GDI

Global Disinformation Index

Disinformation Risk Assessment:
The Online News Market in Argentina

GDI Global
Disinformation
Index

Table of contents

Executive summary

Since the news business has expanded to the online world, transformations in news production and distribution have exposed the industry to new disinformation risks.

News websites have financial incentives to spread disinformation in order to increase their online traffic and, ultimately, their advertising revenue. Meanwhile, the dissemination of disinformation has disruptive and impactful consequences. The COVID-19 pandemic offers a recent example. By disrupting society's shared sense of accepted facts, these narratives undermine public health, safety and government responses.

To combat ad-funded disinformation, the Global Disinformation Index (GDI) deploys its assessment framework to rate news domains' risk of disinforming their readers. These independent, trusted and neutral ratings are used by advertisers, ad tech companies, and platforms to redirect their online ad spending, in line with their brand safety and disinformation risk mitigation strategies.

GDI defines disinformation as 'adversarial narratives that create harm,' and the GDI risk rating provides information about a range of indicators related to the risk that a given news website will disinform its readers by spreading these adversarial narratives. These indicators are grouped under the index's **Content** and **Operations pillars**, which respectively measure the quality and reliability of a site's content and its operational and editorial integrity.[1] A site's overall risk rating is based on that site's aggregated score across all the indicators, and ranges from zero (maximum risk level) to 100 (minimum risk level).

The GDI risk rating methodology is not an attempt to identify and label disinformation sites or trustworthy news sites. Rather, GDI's approach is based on the idea that a combined set of indicators can reflect a site's overall risk of carrying disinformation. The ratings should be seen as offering initial insights into the Argentinian media market and its overall levels of disinformation risk, along with the strengths and challenges the sites face in mitigating disinformation risks.

The following report presents the findings pertaining to disinformation risks for the media market in Argentina, based on a study of 32 news domains. These findings are the result of the research led by the GDI in collaboration with two independent Argentinian researchers from March through September of 2021. All sites included in the report were informed of their individual scores and risk ratings, to allow for engagement and feedback.

The need for a trustworthy, independent rating of disinformation risk is pressing. This risk-rating framework for Argentina will provide crucial information to policy-makers, news websites, and the ad tech industry, enabling key decision-makers to stem the tide of money that incentivises and sustains disinformation.

Key findings: Argentina

In reviewing the media landscape for Argentina, GDI's assessment found that:

Only two sites in the sample present a minimum risk of disinformation.

- These sites received high scores on the **Content pillar** indicators, notably for **Article bias**, **Headline accuracy**, **Negative targeting**, **Sensational language** and **Visual presentation**.

- These sites scored better in the **Operations pillar** than the rest of the domains in the sample, although these scores are still considerably lower than the **Content pillar** indicators.

Most sites in Argentina (more than 90 percent) present a medium, high or maximum risk of disinformation.

- Half of the sites in the sample (17) presented a high level of disinformation risk, and one of them a maximum risk.

- The high-risk sites tend to publish articles with a higher degree of bias and sensational language than the medium-risk sites.

- Twelve sites in the sample (37.5 percent) fell in the medium-risk category.

- All of these sites scored poorly on the **Operations pillar** indicators and disclosed limited information about their funding structure, and about editorial principles and practices, and policies ensuring accuracy and correct attribution.

All sites scored lower in the Operations pillar than they did in the Content pillar.

- While sites do fairly well in the **Content pillar** (average score of 73), their scores are brought down by the much lower scores on the **Operations pillar** indicators (average of 27).

- Most Argentinian sites lacked publicly available operational policies. The lowest scores in the **Operations pillar** were for the indicators **Ensuring accuracy** (covering pre- and post-publication procedures), **Attribution** (such as sources' management, which both provides for accountability and ensures accuracy) and **Funding**.

- In the **Content pillar**, the lowest-scoring indicator, and the only value under 50 for the market average, is for **Byline information**.

The Argentinian media market:
Key features and scope

One of the main challenges for understanding the online news media market in Argentina is the lack of access to data describing both the supply and demand.

In particular, there seems to lack transparency regarding the financial details of media companies and disaggregated data on audience behaviour and preferences.[2] Media ownership is hard to trace given that the companies publish little information regarding their total revenues, operating profits, investments in advertising and market shares.[3]

When it comes to audiences, overall news consumption has been decreasing across all platforms in Argentina since 2017.[4] In particular, consumption of online news has declined from 92 percent to 83 percent, TV from 81 percent to 64 percent, and print from 45 percent to 20 percent. In parallel to news consumption, there is also a decline in trust in the media. When compared with the 46 other countries analysed by the Reuters Digital News Report 2021, Argentina ranks as one of the most distrustful of its media ecosystem.

Argentina presents high levels of political polarisation which translate into the media industry. This polarisation contributes to the erosion of the overarching reputation of many well-known media brands. For instance, 41 percent of respondents said they trusted Clarín and 36 percent trusted Página 12, while a similarly high percentage, 33 percent of the respondents, distrusted them.[5] In fact, according to the latest data by the Reuters Digital News Report, although trust in news overall and in news used by respondents increased when compared to the previous year, they are considerably lower than the peak values in 2018 (41 percent and 47 percent, respectively).[6]

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic there was heightened interest and attention in the news, however, this rapidly turned into fatigue and interest waned after a few months. As a consequence, the ongoing crisis of the news sector deepened. As reported by Martín Becerra, the pandemic accelerated the shutdown of media companies, reinforced the migration of advertising funds from traditional media to social media platforms, and often interfered with the exercise of journalism in the country.[7] According to the latest official data on advertising investments, the country is transitioning into a media market led by digital platforms. In 2020 there was an overall drop in estimated investments in media advertising of 31 percent as compared to the previous year, but the drop shows important variation between media types. While the estimated investments on ads dropped 58 percent in print newspapers and 42 percent on radio, they decreased by only 8 percent for internet ads. Moreover, only digital media received a considerably larger share of the advertising investments.[8]

Throughout 2021, Argentinians primarily chose online media (83 percent) for news consumption, but also relied on TV (64 percent) and print newspapers to a lesser extent (20 percent).[9] This trend raises concerns about disinformation risks in the near future, especially in the absence of appropriate regulatory safeguards. For instance, Argentina lacks effective regulation to guarantee net neutrality, which is the principle that internet service providers (ISPs) must treat all internet traffic equally. The application of this regulatory principle implies that ISPs cannot discriminate or favour some content, platform or method of communication over others, allowing the users to decide fairly. Although there is a legal framework in Argentina that protects net neutrality, no national authority or agency is currently monitoring and enforcing these laws. In fact, some of the leading telecommunication providers in Argentina (Movistar, Telecom and Claro) currently violate net neutrality by offering plans with discounted prices on mobile data consumption with WhatsApp.[10] Addressing this lack of regulation is critical because messaging apps like WhatsApp are vehicles for disinformation as they make it harder to track and debunk potentially harmful information.

Disinformation risk ratings

This study looks specifically at a sample of 32 Argentinian news websites in Spanish.

Market overview

The sample was selected based on each site's reach (using Alexa rankings, Facebook followers, and Twitter followers), relevance, and the ability to gather complete data for the sites.

Table 1. Media sites assessed in Argentina (in alphabetical order)

News outlet	Domain	News outlet	Domain
A24	www.a24.com	La Gaceta	www.lagaceta.com.ar
Ámbito	www.ambito.com	La Izquierda Diario	www.laizquierdadiario.com
Cadena 3	www.cadena3.com	LA NACION	www.lanacion.com.ar
Ciudad Magazine	www.ciudad.com.ar	La Voz	www.lavoz.com.ar
Clarín	www.clarin.com	Los Andes	www.losandes.com.ar
Crónica	www.cronica.com.ar	Mdz	www.mdzol.com
Diario La Capital	www.lacapital.com.ar	MinutoUno	www.minutouno.com
El Cronista	www.cronista.com	Misiones Cuatro	www.misionescuatro.com
El Destape	www.eldestapeweb.com	Misiones Online	www.misionesonline.net
El Intransigente	www.elintransigente.com	Noticias En Red	www.notienred.info
El Liberal	www.elliberal.com.ar	Página 12	www.pagina12.com.ar
El Litoral	www.ellitoral.com	Perfil	www.perfil.com
El Tucumano	www.eltucumano.com	Real Politik	www.realpolitik.com.ar
Infobae	www.infobae.com	Télam	www.telam.com.ar
iProfesional	www.iprofesional.com	Telefe Noticias	www.telefenoticias.com.ar
La Arena	www.laarena.com.ar	TN	www.tn.com.ar

Source: Global Disinformation Index

The findings for the Argentinian news media market show that most of the sites in our sample present a significant level of disinformation risk. In fact, of the 32 online outlets assessed, only two have a minimum risk of disinforming. No sites scored high enough to fit in the adjacent low-risk category. The vast majority of the domains studied (29 out of 32) ranged from medium to high levels, which means they face significant challenges in terms of disinformation risk. One domain falls in the maximum disinformation risk category (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Disinformation risk ratings by site

Risk level: ■ Minimum ■ Medium ■ High ■ Maximum
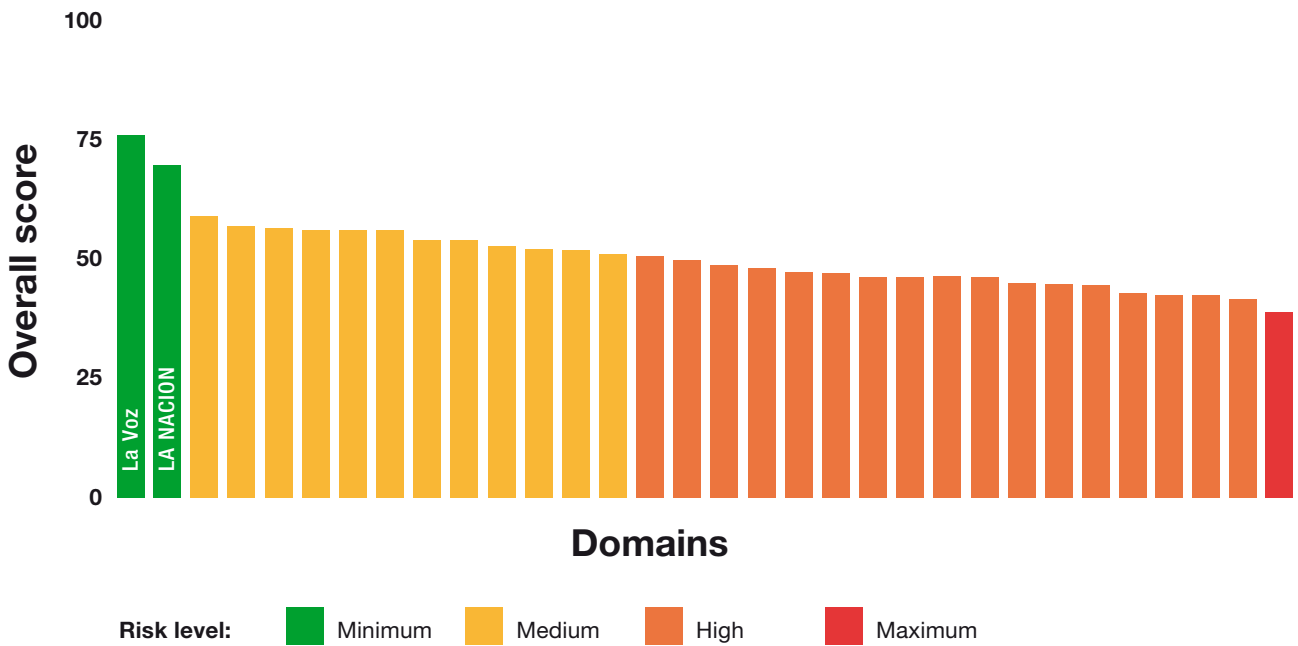
Source: Global Disinformation Index

The overall performance of online media in Argentina reveals that the sites achieved a higher average in the **Content pillar** (73 out of 100) than in the **Operations pillar** (27 out of 100; see figure 2). This means that for most of the websites in our sample, operational aspects could be addressed to lower their overall disinformation risk, by disclosing information on sources of funding, on ownership and on editorial policies. Although there is a wide variation in performance between sites belonging to different risk categories, all sites across the board (especially high- and maximum-risk websites) would benefit from adopting necessary operational checks and balances and publishing them on their websites (see figure 3).

**Figure 2.** Overall market scores, by pillar
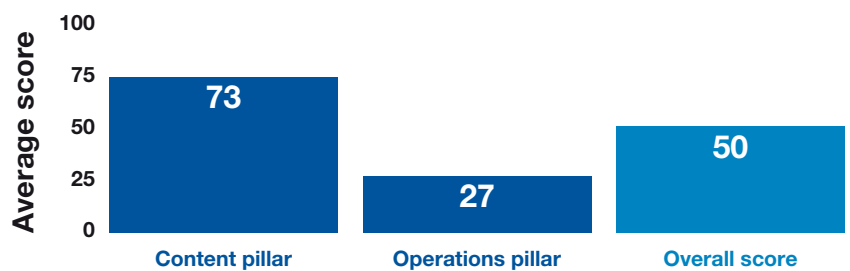
Source: Global Disinformation Index

Two sites in the Argentinian market fit the minimum-risk category. While they scored quite well on the **Content pillar** indicators with an average score of 81, their overall score was brought down by a lower performance in the **Operations pillar** (an average score of 64). Only one site belonging to this category provided enough information on its internal guidelines to verify the authenticity of sources and media used in the articles and to guarantee accountability of the stories. This lower score in the **Operations pillar** due to a lack of transparency is a common phenomenon for all the 32 sites analysed.

There are twelve sites in Argentina that were rated as medium-risk sites. They scored fairly well in the **Content pillar**. However, these sites disclosed little data on their sources of funding and ownership. Furthermore, they generally do not transparently share, to the benefit of their readers, guidelines to ensure that the information they publish is accurate and correctly sourced, nor do they reveal their internal policies to ensure editorial independence.

Seventeen sites fall in the high-risk category and one in the maximum-risk category. Similarly to the medium-risk sites, these sites have relatively high **Content pillar** scores, although their articles are more biased and have a more sensational tone than those in the previous category. They do not publicly share adequate information about their ownership structure. Other operational indicators evaluated revealed that these sites were opaque on their attribution and editorial policies.

**Figure 3.** Average pillar scores by risk rating level
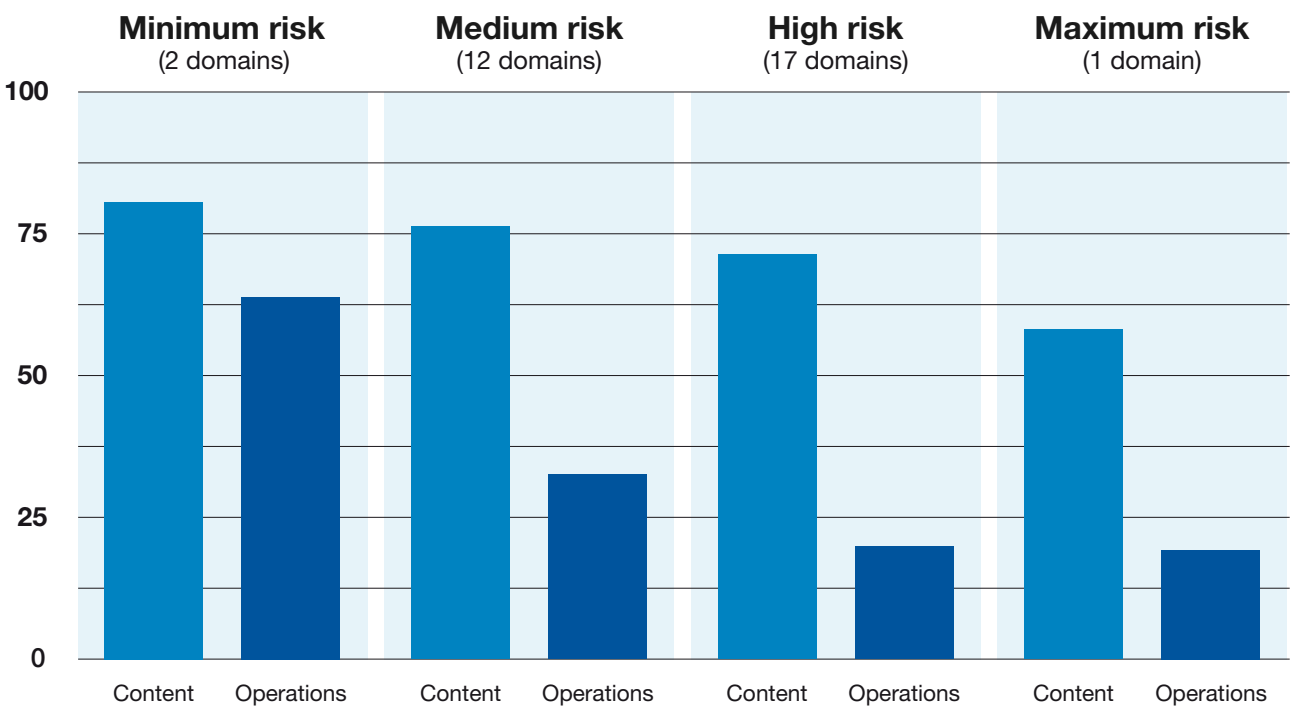
Source: Global Disinformation Index

Pillar overview

Content pillar

The **Content pillar** focuses on the reliability of the content provided on the site. Analysis for this pillar is based on an assessment of ten anonymised articles for each domain. These articles were drawn from the most frequently shared pieces of content during the data collection period and from a sample of content pertaining to topics which present a disinformation risk, such as politics and health. Country reviewers coded a series of indicators for each piece, which was aggregated and normalised, resulting in the final score for each domain. All article scores are based on a scale going from zero (worst) to 100 (best).

Figure 4. Average Content pillar scores by indicator
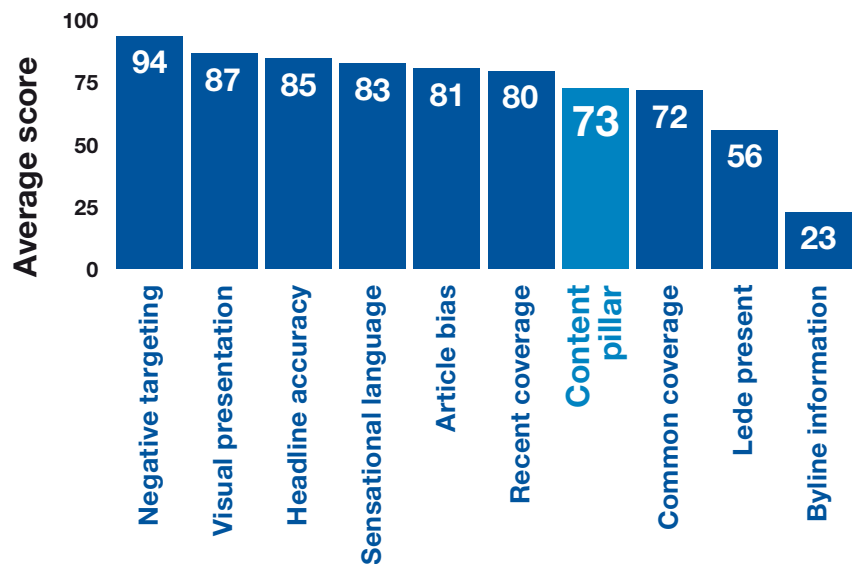
Source: Global Disinformation Index

Most media perform fairly well in the **Content pillar** in Argentina. Although there is a considerable amount of variation in their performance, no domain scored below 58 on this pillar. The average score was 73.25, and 16 out of the 32 reviewed sites had above-average scores in the **Content pillar**. Moreover, 25 out of 32 sites scored 71 or higher. In our sample most domains published well-balanced articles with little presence of bias and only few domains resorted to negative targeting against specific people or groups. Additionally, most of the sites seemed to feature limited use of sensational language and visual elements in their articles.

All domains did fairly well in terms of headline accuracy, as no site in the sample scored lower than 72.5 on average on this indicator. This means that the headlines on most media sites generally reflected the content of the piece. Accurate headlines usually imply that readers know what information to expect from an article and trust they will not be misled by sensationalist claims to click and find completely unrelated content. However, accurate headlines were not as frequently matched with the presence of fact-based ledes in our sample. Fact-based ledes give readers a quick overview of the facts covered in an article and indicate that the publication anchors its reporting to facts and events, rather than couching events in biased or inflammatory narratives.

The indicator that dragged down the **Content pillar** average was the **Byline information** indicator, which scored an average of 23 out of 100. The sites which scored the highest on the **Content pillar** seem to do better than the rest in publishing bylines with their articles. Nevertheless,this indicator features the weakest performance for most Argentinian domains. Publishing bylines can signal transparency about the authors of the articles and encourage accountability for their content.

**Figure 5.** Content pillar scores by site

Source: Global Disinformation Index

Operations pillar

The **Operations pillar** assesses the operational and editorial integrity of a news site. All scores are based on a scale of zero (worst) to 100 (best), as scored by the country reviewers according to the information available on the site. The operations indicators are the quickest wins to reduce disinformation risk ratings, as they represent policies that domains can immediately establish and make public.

Most of the sites analysed in our sample scored poorly in the **Operations pillar**. The average score for the **Operations pillar** was 27. This means that most domains lacked transparency about the way they operate, since they generally did not make public their policies and guidelines regarding their online content or provide sufficient information on funding and ownership. Only one out of the 32 reviewed sites scored above 69, indicating a low risk of disinformation borne by the **Operations pillar**.

Figure 6. Average Operations pillar scores by indicator
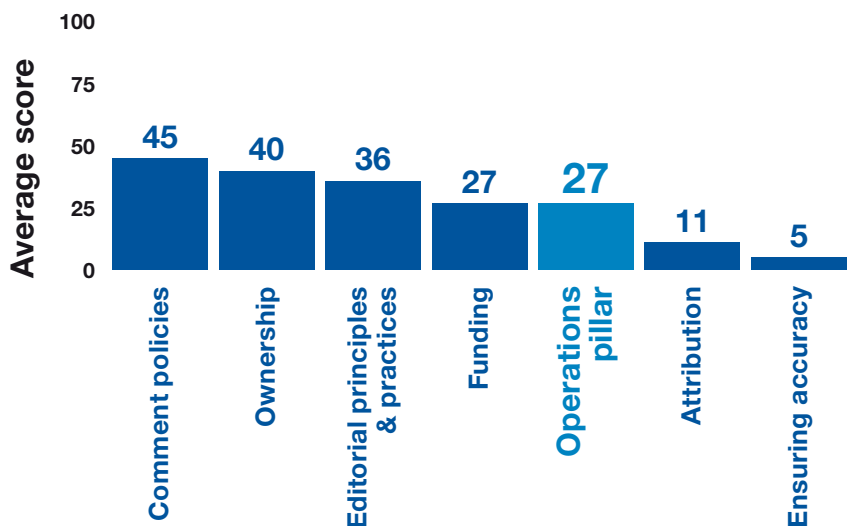
Source: Global Disinformation Index

Disclosing information on the ownership and funding structure of a news outlet provides the reader with elements to evaluate the existence of conflicts of interest and of editorial independence. However, only 8 out of the 32 domains analysed disclosed enough information on their ownership structure and the division between the editorial staff and owners to reach a score higher than 66 in the **Ownership** indicator.

Other elements evaluated in this pillar are the policies and practices that determine how the content is produced. To ensure accuracy, domains can conduct pre-publication fact checking and post-publication corrections when errors occur. They can also establish clear guidelines to ensure editorial independence. However, only two sites have stated on their websites that they follow these types of procedures. The remaining 30 sites revealed no information on measures to guarantee accuracy and only scarce information on editorial independence policies.

Another aspect evaluated in this pillar are the policies on the attribution of the content published. With the exception of one domain in the sample, sites did not, or barely, explain to their readers how they treat their sources, how they treat external content (like photographs and videos and statistics) to guarantee authenticity, or ensure there is a byline in every piece published. When sites include a comments section, they provide a space for content creation and dissemination. If unregulated and uncontrolled, this can foster the spread of misinformation. In this regard, as Figure 6 shows, Argentinian sites performed better than in other operational areas. Many of the domains which allowed a comment section had policies in place that are available to readers, in order to moderate user-generated comments.

The low overall score in the **Operations pillar** in the Argentinian market is the result of the lack of public disclosure of the operational aspects of most news domains. Although the absence of published policies or guidelines does not necessarily mean that such guidelines do not exist, it does hinder accountability and public trust. For this reason, merely by making publicly available these operational policies, Argentinian media outlets could significantly improve their scores.

Figure 7. Operations pillar scores by site
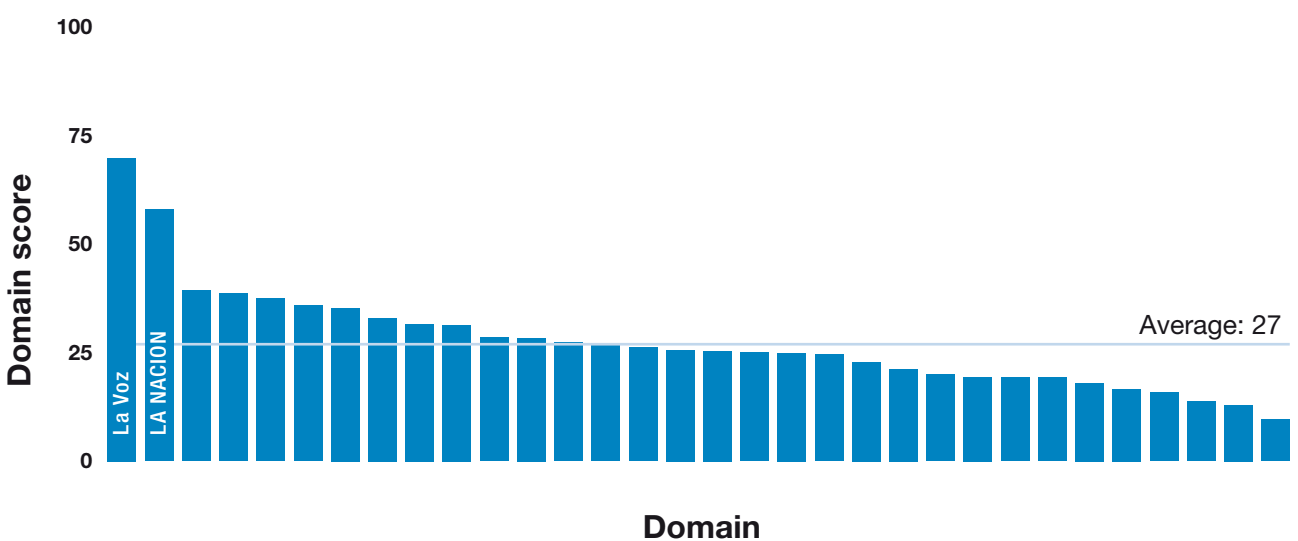
Source: Global Disinformation Index

Conclusion

The analysis of the Argentinian media market reveals that, while sites performed relatively well on the Content pillar, they achieved a lower score in the Operations pillar.

This means that while they managed to produce fairly credible content on average, they did not disclose enough information on their internal policies and rules for readers to be able to assess quality and reliability.

Two sites in the Argentinian media market scored well enough to be in the minimum-risk category. Consequently, most media outlets ended up in the medium- and high-risk categories, while one of them reached scores low enough that it was considered to be at a high risk of disinforming its online readers.

News sites could address these shortcomings by taking the following actions:

- Focus on adopting journalistic and operational standards that increase transparency about the overall policies of the site.

- Publish articles' bylines, as publishing the identity of the author is an easy way to ensure transparency and accountability. Furthermore, it gives readers the opportunity to check whether the author is an actual person or a false identity being used to publish disinformation.

- Improve and make more visible a site's correction practices for published errors. It is important that these corrections are clearly seen and understood, rather than being hidden 'below the fold' on a web page.

- Improve and make more visible a site's pre-publication fact-checking policies and sources' management. This explains the reader how a site ensures that the content published is accurate and verified, improving trust.

- Ensure that sites publish a statement of editorial independence, guidelines for ensuring accuracy and attribution in reporting, and policies for user-generated comments.

- Encourage sites to clearly publish their sources of funding directly on their page, rather than on a parent company site. This information helps to build trust in the site and dispel doubts about how it is funded.

- Make information about the news media outlet's owner easily available on the main site and not a parent company's site. This avoids suspicion and speculations that might hinder the site's trustworthiness.

The use of a Disinformation Index to analyse Argentinian media outlets aims to push sites to perform better. In a context of growing distrust in the media, news sites have much to do to reverse this phenomenon and improve their reputation. This might be achievable by making public their editorial rules, their funding and ownership structure.

Appendix: Methodology

The Global Disinformation Index evaluates the level of disinformation risk of a country's online media market. The country's online media market is represented by a sample of 30 to 35 news domains that are selected on the basis of their Alexa rankings, their number of social media followers, and the expertise of local researchers. The resulting sample features major national news sites with high levels of online engagement, news sites that reflect the regional, linguistic and cultural composition of the country, and news sites that influence ideas among local decision-makers, groups or actors.

The index is composed of the **Content** and **Operations pillars**. The pillars are, in turn, composed of several indicators. The **Content pillar** includes indicators that assess elements and characteristics of each domain's content to capture its level of credibility, sensationalism, and impartiality. The **Operations pillar** indicators evaluate the policies and rules that a specific domain establishes to ensure the reliability and quality of the news being published. These policies concern, for instance, conflicts of interest, accurate reporting and accountability.

Each of GDI's media market risk assessments are conducted in collaboration with a local team of media and disinformation experts who develop the media list for the market sample, contribute to the sampling frame for the content included in the **Content pillar** review, conduct the data collection for the **Content** and **Operations pillars**, vet and interpret the index results, and draft the market report.

Site selection

The market sample for the study is developed based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative criteria. GDI begins by creating a list of the 50 news websites with the greatest traffic in the media market. This list is provided to the country research team, along with data on the number of Facebook and Twitter followers for each

site, to gauge relevance and reach. The local research team then reduces the list to 35 sites, ensuring that the sample provides adequate geographic, linguistic and political coverage to capture the major media discourses in the market. International news outlets are generally excluded, because their risk ratings are assessed in the market from which they originate.[11] News aggregators are also excluded, so that all included sites are assessed on their original content. The final media market sample reflects the complete set of between 30 to 35 sites for which complete data could be collected throughout the review process.

Global Disinformation Index Technical Advisory Group

GDI's risk assessment framework is developed with the advice and support of a technical advisory group (TAG), including:

- Ben Nimmo (Facebook)
- Camille François (Niantic)
- Miguel Martinez (co-founder and chief data scientist, Signal AI)
- Nic Newman (Reuters Institute of Journalism)
- Olaf Steenfadt (Reporters without Borders)
- Cristina Tardáguila (Lupa)
- Amy Mitchell (Pew Research)
- Scott Hale (Meedan and Credibility Coalition)
- Finn Heinrich (OSF), and
- Laura Zommer (Chequeado)

Data collection

The **Content pillar** indicators are based on the review of a sample of ten articles published by each domain. Five of these articles are randomly selected among a domain's most frequently shared articles on Facebook within a two-week period. The remaining five articles are randomly selected among a group of a domain's articles covering topics that are likely to carry disinformation narratives. The topics, and the associated set of keywords used to identify them, are jointly developed by GDI and the in-country research team. Each country team contributes narrative topics and the keywords used to identify them in the local media discourse to GDI's global topic classifier list, developed by GDI's data science and intelligence teams. Country teams also manually verify the machine translation of the entire topic list into the relevant study languages.

The sampled articles are anonymised by stripping them of any information that allows the analysts to identify the publisher or the author of the articles. The anonymised content is reviewed by two country analysts who are trained on the GDI codebook. For each anonymised article, the country analysts answer a set of 13 questions designed to evaluate the elements and characteristics of the article and its headline, in terms of bias, sensationalism and negative targeting. The analysts subsequently review how the article is presented on the domain and the extent to which the domain provides information on the author's byline and timeline. While performing the **Content pillar** reviews, the analysts are required to provide a thorough explanation and gather evidence to support their decisions.

The **Operations pillar** is based on the information gathered during the manual assessment of each domain performed by the country analysts. The country analysts answer a set of 98 questions designed to evaluate each domain's ownership, management and funding structure, editorial independence, principles and guidelines, attribution policies, error-correction and fact-checking policies, and rules and policies for the comments section. The analysts gather evidence to support their assessments as they perform each **Operations pillar** review.

Data analysis and indicator construction

The data gathered by the country analysts for the **Content pillar** are used to compute nine indicators. The **Content pillar** indicators included in the final risk rating are: **Headline accuracy**, **Byline information**, **Lede present**, **Common coverage**, **Recent coverage**, **Negative targeting**, **Article bias**, **Sensational language** and **Visual presentation**. For each indicator, values are normalised to a scale of 0 to 100. The domain-level score for each indicator in this pillar is the average score obtained across the ten articles. The pillar score for each domain is the average of all the scores for all of the pillar's indicators, and ranges from 0 to 100.

For the **Operations pillar**, the answers of the country analysts are translated into a set of sub-indicators. The six indicators are calculated as the averages of these sub-indicator scores. The resulting **Operations pillar's** indicators are: **Attribution**, **Comment policies**, **Editorial principles and practices**, **Ensuring accuracy**, **Funding**, and **Ownership**. For each indicator, values are normalised to a scale of 0 to 100. The domain score for the **Operations pillar** is the average score across indicators.

Table 2. Global Disinformation Index pillars and indicators

Pillar	Indicator	Sub-indicators	Unit of analysis	Definition	Rationale
Content	Headline accuracy	None	Article	Rating for how accurately the story's headline describes the content of the story	Indicative of clickbait
	Byline information			Rating for how much information is provided in the article's byline	Attribution of stories creates accountability for their veracity
	Lede present			Rating for whether the article begins with a fact-based lede	Indicative of fact-based reporting and high journalistic standards
	Common coverage			Rating for whether the same event has been covered by at least one other reliable local media outlet	Indicative of a true and significant event
	Recent coverage			Rating for whether the story covers a news event or development that occurred within 30 days prior to the article's publication date	Indicative of a newsworthy event, rather than one which has been taken out of context
	Negative targeting			Rating for whether the story negatively targets a specific individual or group	Indicative of hate speech, bias or an adversarial narrative
	Article bias			Rating for the degree of bias in the article	Indicative of neutral, fact-based reporting or well-rounded analysis
	Sensational language			Rating for the degree of sensationalism in the article	Indicative of neutral, fact-based reporting or well-rounded analysis
	Visual presentation			Rating for the degree of sensationalism in the visual presentation of the article	Indicative of neutral, fact-based reporting or well-rounded analysis
Operations	Attribution	None	Domain	Rating for the number of policies and practices identified on the site	Assesses policies regarding the attribution of stories, facts and media (either publicly or anonymously); indicative of policies that ensure accurate facts, authentic media and accountability for stories
	Comment policies	Policies		Rating for the number of policies identified on the site	Assesses policies to reduce disinformation in user-generated content
		Moderation		Rating for the mechanisms to enforce comment policies identified on the site	Assesses the mechanism to enforce policies to reduce disinformation in user-generated content
	Editorial principles and practices	Editorial independence		Rating for the number of policies identified on the site	Assesses the degree of editorial independence and the policies in place to mitigate conflicts of interest
		Adherence to narrative		Rating for the degree to which the site is likely to adhere to an ideological affiliation, based on its published editorial positions	Indicative of politicised or ideological editorial decision-making
		Content guidelines		Rating for the number of policies identified on the site	Assesses the policies in place to ensure that factual information is reported without bias
		News vs. analysis		Rating for the number of policies and practices identified on the site	Assesses the policies in place to ensure that readers can distinguish between news and opinion content
	Ensuring accuracy	Pre-publication fact-checking		Rating for the number of policies and practices identified on the site	Assesses policies to ensure that only accurate information is reported
		Post-publication corrections		Rating for the number of policies and practices identified on the site	Assesses policies to ensure that needed corrections are adequately and transparently disseminated
	Funding	Diversified incentive structure		Rating for the number of revenue sources identified on the site	Indicative of possible conflicts of interest stemming from over-reliance on one or few sources of revenue
		Accountability to readership		Rating based on whether reader subscriptions or donations are identified as a revenue source	Indicative of accountability for high-quality information over content that drives ad revenue
		Transparent funding		Rating based on the degree of transparency the site provides regarding its sources of funding	Indicative of the transparency that is required to monitor the incentives and conflicts of interest that can arise from opaque revenue sources
	Ownership	Owner-operator division		Rating based on the number of distinct executive or board-level financial and editorial decision-makers listed on the site	Indicative of a separation between financial and editorial decision-making, to avoid conflicts of interest
		Transparent ownership		Rating based on the degree of transparency the site provides regarding its ownership structure	Indicative of the transparency that is required to monitor the incentives and conflicts of interest that can arise from opaque ownership structures

Source: Global Disinformation Index

Risk ratings

The overall index score for each domain is the average of the pillar scores. The domains are then classified on the basis of a five-category risk scale based on the overall index score. The risk categories were defined based on the distribution of risk ratings from 180 sites across six media markets in September 2020.

This cross-country dataset was standardised to fit a normal distribution with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The standardised scores and their distance from the mean were used to determine the bands for each risk level, given in table 3. These bands are then used to categorise the risk levels for sites in each subsequent media market analysis.

Table 3. Disinformation risk levels

Risk level	Lower limit	Upper limit	Standard deviation
Minimum risk	69.12	100	> 1.5
Low risk	59.81	69.11	> 0.5 and ≤ 1.5
Medium risk	50.5	59.8	> -0.5 and ≤ 0.5
High risk	41.2	50.49	≥ -1.5 and ≤ -0.5
Maximum risk	0	41.19	< -1.5

Source: Global Disinformation Index

Disclaimer

GDI discourages the direct comparison between the current report and the 2020 Argentina report. The two reports are indeed based on different versions of our methodology. The latter has been updated and refined in reference to the data gathering process, the indicator computation, the definition of the risk bounds, and other steps in the manual research process.

Although the resulting scores obtained with the current and previous versions of the methodology are consistent, a direct comparison is not recommended.

Endnotes

1   The GDI assessment framework is outlined in the annex of this report.

2   Reporters Without Borders. Media Ownership Monitor. Argentina. https://argentina.mom-rsf.org/en/findings/findings/#!9fed61067e34232006ff7dcd0ed479d0.

3   Reporters Without Borders. Media Ownership Monitor. Argentina. https://argentina.mom-rsf.org/en/findings/findings/#!9fed61067e34232006ff7dcd0ed479d0.

4   Reuters Digital News Report 2021. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf.

5   Reuters Digital News Report 2021. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf.

6   Reuters Digital News Report 2021. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf.

7   See https://martinbecerra.wordpress.com/2021/07/08/argentina-juega-al-desconfio-de-las-noticias/.

8   See https://www.agenciasdemedios.com.ar/inversiones-publicitarias/.

9   Reuters Digital News Report 2021. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf.

10 Reporters Without Borders. Media Ownership Monitor. Argentina. https://argentina.mom-rsf.org/en/findings/findings/#!bb160f6dd3eebfdbf422b340b62b8d9c.

11 In select cases, international news outlets may be included in a study if the domestic market is small, the sites are considered highly relevant, the content on the site is specific to the market assessed, and GDI has not developed a risk rating for that site elsewhere.

GDI | Global Disinformation Index