

# Civil registries among the Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil: Rereading

## Os registros civis em meio à pandemia da Covid-19 no Brasil: releituras

Camila Schwinden Lehmkuhl<sup>1</sup>, Eva Cristina Leite da Silva<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brasil. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8389-1176>

<sup>2</sup> Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brasil. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4579-1064>

**Mail to/Autor para correspondência/Correo a:** Camila Schwinden Lehmkuhl, [camila\\_1ehmkuhl@hotmail.com](mailto:camila_1ehmkuhl@hotmail.com)

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** With the arrival of COVID-19 in Brazil, metrics related to the pandemic become crucial for the country's situational diagnosis. Among them, two are highlighted in this research, those presented by the Ministry of Health and by the civil registries of natural persons. The purpose of this article is to contrast the data related to COVID-19 in Brazil presented by civil registries with those pointed out by the Ministry of Health. To achieve the general objective, it presents the legislative changes applied to civil registries in the midst of the COVID-19 in Brazil; it exposes and opposes the data presented by the civil registries of Brazil and the Ministry of Health, and; it reflects on the differences observed between the data presented. **Method:** it develops a qualitative and quantitative research in which the documental method is adopted. **Results:** there is a possible under diagnosis and under reporting of deaths by COVID-19 in Brazil. **Conclusions:** civil registry data can be sources of information for various research on COVID-19 in Brazil, now and in the future.

**Keywords:** Civil registry; COVID-19; Coronavirus; Brazil; Pandemic.

### Resumo

**Introdução:** com a chegada da COVID-19 no Brasil, métricas relacionadas à pandemia passam a ser cruciais para o diagnóstico situacional do país. Dentre elas, duas são destacadas nessa pesquisa, as apresentadas pelo Ministério da Saúde e pelos registros civis das pessoas naturais. Objetiva evidenciar os registros civis como fonte de informação para pesquisas relacionadas à COVID-19 no Brasil, contrastando-os com o que é apresentado pelo Ministério da Saúde. Para alcançar o objetivo geral, apresenta as alterações legislativas aplicadas aos registros civis em meio à pandemia por COVID-19 no Brasil; expõe e contrapõe os dados apresentados pelos registros civis do Brasil e pelo Ministério da Saúde, e; reflete a respeito das diferenças observadas entre os dados coletados. **Metodologia:** desenvolve uma pesquisa quali-quantitativa em que se adota o método documental. **Resultados:** verifica-se um possível subdiagnóstico e subregistro de óbitos por COVID-19 no Brasil. **Conclusão:** os dados de registro civil podem ser fontes de informação para pesquisas diversas sobre a COVID-19 no Brasil, agora e no futuro.

**Palavras-chave:** Registro civil; Fonte de Informação; COVID-19; Coronavírus; Brasil; Pandemia.

## INTRODUCTION

First described in Wuhan, China, on December 31, 2019, the most recent coronavirus discovered is the cause of the disease called COVID-19. With the transit of citizens around the world, this virus spread to all continents in a few months. Since then, it has been changing the daily lives of cities, states and countries, generating collapses in health systems and, consequently, the death of thousands of people.

In Brazil, according to the Ministry of Health (MS), the first case of positive test for COVID-19 was diagnosed on February 26, 2020, in São Paulo. From this period, the cases started to increase day after day (Ministério da Saúde, 2020a).

To count the number of infected people and the number of deaths nationally, the Ministry of Health developed the Coronavirus Panel (Ministério da Saúde, 2020b), a website created by the government to present to the population the number of deaths, infected and cured of COVID-19 in Brazil.

In addition to the MS, the National Association of Natural Persons' Registrars in Brazil (ARPEN) together with the National Council of Justice (CNJ), aiming at fulfilling the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030, created in 2018 the Civil Registry Transparency Portal, developed to provide citizens with information and statistical data on births, marriages and deaths, among other related content. With the arrival of COVID-19, the Civil Registry Transparency Portal developed a new tab: Special COVID-19. In this tab are available data related to the deaths by COVID-19, by respiratory and cardiac diseases in Brazil, according to what is presented in the civil registries.

Taking into consideration the data presented in the Portal and in the Panel, the general objective is to evidence the civil records as a source of information for research related to COVID-19 in Brazil, contrasting them with

what is presented by the Ministry of Health. The specific objectives are: a) present the legislative changes applied to the civil registries in the midst of the pandemic by COVID-19 in Brazil; b) expose and contrast the data presented by the civil registries in Brazil and the Ministry of Health; c) reflect on the differences observed between the collected data.

As for the methodology, the approach is qualitative and quantitative, of the exploratory type, being used as a method the documental research, carried out in primary documents, such as laws, resolutions and federal norms, as well as data presented in the official sites already mentioned<sup>1</sup>.

As a result, it was identified that there is a possible underdiagnosis in the *causa mortis* by OVID-19 in Brazil; besides a possible underregistration of civil deaths in the middle of the OVID-19 pandemic in Brazil.

### The COVID-19 in Brazil

On December 31, 2019, it was reported for the first time "[...] pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan, China" ([Organização Pan-Americana da Saúde, 2020](#)). On January 30, 2020, the outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Interest (Pan American Health Organization, 2020). Already on February 11, 2020, the WHO announced a name for the new coronavirus disease: COVID-19. On March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was characterized by WHO as a pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020).

In Brazil, the first confirmed positive test case for COVID-19 registered happened in February, as already presented, and the first death occurred on March 16, 2020 ([Ministério da Saúde, 2020a](#)). Thus, since February 2020, COVID-19 has become part of the daily life of the Brazilian population.

To track the numbers of the disease, the Ministry of Health has launched a website in the domain gov.br for citizens/researchers to consult cases and confirmed deaths in the country, the Coronavirus Panel.

## CORONAVIRUS PANEL

The Coronavirus Panel was developed to be the official communication vehicle about the epidemiological situation of COVID-19 in Brazil<sup>2</sup>. It is a partnership between DataSUS, the Federal Government Health Surveillance Secretariat and the Ministry of Health. Launched on March 26, 2020, in addition to showing the numbers of deaths and cases confirmed by COVID-19, The "Interactive Panel COVID-19 in Brazil" ([Ministério da Saúde, 2020c](#)) was used for this research, a panel also of the Ministry of Health that is allocated in a tab of the Coronavirus Panel.

The process of updating data on cases and deaths confirmed by COVID-19 in Brazil "[...] is carried out daily by the Ministry of Health through official information provided by the State Health Departments of the 27 Brazilian Federal Units" ([Ministério da Saúde, 2020b](#)).

The website itself highlights the updating process: "The process of updating information in municipalities, states and the federal sphere is dynamic and complex. The data informed daily are subject to change. Considering the plurality of each Brazilian municipality in terms of population size, infrastructure and organization of health services, in addition to all the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic imposes, it is possible that there will be changes in the number of cases or deaths due to errors or delays in passing on information" ([Ministério da Saúde, 2020b](#)).

Besides the Coronavirus Panel, there are other platforms doing the counting of COVID-19 numbers in Brazil, however, the Interactive Panel COVID-19 of the Ministry of Health and the Civil Registry Transparency Portal were chosen for this survey as the official source of the Brazilian Government.

## CIVIL REGISTERS IN BRAZIL

Civil records portray the citizen's life cycle, which begins with birth, possible emancipation, marriages and divorces, and closes with death, through death registration.

Mandatory in Brazil since 1888 are a source of research for different possible studies, for the citizen and his rights, the government and scientific research. The following are some examples of the uses of civil records by these different agents.

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<sup>1</sup>Frente a este contexto, e que justifica a presente pesquisa, foi realizada uma busca em duas bases de dados brasileiras: uma focada em pesquisas relacionadas à Ciência da Informação, a Base de Dados Referenciais de Artigos de Periódicos em Ciência da Informação (Brapci); e outra em âmbito geral, a Biblioteca Digital Brasileira de Teses e Dissertações (BDTD). Foram utilizadas como palavras-chave as expressões Portal da Transparência do Registro Civil e Painel Coronavírus (entre aspas). Na Brapci foi selecionado o campo texto completo e na BDTD todos os campos, os parâmetros o mais abrangente possível, contudo nada foi recuperado em ambas as bases. O resultado demonstra que possivelmente ainda não foram publicadas pesquisas a respeito do Portal da Transparência do Registro Civil e do Painel Coronavírus, o que torna a pesquisa em tela especificamente inédita.

Citizens and their rights	Government	Researchers
Right to birth registration and, consequently, to all official documents generated from such registration, such as Identity Card, Individual Taxpayer's Registry (CPF), Labor Card, among others.	Use of the death register to cease the title of voter at the competent Electoral Registry Office or the benefit of the retiree at the INSS, as soon as the death is communicated by the Registry Office.	Searches related to cause mortis in death records.
Construction of family trees, family research, from past records.	Statistics of the Brazilian population from birth, marriage and death registers.	Morphological and semantic studies related to the various alterations of the Portuguese language and textual construction throughout the history of Brazil.
Possibility of requesting dual citizenship, considering the context of immigration in Brazilian territory.	Improvement or creation of public policies specific to a certain Brazilian region/state/municipality.	The various professions common to each age, professions that no longer exist or that have been replaced by others.
Acquisition of inheritance rights from the proof of facts prior to the act.	Revisiting the history of municipalities, states and country.	The preservation of the documental heritage of civil registry in Brazil.

**Table 1.** Possible uses of civil registers.

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors, based on professional and research experiences (2020).

The focus of this article is on death records and *causa mortis*, but other uses of the civil register will be taken into account accordingly. The death registrations are performed in Civil Registry Offices of Natural Persons in Brazil and follow the precepts brought by Law n° 6.015, of December 31, 1973 (*Lei N°6.015, de 31 de dezembro de 1973, 1973*), known as the Law of Public Registries. In addition to these rules, each State Court of Justice has its own Code of Rules, which defines more specific rules on the production of the death registration. With regard to the death registration process in Brazil, in general terms, it can be described as follows:

1 <sup>a</sup>	After the death, the physician linked to a health unit will fill out a document called Death Declaration (DO); if there is no medical assistance, the registration can be made from the declaration of two witnesses, who will also sign the death registry.
2 <sup>a</sup>	The DO will contain the personal data of the deceased, the place of death, the time and cause of death, among other information; if by witnesses, they will declare this information.
3 <sup>a</sup>	With the DO in hand, the declarant goes to the Civil Registry Office with his personal documents and the documents of the deceased, and the Death Register is initiated.
4 <sup>a</sup>	After the description of the facts and personal data, the registration is made, the declarant signs and/or witnesses, if appropriate.
5 <sup>a</sup>	Once the registration is completed, the declarant will take with them the Death Certificate.
6 <sup>a</sup>	After registration, the notary has the responsibility to communicate the death to several government agencies and file the documents generated permanently in his office.

**Table 2.** General steps for the creation of the Civil Registry of Death.

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors (2020).

In the context addressed, this process was described to demonstrate more clearly to the reader how the creation of the death register occurs and, consequently, the number of deaths generated in Brazil, which will be the subject of the next section.

In the midst of the pandemic, this form of ploughing and the obligations for death registration have changed. The following tables 3 and 4 present comparisons related to changes in civil registries in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil.

Article 77 of Law N° 6.015, of December 31, 1973 (Edition given by Law No. 13.484, of 2017))	Article 1 of Joint Ordinance No. 1 of March 30, 2020, of the National Council of Justice
<b>No burial shall be made without a certificate from the registry officer</b> of the place of death or place of residence of the deceased, when the death occurs in a place other than his domicile, extracted after the transcription of the death certificate, in view of the doctor's certificate, if there are two qualified persons who witnessed or verified the death" (Lei n. 6.015, 1973).	To authorize health establishments, in the event of absence of family members or persons known to the obituario or due to public health requirements, to forward the bodies to the cemiteral coordination of the municipality, for burial or cremation <b>without prior drawing up of the civil death register"</b> ( <a href="#">Portaria Conjunta N° 1, de 30 de março de 2020, 2020</a> ).

**Table 3.** Comparison between what is in the Law of Public Registries and Joint Ordinance No. 1/2020.

**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2020, our emphasis), based on Law n. 6.015 (1973) and Ministry of Health (2020).

This means that the precept brought by Law no. 6.015, of December 31, 1973, that only with the death certificate the burial could be made, with the publication of Joint Ordinance no. 1, of March 30, 2020, allows the burial to be made without the death registration. What can be stated in this case is that citizens are being buried without the death certificate drawn up.

Art. 78 of Law N° 6.015, of December 31, 1973	Art. 2° of Provision N° 93 of March 26, 2020, of the National Council of Justice
In the impossibility of being <b>registered within 24 (twenty-four) hours</b> of the death, for the distance or any other relevant reason, the seat will be drawn up later, with the utmost urgency, and within the time limits established in article 50". According to article 50: "Every birth that occurs in the national territory must be registered, in the place where the birth occurred or in the place of residence of the parents, within fifteen days, which will be extended in up to three months to places more than thirty kilometers from the headquarters of the registry office ( <a href="#">Lei N°6.015, de 31 de dezembro de 1973, 1973</a> ).	The Death Declarations may be signed in person by the declarants at the Hospitals and sent by electronic means to the official e-mail of the competent civil registry service of natural persons, at the address disclosed on the website of the National Association of Natural Persons Registrars - ARPEN BRAZIL ( <a href="http://www.arpenbrasil.org.br">www.arpenbrasil.org.br</a> ), for immediate drawing up of the seat, and the interested party must attend the service within the same period mentioned in the caption of the previous article, for regularization and eventual completion of the seat and withdrawal of the respective certificate <sup>12</sup> . As for the previous caption mentioned, "Article 1. The deadlines for the Declaration of Birth contained in article 50, of Law no. 6.015, of December 31, 1973 (Law of Public Records) are extended <b>until fifteen days after the end of the Emergency in Public Health of National Importance (ESPIN)</b> , established by Ordinance no. 188/GM/MS, of February 4, 2020, exempt from fine or any other penalty" ( <a href="#">Provimento n. 93, de 26 de março de 2020, 2020</a> ).

**Table 4.** Comparison between what is in the Law of Public Registries and in Provision No. 93/2020.

**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2020, our emphasis).

Art. 50 is applied to death and birth registrations with regard to deadlines and, therefore, provided they comply with the provisos presented by Law no. 6.015/73, it can be performed up to 90 days after the death/birth of the citizen. On the other hand, art. 77, presented in Chart 3, portrays that burial cannot take place without the registration of death, which in this case already happens.

As for the new [Provimento n. 93, de 26 de março de 2020 \(2020\)](#), the birth and death registers have the same deadline to be effective, 15 days after the end of the Public Health Emergency period of National Importance (Espin), which at this moment is December 31, 2020. It also allows health establishments to begin registering citizens' deaths, with the declarant having this period set for signing the register. However, health care institutions may be overloaded and, for this, it will be necessary the availability of an employee to scan personal documents, look for the e-mail of the competent registry office and inform the family of the legal procedure for effective registration.

With regard to post-registration operations, the notaries must send their acts within the established term to different federal, state and municipal government agencies that use this data as a source of information for the execution of their actions; some examples of these uses were mentioned in the Chart 1.

In order to receive this data generated by the civil registry, the government instituted on June 26, 2014 Decree N°

8,720, revoked by Decree N° 9,929 of July 22, 2019, which provides for the National Civil Registry Information System (Sirc) (Decreto n. 9.929, de 22 de julho de 2019, 2019). As the Sirc website itself points out:

With the integrated and secure management of the base formed by the information sent by registries, it will be possible to qualify other government databases, subsidize public policies and help to prevent fraud in the granting of benefits and crimes such as forgery and trafficking in persons (*Sistema Nacional de Registro Civil.*, 2020).

This way, the civil registry data are sent by the notaries to the federal government through the Sirc. On July 27, 2014, one month after the publication of the Sirc Decree, the National Council of Justice publishes Provision N° 38, revoked in 2015 by Provision N° 46 of June 16, which resolves: "Article 1. Establish the Central Civil Registry Information of Natural Persons - CRC that will be operated through an interlinked system, available in the world wide web [...]. Um dos objetivos da CRC é I. interligar os Oficiais de Registro Civil das Pessoas Naturais, permitindo o intercâmbio de documentos eletrônicos e o tráfego de informações e dados. Em seu art. 6° (Provimento n. 46, de 16 de junho de 2015, 2015)). One of the objectives of the CRC is "I. to interconnect the Natural Persons Civil Registry Officers, allowing the exchange of electronic documents and the traffic of information and data". In its art. 6°:

The Natural Persons Civil Registry Officers shall make available to the Central de Informações de Registro Civil das Pessoas Naturais - CRC the information defined by Arpen-Brasil, observing the legislation in force regarding statistical data, within ten calendar days from the drawing up of the acts, respecting the local peculiarities (Provimento n. 46, de 16 de junho de 2015, 2015).

The Sirc, in turn, aiming to facilitate the process of sending civil records, "[...] receives information forwarded by the services to the information centers of civil records of natural persons - CER" (Instituto Nacional de Seguradora Social, 2018), ie, the information can be sent to the Sirc through the CRC.

It can be understood in this session that: civil registries have several established uses; that new regulations are being presented regarding registration in the midst of the pandemic; and that registry offices have deadlines and obligations for sending data/information to CRC and Sirc databases. The following will describe the Civil Registry Transparency Portal, created from the CRC for the public viewing of data on civil registries in Brazil.

## CIVIL REGISTRY TRANSPARENCY PORTAL

The creation of the Civil Registry Transparency Portal, according to Gustavo Renato Fiscarelli, Secretary General of Arpen Brazil and Vice-President of Arpen São Paulo (*Associação Nacional dos Registradores de Pessoas Naturais do Estado de São Paulo*, 2019) was an initiative of the National Council of Justice related to the fulfillment of the United Nations Agenda 2030.

Agenda 2030 (UN) is "[...] an action plan with global goals and indicators, adopted by 193 countries, including the Brazilian State, which has as its scope the realization of human rights and the promotion of sustainable development in its social, economic, environmental and institutional dimensions (Provimento n. 85, de 19 de agosto de 2019, 2019). Among the objectives of Agenda 2030 (UN), number 16 aims at promoting justice, peace and effective institutions. The Civil Registry Offices are included more specifically in goals number 9: "By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration"; and number 10: "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national law and international agreements" (*Associação Nacional dos Registradores de Pessoas Naturais*, 2019). As for public access to information, civil registers in Brazil are considered public documents. Thus, it is the citizen's right to access it, except in cases that deal with the citizen's intimate life, such as, for example, in cases of adoption or exchange of sex.

In this context, the Civil Registry Transparency Portal was disclosed in 2018, a free access site developed to provide citizens with information and statistical data on births, marriages and deaths, among other related contents, maintained by Arpen Brasil from the data received through CRC. Based on the commitment to transparency, "[...] the CNJ published, in March 2020, Ordinance N°. 57, which orders the monitoring and supervision of statistical data on COVID-19 in the country" (*Associação Nacional dos Registradores de Pessoas Naturais do Estado de São Paulo*, 2019), which resulted in the publication of the panel called "Special COVID-19" in the Transparency Portal.

The "COVID-19 Special" presents data related to the deaths that occurred in Brazil that have as cause mortis suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. Also included in this panel were the numbers of deaths that had as cause of death other respiratory diseases that may be linked to COVID-19, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), pneumonia, respiratory failure, septicaemia (sepsis/septic shock), indeterminate (cause mortis linked to respiratory diseases, but not conclusive) and more recently, data have been added regarding deaths from cardiac causes, which at this time will not be analyzed.

According to what has been presented so far on the Interactive Panel COVID-19 of the Ministry of Health and the Civil Registry Transparency Portal, the following will show the possible interlocutions between these two

platforms that are being used for mapping COVID-19 in Brazilian territory.

## POSSIBLE INTERLOCUTIONS BETWEEN THE DATA OF THE PORTAL OF TRANSPARENCY OF THE CIVIL REGISTRY AND THE INTERACTIVE PANEL OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Before starting the analysis of the data presented in both sites, it is important to point out to the reader that the data on COVID-19 are constantly changing and will certainly be different until the publication of this article. However, the objective of the research is to present possible readings from the civil registers as a source of information about COVID-19 in Brazil.

As presented, the first confirmed case of death by COVID-19 in Brazil was released by the MS on March 17, 2020 (Ministério da Saúde, 2020a). However, according to the Civil Registry Transparency Portal in a survey conducted on September 21, 2020 there are eighteen suspected or confirmed deaths in Brazil between 01/01/2020 and 16/03/2020. The first suspect or confirmed case of death would be in Minas Gerais, on 01/2020. This example was brought only to elucidate that civil registries can present information that is not being exposed by the media nor by the Brazilian authorities. It is valid to emphasize that, because they are suspicious or confirmed cases, they can also be changed daily. This occurs when, after the death registration, the result of the test for COVID-19 is negative; in this case, there is the possibility that family members request the rectification of the death registration, which removes this information from the statistics.

## COMPARISON OF THE DATA AVAILABLE ON THE TRANSPARENCY PORTAL AND IN THE INTERACTIVE PANEL BY BRAZILIAN STATE

According to the Transparency Portal,

The updating of the Transparency Portal by the registers of deaths drawn up by the Civil Registry Offices complies with legal deadlines. The family has up to 24 hours after the death to register the death at the Registry Office, which, in turn, has up to five days to register the death, and then up to eight days to send the act made to the National Civil Registry Information Center (CRC Nacional), which updates this platform. (Associação Nacional dos Registradores de Pessoas Naturais, 2020).

Thus, the Civil Registry data may take up to 14 days to be sent to the Portal, this considering that the registration is made within the first 24 hours after the death. On the other hand, there are notary offices that have automated systems that from hour to hour or day to day send the information to CRC.

In addition, on the Transparency Portal, data regarding the confirmations are being considered, as well as the suspicious cases in which the doctor writes as *causa mortis* "suspect or probable for COVID-19". This became a requirement from Joint Ordinance No. 1 of March 30, 2020: "Single paragraph. In case of death due to suspicious respiratory disease for COVID-19, not confirmed by exams at the time of death, the description of cause mortis or as 'probable for COVID-19' or 'suspect for COVID-19' must be written in the Declaration of Death" (Provimento n. 93, de 26 de março de 2020, 2020). This ordinance brings reflections about the little testing caused by the low number of tests available in Brazil, besides the saturation of the laboratories responsible for the analysis of the samples received.

In Coronavirus Panel, the numbers presented are only of confirmed deaths, suspicions are not counted. As for the update, according to the website, "[...] the data provided by the states are consolidated and publicly available every day around 7pm (Ministério da Saúde, 2020a).

Considering the three months for registration according to Law No. 6,015 of 1973 allows, depending on the distance to the nearest registry office and that some states had collapsed in health over these six months, the following data on deaths by COVID-19 in Brazil will be presented in a survey conducted on September 21, 2020, using as deadlines March 27, 2020 to April 27, 2020.

This one-month period was chosen for some reasons: first, because the Interactive Panel of the Ministry of Health presents data only from March 27th, when it was created by the MH; second, that it is five months since the deaths occurred and thus the information was sent to the bases, even with the deadline for registration of the death extended by up to three months as already seen, the records presented between the end of March and April would already be closer to the reality experienced by Brazil in this beginning of the pandemic.

The available data were compiled according to what is available in the Transparency Portal - in the tab "Deaths with suspicion or confirmation of COVID-19 in B" - by date of death, as well as those disposed in the Interactive Panel COVID-19 in Brazil, by Brazilian state, in the cited period. In column 4 "difference in percentage" is the percentage relative to what increased or decreased in the relationship between the data of the two platforms. The states that present smaller data in the Transparency Portal than in the Interactive Panel are represented with an asterisk, which will be represented in a single frame below.

STATE	Transparency Portal (Civil Registry)	Covid-19 Interactive Panel (Ministry of Health)	Difference in Percentage
1) Acre	17	14	14,2857%
2) Alagoas	33	34	*3,0303%
3) Amapá	20	26	*30,0000%
4) Amazonas	395	320	23,4375%
5) Bahia	94	83	13,2530%
6) Ceará	638	390	63,5897%
7) Distrito Federal	51	37	88,8889%
8) Espírito Santo	93	61	52,4590%
9) Goiás	84	26	223,0769%
10) Maranhão	174	125	39,2000%
11) Mato Grosso	13	10	30,0000%
12) Mato Grosso do Sul	11	9	22,2222%
13) Minas Gerais	235	62	279,0323%
14) Pará	407	114	257,0175%
15) Paraíba	56	50	12,0000%
16) Paraná	162	75	116,0000%
17) Pernambuco	328	450	*37,1951%
18) Piauí	16	20	*25,0000%
19) Rio de Janeiro	2.325	677	243,4269%
20) Rio Grande do Norte	29	45	*55,1724%
21) Rio Grande do Sul	91	42	116,6667%
22) Rondônia	16	10	*100,0000%
23) Roraima	2	4	*100,0000%
24) Santa Catarina	66	43	53,4884%
25) São Paulo	3.008	1.825	64,8219%
26) Sergipe	9	10	*11,1111%
27) Tocantis	1	2	*100,0000%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.373</b>	<b>4.554</b>	<b>86.8603</b>

**Table 5.** Number of deaths by COVID-19 in the Transparency Portal and Coronavirus Panel by state.

**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2020), based on data available at the Transparency Portal and Coronavirus Panel sites.

Of the 26 states plus the Federal District, 8 states that are indicated with the asterisk in the table have more records in the Interactive Panel COVID-19 than in the Transparency Portal. The other 19 states have more records in the Transparency Portal than in the Coronavirus Panel.

States with <b>more</b> records in the COVID-19 Panel than in the Transparency Portal	States with <b>more</b> records in the Transparency Portal than in the COVID-19 Panel
1. Alagoas	1. Acre
2. Amapá	2. Amazonas
3. Pernambuco	3. Bahia
4. Piauí	4. Ceará
5. Rio Grande do Norte	5. Distrito Federal
6. Roraima	6. Espírito Santo
7. Sergipe	7. Goiás
8. Tocantis	8. Maranhão
	9. Mato Grosso
	10. Mato Grosso do Sul
	11. Minas Gerais
	12. Pará
	13. Paraíba
	14. Paraná

States with more records in the COVID-19 Panel than in the Transparency Portal	States with more records in the Transparency Portal than in the OVID-19 Panel
	15. Rio de Janeiro
	16. Rio Grande do Sul
	17. Rondônia
	18. Santa Catarina
	19. São Paulo

**Table 6.** Distinctions between the numbers presented in the Transparency Portal and Coronavirus Panel.

**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2020), based on data available at the Transparency Portal and Interactive Panel COVID-19 sites.

Considering that the Civil Registry Transparency Portal considers confirmed and suspect registrations, the numbers should all be greater than those presented by the Ministry of Health which are only the confirmed ones. However, what is observed is that these 8 states in the first column have a lower number than the number of death records, which may be an indication of under-registers of death. That is, the relatives may not be registering the death of the deceased.

The possibility of under-registering death raises some questions that permeate what was presented in table ?? at the beginning of this text. Without the death registration, the INSS will not know that the citizen died and may continue to pay benefits, for example; the title of voter of this citizen will continue to be valid, even after his death, because this information comes from the registry offices to government agencies through the SIRC and the CRC as explained above.

As for the second column, these are states that have more records in the Transparency Portal than in the COVID-19 Panel, which would be within "normality", since the civil records count suspects as well. However, as shown in the cutout of table 5 below, 6 states had an expressive number of cases more than double in the comparison.

Brazilian State	Transparency Portal (Civil Registry)	Covid-19 Interactive Panel (Ministry of Health)	Difference in Percentage	Difference in Real Numbers
Goiás	84	26	223,0769%	58
Minas Gerais	335	62	279,0323%	173
Pará	407	114	257,0175%	293
Paraná	162	75	116,0000%	87
Rio de Janeiro	2.325	677	243,4269%	1.648
Rio Grande do Sul	91	42	116,6667%	49

**Table 7.** States where there is the greatest difference between the number of death records and the numbers published by the Ministry of Health.

**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2020).

These data are indications that in these states there may have been collapses in the health system promoting underdiagnosis in the death registry, that is, there are many citizens dying with suspicion of COVID-19 without the examination being done or the result of the examination for COVID-19 being ready in time to be informed in the Declaration of Death. In addition, it is reaffirmed that citizens who have a "suspected COVID-19" death record may alter the record after the examination has been positive or negative, however, this process is not free of charge and consequently not all family members will return to the registries to make this record. For history this mention may mean a gap in the trajectory of COVID-19 in Brazil, one hundred years from now, for example, researchers may not really know who died by COVID-19 in Brazil.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the various questions raised and taking into account the general objective of contrasting the data related to COVID-19 in Brazil presented by civil registries with those pointed out by the Ministry of Health, it is believed that the research has achieved its purpose, bringing the most current regulations on Civil Registry in the midst of the pandemic; the available data; and possible reflections about them, such as the possibility of under-registering death and under-diagnosis of deaths by COVID-19 in Brazil and its consequences.

What was sought in this research was to demonstrate not only the numbers, which can still suffer alterations, but especially this range of information brought by civil registries and how much research and reflection can be carried out from them. To this end, it is suggested to readers to reapply the research in other periods.



It is salutary to demonstrate that the Civil Registry is a diverse source of information for citizens, government and researchers in general, and that it is intrinsically related to transparency and the right of access to public information, including represented in one of the objectives of Agenda 2030 (UN), contributing to justice, peace and effective institutions.

Finally, it is worth considering that these records that are being made today are also part of history. Just as the Spanish flu has marked the world, COVID-19 is already making its mark and will possibly be the reason for many researches developed during this century.

It is believed, however, that records, analyses and reflections like this will also show to the story that numbers can tell facts and that getting as close as possible to the real context is the objective of science in favor of life, quality of life and all its development.

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