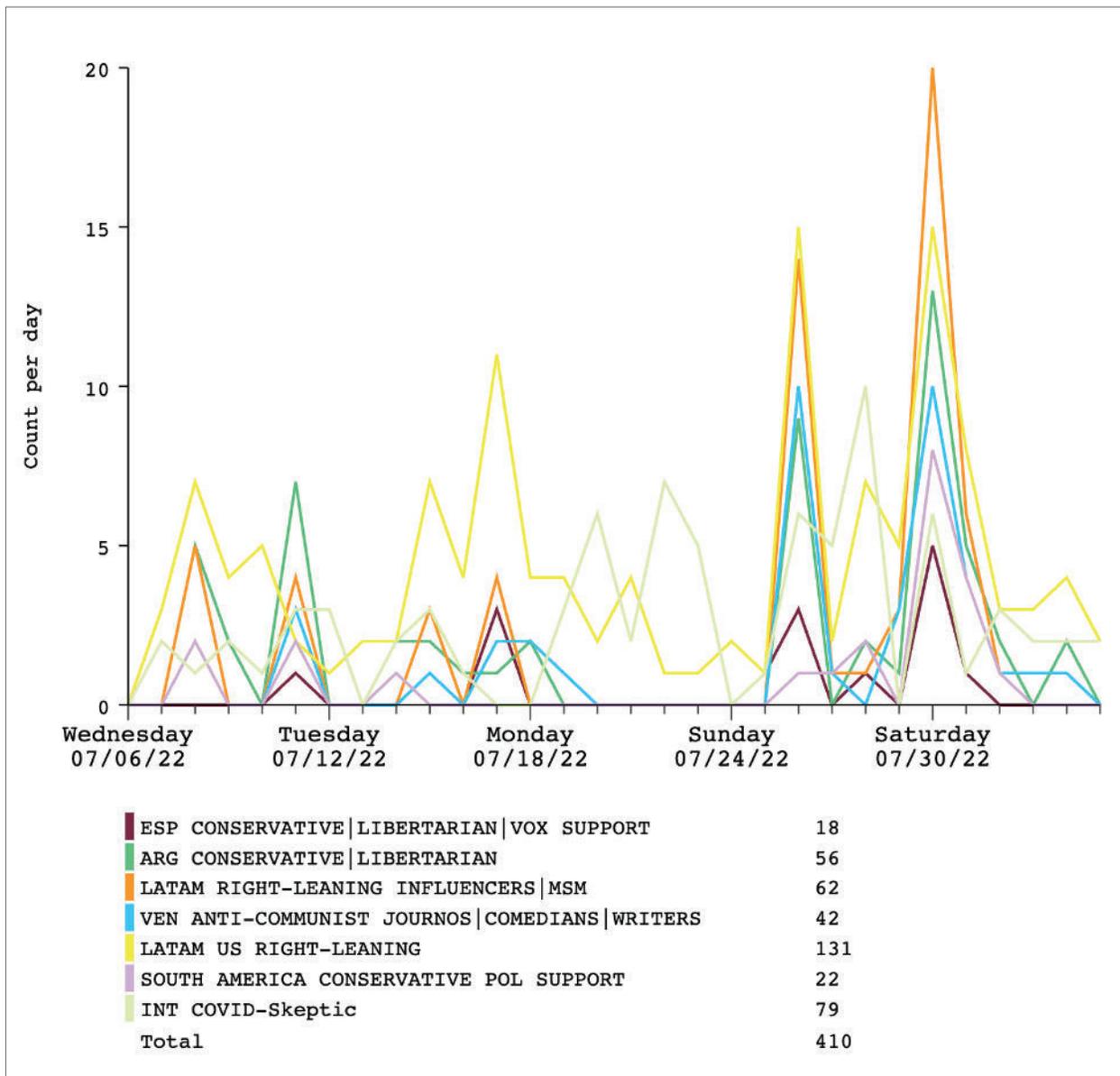
La Derecha Diario [The Right’s Newspaper]

La Derecha Diario is an Argentina-based content aggregator that predominantly shares Spanish translations of U.S. right-wing content. La Derecha Diario spreads its articles and video clips through its website and accounts on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). On YouTube, the outlet posts a combination of original [livestreams](#) focused on Argentinian

↑ Libertad Digital and esRadio co-founder Federico Jiménez Losantos is a source of much of the climate misinformation content on esRadio’s YouTube [channel](#)

politics and English-language right-wing [news clips](#) with Spanish subtitles. La Derecha Diario’s climate content features a wide range of denialism and misinformation ranging from [criticism](#) of politicians who support climate action to [mockery](#) of “alarmist” climate activists and [support](#) for the forceful removal of climate change protestors. Analysis of website domain shares in our Spanish-language climate misinformation map showed that every group in the network repeatedly shared material from La Derecha Diario regardless of their geographical location.

↓ The line graph left, shows shares of La Derecha Diario content by each group in our Spanish-language climate misinformation map between July 6 and Aug. 6, 2022



Climate-Specific Focus

El “Fraude del Cambio Climático”, y Meteorología [Climate Change and Meteorology Fraud]

“El ‘Fraude del Cambio Climático’, y Meteorología” (sic) is a Spain-based Facebook [page](#) that exclusively posts climate misinformation. “El ‘Fraude del Cambio Climático’, y Meteorología” primarily uses politics and news events in Spain to frame its climate narratives. Much of the page’s content uses [meteorological graphs](#) and scientific jargon to [undermine](#) the scientific community’s consensus on the reality of climate change. The page has a small audience of 4,627 followers as of Sept. 19, 2022.

El "Fraude del Cambio Climático",y Meteorología August 9 · 🌐

GRANDES CIENTÍFICOS ITALIANOS SUELTAN UNA BOMBA SOBRE EL MAL LLAMADO "CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO"
3 Agosto 2022

NOTA: Os dejo este articulo de hace unos dias, donde no se dice mucho mas de lo que ya sabiamos y de lo que en esta web he llenado de datos y graficas durante mas de una decada, pero esta bien que por fin sean los propios cientificos los que den un golpe en la mesa y digan que el "Cambio climatico IPeceriano" es un timo, y sobre todo que estos mismos cientificos pongan su n... [See more](#)

ELMANIFIESTO.COM

Grandes científicos italianos sueltan una bomba sobre el cambio climático
Sí, hay cambio climático, si hay calentamiento atmosférico, dicen 83 grandes científicos ita...

👍❤️ 137 37 Comments 60 Shares

← “El ‘Fraude del Cambio Climático’, y Meteorología” [re-posted](#) the text of an article on Facebook that claims that Italian scientists have disproven human activity causes climate change

Velarde Daoiz

User @velardedaiz2 is a Twitter [account](#) created in 2019 that appears to be linked to a Spanish climate denialism [author](#) named Velarde Daoiz. Daoiz routinely [spreads](#) climate misinformation that [minimizes](#) the urgency of climate action, [presents](#) government action on climate change as ineffectual, or [dismisses](#) climate change [activism](#) as [alarmism](#). Unlike other Spain-based accounts, @velardedaiz2 seems plugged into the global climate denialism conversation.

The account follows, retweets, and [interacts](#) in Spanish and English with Twitter's most popular climate deniers, effectively serving as a bridge for popular English-language content to reach the account's modestly sized Spanish-speaking audience. A [second](#) account connected to Daoiz, @velardedaiz, was previously [suspended](#) for three months for a Sept. 17, 2019 post that Twitter deemed violative. The [post](#) was later deleted.

EcoTontería [Eco-Dumbness]

The EcoTontería Twitter [account](#) aggregates climate misinformation content from across the web and translates it into Spanish. EcoTontería has less than 1,000 followers, but some of those are popular Spanish-language climate deniers who spread EcoTontería's material to the broader network. EcoTontería's current screen name reads in Spanish, "there is no apocalypse" [No hay Apocalipsis], and its bio claims there is no evidence that carbon dioxide is the cause of global warming.



↑ A December 2019 [tweet](#) from @velardedaiz2 shared a link to a New York Magazine article that claimed the effects of climate change are not as bad as previously described. User @velardedaiz2 used the article to vindicate its claim that "climate alarmism" has gone off the rails.



↑ EcoTontería's screen name and bio prominently feature climate denialism tropes. Despite the account's small following, it is an important facilitator of Spanish-language climate misinformation.

Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs)

Content Sharing

We identified actors spreading climate misinformation in Spanish regularly posting identical or near-identical content. This basic coordination appears to be authentic and overt and is likely part of an effort to grow an audience through cross-promotion. For example, the YouTube channel [Al Descubierto - con Elina Villafañe](#) [Uncovered - with Elina Villafañe] is an Epoch Times en Español-produced news show with just over 68k subscribers. Content from this channel, such as a video whose title translates to “Why in the last years international companies emphasize being ‘green’ so much?,” is often shared on the Epoch Times en Español official channel, which has 252k subscribers. Similarly, the Twitter accounts for [Libertad Digital](#) and [Libre Mercado](#) – both associated with Spain-based right-wing radio station [EsRadio](#) – frequently share the same climate misinformation content from Libre Mercado’s website.

Recruitment

We observed a cluster of accounts in the network strategizing to recruit like-minded content creators. The YouTube channel and Instagram page [Radio Libertaria](#) is openly [affiliated](#) with QAnon-aligned website [The Awaken Citizen](#), which has [called](#) for like-minded creators to join its “influencers” list to “fight progressivism on social media networks.” In an August 2021 YouTube [video](#), The Awaken Citizen said its “partner program” would “combat censorship” until the network was able to



- ↑ Twitter accounts for Libertad Digital and Libre Mercado shared the same article at roughly the same time about prominent climate denier Bjorn Lomborg

leave what the Awaken Citizen described as the platforms of the “progressive, globalist left.” In return for joining the network, The Awaken Citizen promises that the partner program will help influencers share their content and grow their audiences. The Awaken Citizen has a cross-platform presence and has [previously shared](#) climate misinformation.

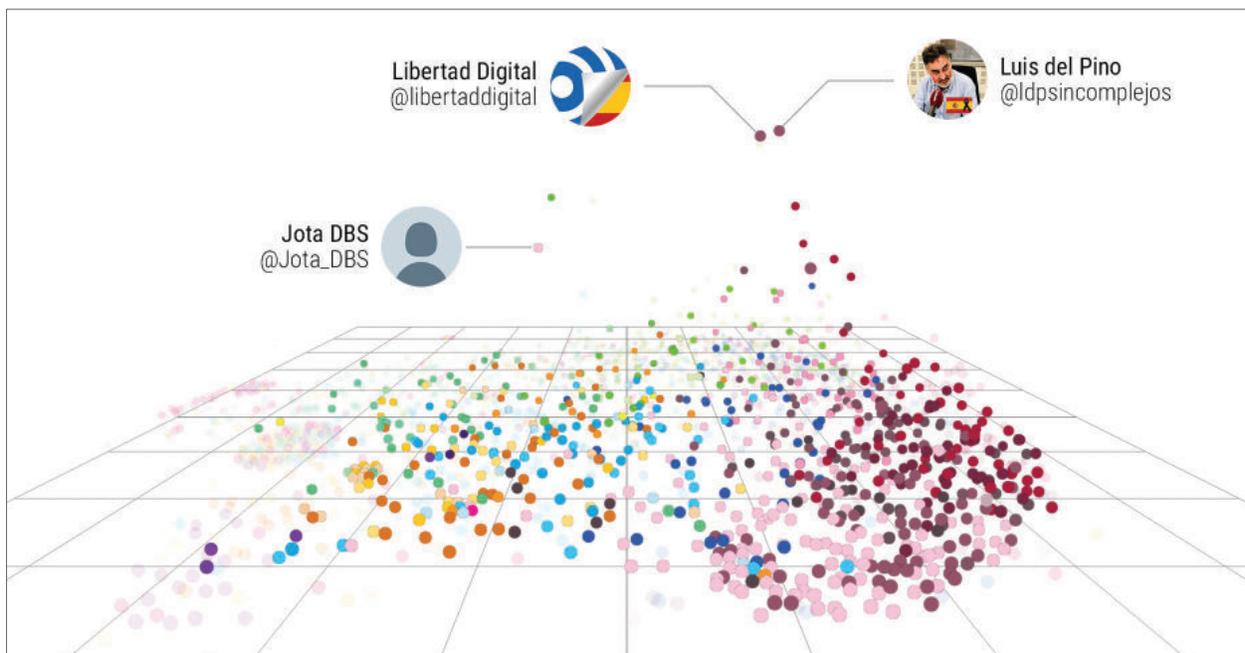
Translation from English-language Primary Sources

The most-followed accounts in our Spanish-language climate misinformation map routinely repost and translate content from prominent English-speaking climate deniers.

These include Danish author [Bjorn Lomborg](#), American writer [Michael Shellenberger](#), and right-wing conspiracist [Alex Jones](#). Three of the most-followed accounts on our map – Uruguay-based right-wing content aggregator [Jota DBS](#) (20.9k followers), Spain-based conservative radio show host [Luis](#)



↑ A screenshot from The Awaken Citizen [website](#) describes the network’s efforts against censorship (top). A screenshot from The Awaken Citizen’s recruitment [video](#) (bottom).



↑ A topographical view of Graphika’s Spanish-language climate misinformation map correlates height with in-map followership, showing how influential @JotaDBS, @LibertadDigital, and @ldpsincomplejos are in the wider network

[del Pino](#) (302.9k followers), and conservative outlet [Libertad Digital](#) (279.7k followers) – [have amplified translated content](#) from or about Lomborg and Shellenberger numerous times just in the last year. In this way, these prominent Spanish-language accounts provide a critical bridge for English-language climate misinformation content to reach international Spanish-speaking audiences.



Bill Gates says bioterrorism and climate change are the next biggest threats after pandemic

Guerras Climáticas
10,045 vistas • Se estrenó el 27 feb 2021

1,107 NO ME GUSTA COMPARTIR DESCARGAR GRACIAS GUARDAR ...

INFO GUERRA 162,000 suscriptores **SUSCRIBIRSE**

The YouTube channel [InfoGuerra](#) [InfoWar] (162k subscribers) is another example of how this translation pipeline brings climate denialism content to Spanish-speaking audiences. InfoGuerra appears to be a Spanish-language copycat of Alex Jones' Infowars. It traffics in general anti-globalist conspiracy theories and occasionally spreads climate conspiracies from this perspective, such as asserting that climate action is a globalist "[facade](#)" to extract more money from the population through "green costs." InfoGuerra will sometimes [provide](#) livestream translations of InfoWars' articles with screen shares of Jones'

↑ YouTube channel InfoGuerra often [translates and describes](#) English-language press reports in its videos. In the above video, InfoGuerra suggests that globalists are using geoengineering to manipulate weather patterns under the guise of climate change.

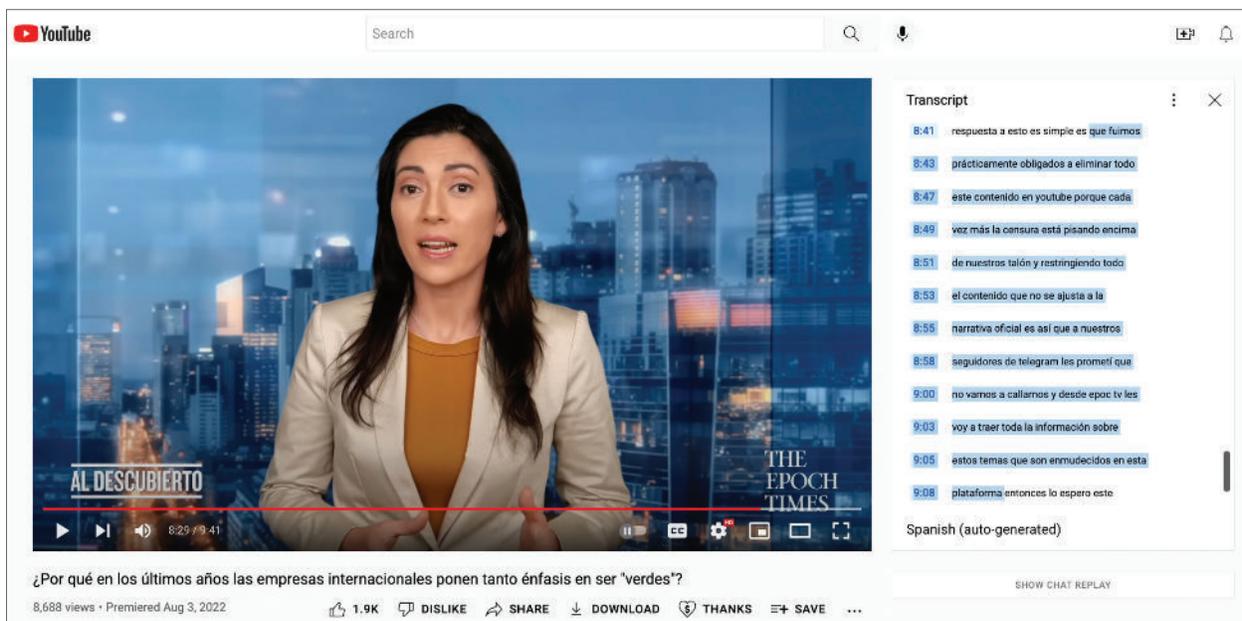
website. In one [joint video](#) featuring InfoGuerra and Chilean YouTuber Contracultura [Counter Culture], Contracultura explicitly describes their activities as “bringing a lot of the information that is in English and translating it and describing it for the Spanish-speaking world.”

Attempts to Evade Content Moderation

We observed multiple instances of users engaging in behaviors intended to circumvent social media platform content moderation. One prominent tactic that network actors used to spread climate denialism and misinformation narratives was to direct audiences to their accounts on alternative platforms such as Rumble or Telegram, which have more lax moderation policies. These posts typically included a content “teaser” and a link to the alt-platform accounts.

For instance, in an Aug. 3, 2022 YouTube [video](#) criticizing green energy, Al Descubierta’s Elina Villafañe told audiences in Spanish that YouTube’s censorship is “nipping at our heels and restricting all the content that doesn’t adjust to the official narrative.” Villafañe then invited viewers to follow the channel’s Telegram account to access “all the information on topics that

↓ The Epoch Times’ host for the Spanish-language show Al Descubierta [told](#) audiences to visit and follow their accounts on other social media platforms that do “not adjust to the official narrative.”



YouTube

Search

AL DESCUBIERTO

THE EPOCH TIMES

¿Por qué en los últimos años las empresas internacionales ponen tanto énfasis en ser "verdes"?

8,688 views • Premiered Aug 3, 2022

1.9K DISLIKE SHARE DOWNLOAD THANKS SAVE ...

Transcript

8:41 respuesta a esto es simple es que fuimos

8:43 prácticamente obligados a eliminar todo

8:47 este contenido en youtube porque cada

8:49 vez más la censura está pisando encima

8:51 de nuestros talón y restringiendo todo

8:53 el contenido que no se ajusta a la

8:55 narrativa oficial es así que a nuestros

8:58 seguidores de telegram les prometí que

9:00 no vamos a callarnos y desde epic tv les

9:03 voy a traer toda la información sobre

9:05 estos temas que son enmudecidos en esta

9:08 plataforma entonces lo espero este

Spanish (auto-generated)

SHOW CHAT REPLAY

get silenced on this platform.” Similarly, to close out an Aug. 8 video that [criticized](#) U.S. President Joe Biden’s administration for investing millions of dollars into renewable energies, Villafañe told viewers that more in-depth coverage of the topic was only available on other platforms due to alleged YouTube censorship.

Many disseminators of climate misinformation also use coded language. For example, InfoGuerra has [repeatedly](#) referred to Bill Gates as “Bill Puertas”: While “puertas” means doors in Spanish, it can also be roughly translated as “gates.” In one livestream, the InfoGuerra host used this language to [claim](#) that instances of prominent climate change activists, such as Gates, buying beachfront property show there is no threat to coastal cities from rising sea levels. We also observed Twitter users [adding](#) a period to the middle of climate-related key terms – e.g., “calentamiento” [warming.lie] – to amplify conspiratorial narratives about governments manipulating the weather.

Conspiratorial narratives about the United Nations’ 2030 [Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development were rife with deliberate misspellings of keywords and hashtags, especially on TikTok. These included alternate renderings of key phrases – such as “agenda veinte treinta” or “agenda twenty thirty” – and using different numbers or punctuation: Agenda 20/30, Agenda 20-30, ag3nda 2030.

Many disseminators of climate misinformation also use coded language. For example, InfoGuerra has repeatedly referred to Bill Gates as “Bill Puertas”.

Climate Misinformation Narratives

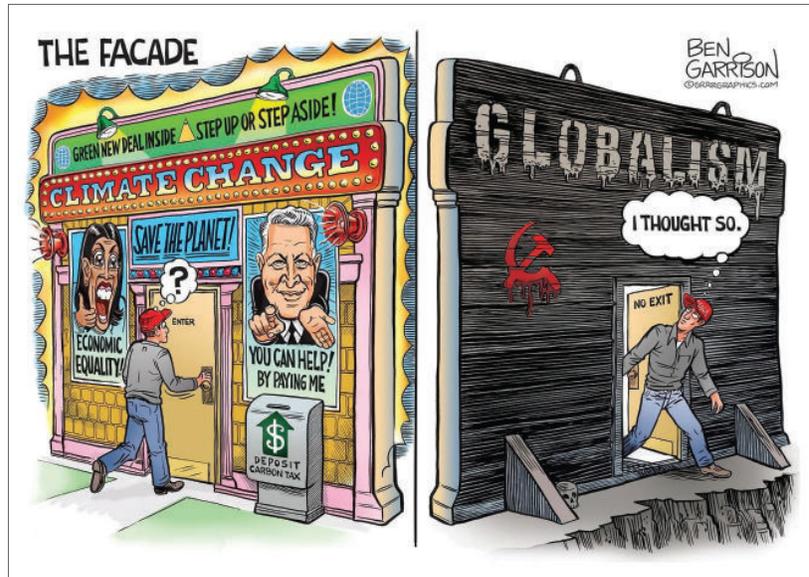
Accounts in the climate misinformation network advanced a core set of narratives that used false or misleading statements to promote denialism of human-influenced climate change, share conspiratorial thinking about its origins, or minimize the urgency for mitigative action. Many of these claims were interwoven with right-wing ideological narratives, and some overlapped with online conversations unrelated to climate change, such as health misinformation. Posts frequently featured content translated from English-language sources, and many of the narratives we surfaced were not unique to Spanish-speaking communities. However, network actors sometimes tailored content to the political and social environments of Spanish-speaking countries.

Global Elites Created Climate Change

One of the most prominent narratives advanced by the Spanish-language climate misinformation network draws on pre-existing conspiracy theories, such as the [New World Order](#), to claim that a ruling cabal of global elites has fabricated the concept of climate change. The narrative claims these elites will use the cover of climate change to implement a “globalist agenda” with sweeping social changes designed to oppress ordinary people and benefit themselves financially. Many renditions of the narrative in Spanish lean into an adversarial framework, describing victims as “nos” or “nosotros,” which translates to “us.”

Posts frequently featured content translated from English-language sources, and many of the narratives we surfaced were not unique to Spanish-speaking communities.

This narrative often appears as a part of political campaigns in the Spanish-speaking world. For example, the Spanish far-right party Vox and its supporters have [claimed](#) on social media that Spain's current center-left government is using "false" fears of climate change to implement a globalist agenda that will allow elites to profit from rising energy prices. In September this year, right-wing activists and politicians in Chile [claimed](#) that elites are using the ruse of climate change to profit from the transition to renewable energy sources and other climate misinformation as part of a campaign to [defeat](#) the vote for a new constitution.



↑ Info Guerra [shared](#) a cartoon on Telegram alongside a Spanish-language caption that translates to: "Behind the facade of Climate Change"

We also identified recent variations of the "global elites" narrative that leveraged ongoing issues with the global food supply chain and fears about food shortages and inflation. Vox has [suggested](#) that the Spanish government [designed](#) its climate policies to punish farmers and benefit the urban elites. Other iterations have used the recent Dutch farmer [protests](#) against green agricultural policies to suggest elites are intentionally trying to [create](#) food shortages for profit.



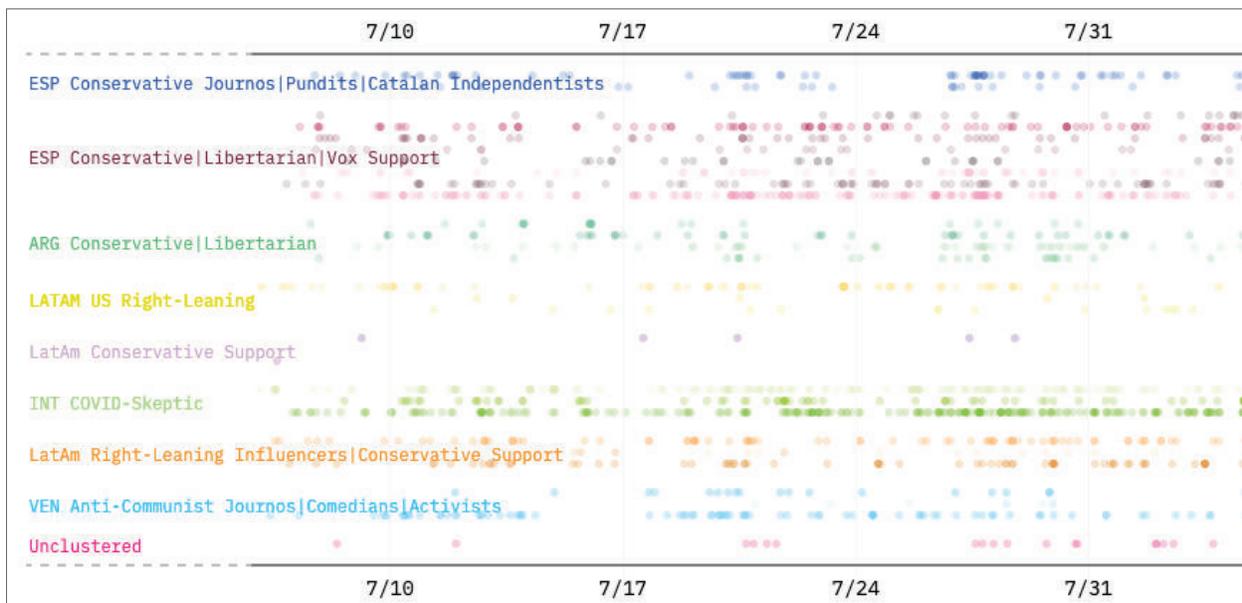
↑ A TikTok [post](#) claimed that Dutch government policies restricting fertilizer nitrogen levels, which has led to a series of farmer protests, were actually part of an elite conspiracy to engineer famine under the guise of protecting the climate

Climate Change and Agenda 2030

Agenda 2030, shorthand for the U.N.'s wide-ranging [Sustainable Development Goals](#), is a common feature in conspiracy theories about COVID-19 and narratives targeting vulnerable groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community and immigrants. In our analysis, we observed Spanish-language climate deniers leveraging misleading claims about Agenda 2030 to spread narratives such as that climate change is a hoax or the result of geoengineering.

Influencers in Spain and Latin America amplified many of these climate-related Agenda 2030 narratives. Cristiana Martin Jiménez, a right-wing Spanish conspiracy theorist active on [TikTok](#), [Twitter](#), [Telegram](#), and [Instagram](#), has claimed that Agenda 2030 was designed to reduce the global population by undermining the prospects of developing economies in Africa and Asia. Jiménez and Juan Andrés Salfate, a popular Chilean movie critic and online conspiracy theorist, have also [alleged](#) that the U.S.-based [Rockefeller Foundation](#) invented climate change to help implement Agenda 2030's "true" goal of forcing rural populations to migrate to cities where they are more easily controlled.

↓ The below chronotope represents each tweet from the network between July 4, 2022, and Aug. 4, 2022, that included the hashtag #Agenda2030. The dot distribution reveals that clusters of accounts in Spain, right-leaning influencers in Spain, and International Covid-skeptics most frequently used the hashtag.





← An Instagram [post](#) from Juan Andrés Salfate claimed that the Rockefeller Foundation is attempting to implement the “true” Agenda 2030 goal of forcing rural populations into cities where they are more easily controlled.

Interestingly, we identified numerous climate misinformation [posts](#) that didn’t mention Agenda 2030 in their content but still included an Agenda 2030 hashtag. Some of these were accompanied by conspiracy theory hashtags, such as #NWO and #NOM (“New World Order” and its Spanish translation, “Nuevo Orden Mundial”). The use of these seemingly unrelated hashtags could reflect an effort by these actors to reach existing conspiratorial audiences and attract new followers.

Climate Change Is Actually Geoengineering

Some members of the Spanish-language network spread claims that geoengineering, not climate change, is the cause of an increasing number of extreme weather events around the world. Geoengineering is the term used to describe human [intervention](#) in Earth’s climate systems, such as by removing carbon from the atmosphere or reflecting sunlight away from the planet. Allegations that geoengineering has led to extreme weather events that scientists widely attribute to climate change often dovetail with long-standing conspiracies about [aircraft contrails](#) and a U.S. government research facility in Alaska known as the [High-frequency Active Auroral Research Program \(HAARP\)](#).



↑ TikTok user “[Buscando a la Verdad](#)” shared a [video](#) of a weather report suggesting that it was caused by “chemtrails” and geoengineering. Per the caption in red, chemtrails and geoengineering are the real causes of climate change.

The contrail conspiracy claims that contrails, or “[chemtrails](#),” are chemical agents that government-controlled aircraft spray into the air for various nefarious purposes, including poisoning the population by “[fumigating](#)” them. Similarly, HAARP – which studies Earth’s upper atmosphere – is [portrayed](#) as the center of a U.S.-government operation to control the weather and people’s minds.

In the Spanish-language climate misinformation network, we saw frequent references to HAARP and chemtrails, such as [videos](#) on TikTok purporting to show before-and-after footage of contrails visible in the sky to suggest they caused subsequent changes in the weather. These posts often include hashtags referencing geoengineering, HAARP, climate manipulation, and other conspiracy theories, such as about the Illuminati.

Climate Change Is a Hoax

Network actors frequently interwove the previously mentioned narratives with the widespread claim that climate change is a hoax. As in English, these narratives in Spanish often question the science underpinning climate science, such as by arguing that there is no proven connection between carbon dioxide emissions and climate change. We also observed some Spanish-speaking influencers deny the occurrence of climate change events rather than try to explain them away. For instance, the Facebook [page](#) “El ‘Fraude del Cambio Climático’, y Meteorología” has repeatedly amplified claims that commonly reported effects of climate change, including rising ocean temperatures, more frequent



- ↑ The Facebook page “[Mentes en Guerra](#)” shared a [meme](#) suggesting that climate activist Greta Thunberg is working on behalf of a shadowy evil force (portrayed by a photoshopped image of Emperor Palpatine from the Star Wars franchise). In the meme, Palpatine is making Thunberg tell her audience that climate change is creating changes in the weather rather than the true cause: geoengineering.



← A YouTube [video](#) published by “La Gran Epoca,” one of the Epoch Times’ Spanish-language channels (and separate from Epoch Times en Español), featured a misleading graphic suggesting that carbon dioxide cannot cause climate change because it comprises a low percentage of the total atmosphere

heat waves, and melting glacier ice, are not actually happening. To support these narratives, the page features numerous false and misleading graphics suggesting that [Earth](#) and its [oceans](#) are actually [cooling](#), arctic sea ice is [expanding](#), and the number of record heat days has [decreased](#).

Attempts to dismiss climate change as a hoax were often accompanied by narratives portraying concerns about climate change as unnecessarily alarmist and overblown. These alarmist narratives vary but typically contain a core assertion characterizing policies to combat climate change as extremist, overbearing, and unnecessary.

Numerous Spanish-language users in the network reshared translated [posts](#) and [videos](#) from Michael Shellenberger, a prominent critic of what he has referred to as “climate alarmism.” In particular, we identified several accounts using Shellenberger’s work to criticize governments and left-wing activists for creating what they referred to as an “[anti-human religion](#)” and a “[religion of alarmism](#)” that has induced [eco-anxiety](#) in millions of people.



↑ The Facebook page for right-wing Spanish radio station [esRadio](#) shared an [opinion piece](#) from Libertad Digital suggesting that concerns about climate change are overblown and “climate alarmism”

Criticizing Scientists, Politicians, and Climate Activists

The climate misinformation narratives we reviewed in Spanish were nearly always accompanied by criticisms of scientists, environmental activists, and politicians who support climate action. These narratives usually attempt to undermine the credibility of their targets by portraying them as hypocritical elites unable to speak on behalf of the people most impacted by the policies they promote. A frequent narrative in this vein criticized politicians for using fossil fuel-intensive vehicles while imposing the costs of adopting eco-friendly technologies on ordinary citizens. For example, network actors [mocked](#) U.S. President Joe Biden for using a motorcade while supporting electric car production.

One of the most frequent targets of the Spanish-language climate misinformation network was Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. Network actors spread videos [claiming](#) the U.N. had brainwashed Thunberg into believing that humans caused climate change and [memes](#) portrayed her as a pawn of global elites using climate change for financial gain. In June this year, multiple Spanish-language accounts used [decontextualized](#) images from a music festival to claim that Thunberg's supporters had left mountains of trash behind after watching her speak.



- ↑ A TikTok [video](#) in Spanish criticized elites for using private jets to attend the Davos World Economic Forum. The video's top caption reads, "prohibitions for us not for them," and the bottom caption reads, "Hypocrites, only fools would believe stories from these corrupt politicians."

