

GDI

Global
Disinformation
Index

Media Market Risk Ratings: Argentina

www.disinformationindex.org

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The **Global Disinformation Index** is a UK-based not-for-profit that operates on the three principles of neutrality, independence and transparency. Our vision is a world in which we can trust what we see in the media. Our mission is to restore trust in the media by providing real-time automated risk ratings of the world's media sites through a Global Disinformation Index (GDI). The GDI is non-political. Our Advisory Panel consists of international experts in disinformation, indices and technology. For more information, visit www.disinformationindex.org

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Preface

Since the invention of the web, how we live our lives online—and off—has changed in countless ways. This includes how news is funded, produced, consumed and shared.

With these shifts in the news industry have come risks. Disinformation is one of them. Disinformation has been used as a tool to weaponise mass influence and disseminate propaganda. During the COVID-19 pandemic, disinformation has created an infodemic undermining public health, safety and government responses. No country or media market is immune from these threats.

To combat disinformation, we need to find ways to disrupt the system and its funding. This is where the Global Disinformation Index (GDI) has set its focus.

At the GDI, we believe that an independent, trusted and neutral risk rating of news sites' disinformation risks is needed. These risk ratings can be used by advertisers and ad tech companies to ensure that where they direct their online ad spends is aligned with their own brand safety and risk mitigation strategies for disinformation.

The GDI's research offers a trusted and neutral assessment about a news domain's risk of disinforming. By looking at structural, content, operational and context indicators, the GDI provides a domain-level rating about a news site's risk of disinforming an online user.

The following report presents the results of applying the GDI risk rating methodology to some of the frequently visited media sites in Argentina. In total we assessed 32 sites. The country was chosen because of its diverse and respected media market, its sizeable advertising market, and its challenges with misinformation and disinformation in the past.

The purpose of GDI's domain risk ratings are to highlight the media outlets that minimise the risk of disinformation online for readers and advertisers, and to encourage positive progress among media outlets. GDI only identifies sites in its market studies that stand as top performers in a given area. For Argentina, this report highlights the sites that scored 85 or above on any of the three overall areas assessed: Content (i.e. reliability of content), Operations (i.e. operational and editorial integrity) and Context (i.e. perceptions of brand trust). The remainder of the site results are anonymised here, although all site-level scores and findings have been shared directly with the media outlets.

In general, the findings show that Argentine media performs relatively well on Content, but has significant room for improvement in Operations. The named sites are market-leaders for neutral news reporting, and all have the potential to move into the "low risk" category with operational improvements.

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

1. www.a24.com	12. www.eltucumano.com	23. www.minutouno.com
2. www.ambito.com	13. www.infobae.com/america	24. www.misionescuatro.com
3. www.cadena3.com	14. www.iprofesional.com	25. www.misionesonline.net
4. www.ciudad.com.ar	15. www.laarena.com.ar	26. www.notienred.info
5. www.clarin.com	16. www.lacapital.com.ar	27. www.pagina12.com.ar
6. www.cronica.com.ar	17. www.lagaceta.com.ar	28. www.perfil.com
7. www.cronista.com	18. www.laizquierdadiario.com	29. www.realpolitik.com.ar
8. www.eldestapeweb.com	19. www.lanacion.com.ar	30. www.telam.com.ar
9. www.elintransigente.com	20. www.lavoz.com.ar	31. www.telefenoticias.com.ar
10. www.elliberal.com.ar	21. www.losandes.com.ar	32. www.tn.com.ar
11. www.ellitoral.com	22. www.mdzol.com	

Introduction

The harms of disinformation¹ are proliferating around the globe—threatening our elections, our health, and our shared sense of accepted facts.

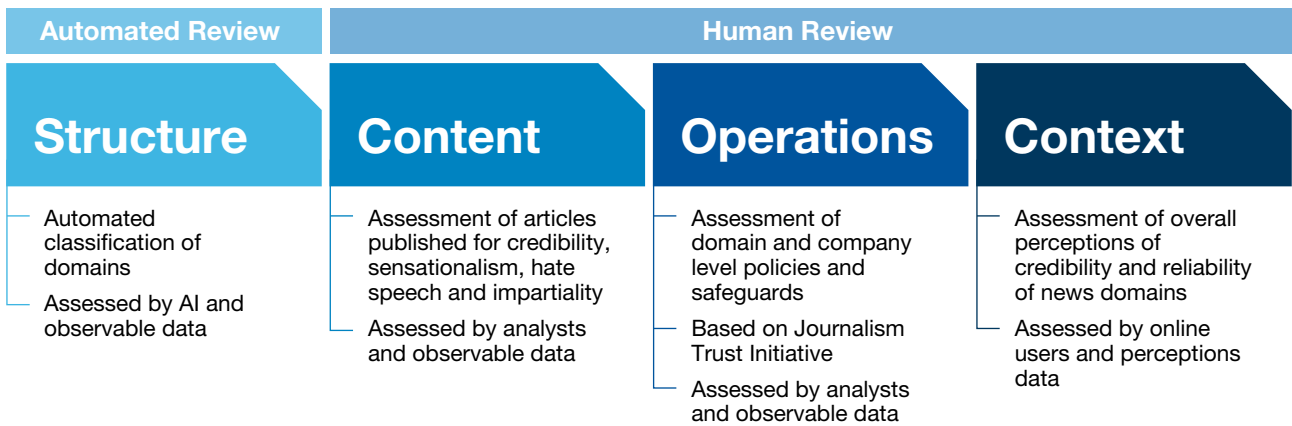
The infodemic laid bare by COVID-19 conspiracy theories clearly shows that disinformation costs peoples' lives. Websites masquerading as news outlets are driving and profiting financially from the situation.

The goal of the Global Disinformation Index (GDI) is to disrupt the revenue streams that incentivise and sustain the spread of disinformation. Using both artificial and human intelligence, the GDI has created an assessment framework to rate the disinformation risk of news domains.²

The GDI risk rating provides advertisers, ad tech companies and platforms with greater information about a range of disinformation flags related to a site's Structure (i.e. metadata and lexical features),³ Content (i.e. reliability of content), Operations (i.e. operational and editorial integrity) and Context (i.e. perceptions of brand trust; see Figure 2). The findings in this report are based on the three pillars that were manually reviewed: Content, Operations, and Context.⁴ A site's disinformation risk level is based on that site's aggregated score across these three pillars.

A site's overall score ranges from zero (maximum risk level) to 100 (minimum risk level). Each indicator that is included in the framework is scored from zero to 100. The output of the index is the site's overall disinformation risk level, rather than the truthfulness or journalistic quality of the site.

Figure 2. Overview of the GDI disinformation risk assessment



The following report presents findings pertaining to disinformation risks for the media market in Argentina, based on a study of 32 news domains.⁵ The data provide an initial snapshot of the overall strengths and challenges that these sites face to mitigate disinformation risks.⁶

All of these findings come from research led by the GDI. The study took place between June and September 2020, with the survey conducted between June and July 2020. The media list was compiled in partnership with Chequeado, an Argentine fact-checking organisation. It was designed to look at the most relevant and popular sites in the country, based on their Alexa rankings and followers on Facebook and Twitter. Key provincial and niche media sites were also included.

The GDI risk rating methodology is not an attempt to identify truth and falsehoods. It does not label any site as a disinformation site or, inversely, as a trusted news site. Rather, our approach is based on the idea that a range of signals, when evaluated together, can indicate a site's risk of carrying disinformation.

The scores should be seen as offering initial insights into the Argentine media market and its overall levels of disinformation risk. The results are open to debate and refinement with stakeholders from news sites, advertisers and the ad tech industry. (The annex to this report outlines the assessment framework).⁷ We look forward to this engagement.

Key Findings: Argentina

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

Nearly two-thirds of the sites in our sample have a high risk of disinforming their online users (See Figure 3).

- 21 out of 32 sites present a high disinformation risk rating.
- Many of these sites score very poorly on operational policies. Most of them entirely fail to meet the universal standards for editorial and operational policies.

Nearly a third of the sites in our sample have a medium-risk rating (See Figure 3).

- Ten out of 32 sites present a medium-risk rating.
- These sites tend to perform relatively well on the content indicators, especially for having non-biased and non-sensational content.
- These sites still perform poorly when it comes to the use of bylines and lack some of the operational transparency and editorial safeguards, including information on their sources of funding.

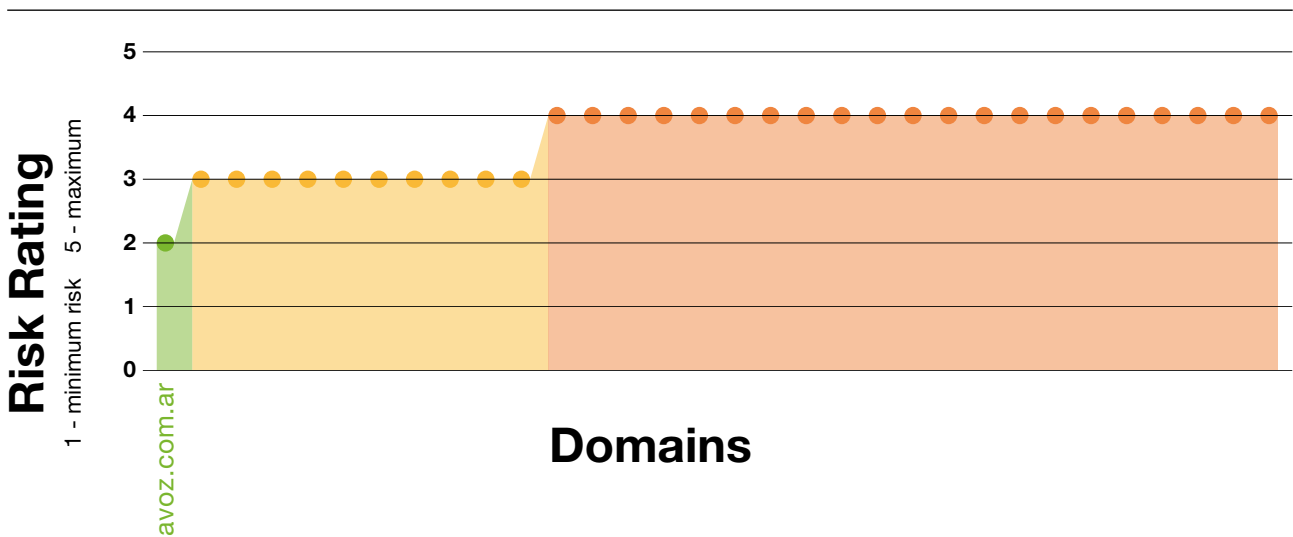
There is only one site that presents low levels of disinformation risks (See Figure 3).

- Only one site—the regional paper La Voz del Interior (www.lavoz.com.ar)—was rated as having a low disinformation risk. It scores almost perfectly on all of the content indicators except for the consistent use of bylines on the articles assessed.
- The site also had several operational policies in place that others in the sample did not, including information about its guidelines for user-generated content, a statement of editorial independence, and a clear process for correcting errors.
- However, the site lacks a few of the operational checks and balances that are considered critical for running an independent and accountable newsroom. This includes incomplete information about its funding and ownership.

Many of the risk factors in Argentina come from weak operational transparency and a lack of editorial safeguards, including information on their sources of funding and revenue.

- Only one of the sites has a published statement of editorial independence.
- Only two sites have published an error corrections policy and process.
- If these globally-agreed operational policies were all in place in newsrooms, the scores—and risk ratings—would significantly strengthen for the Argentine sites in our sample

Figure 3. Disinformation risk ratings by site



The Argentine media market: Key features and scope

News consumption in Argentina is dominated by internet users. According to the Reuters Institute,⁸ 86 percent of Argentines access news online, far more than via TV (67 percent) or print (23 percent).

In addition to the challenges posed by a decrease in news consumption, the market faces the added challenge created by horizontal and vertical integration of the Clarin Group, which has come to control more than a third of the country's broadband (56%), telecom (34% cell phone lines) and cable (40% of pay TV).⁹

The market for online news is led by Infobae, TN Online and Clarin. Based on the most recent survey, the proportion of Argentines who say they have accessed these three online sources in the past week is 40 percent, 36 percent and 29 percent, respectively.¹⁰ Recent polls suggest that only 33 percent of people in Argentina trust the media and only 28 percent trust the news they see on social media, rates that have both decreased over the past two years.¹¹

The country is also seeing a transition in the type and total amount of advertising investments. Though television is still the largest sector, amassing 39 percent of all dollars spent on advertising in Argentina (2019), the share devoted to online ads grew from 25 percent to 27 percent between 2018 and 2019.¹² However, the amount spent on advertising as a whole is decreasing.¹³ This can be explained by the sustained drop in the general consumption of products over the past years,¹⁴ which, in turn, reflects general economic stagnation.¹⁵ The drop in advertising, combined with a decreasing demand for online news¹⁶ and the vertical integration of one of the main players of the sector,¹⁷ is creating challenges for the sustainability of the industry upon which much of the country's public debate has come to rely.

Disinformation risk ratings

In the majority of cases, Argentine media sites face significant challenges when it comes to mitigating disinformation risks.

Market overview

In fact, 21 of the 32 sites that were assessed show a high level of disinformation risk, while 10 out of 32 show medium risk and only one media site scored as low risk. Overall, many of the risk factors in Argentina come from weak operational transparency and a lack of editorial safeguards, including information on their sources of funding and revenue (see Figure 4). International standards like the Journalism Trust Initiative (JTI) have argued that such protections matter in order to prevent conflicts of interest in the newsroom, ensure proper editorial oversight of published content and build overall reader trust in the site.

In Argentina, no site received a rating of minimum disinformation risk. Of the nine countries assessed to date, Argentina is the second country where no site in the media sample presented minimum risks.¹⁸ Only one site - La Voz del interior (www.lavoz.com.ar) - received a low-risk rating. The site performs well on all of the indicators related to a review of site content, except for the use of bylines. A majority of the articles assessed used an unbiased and neutral tone, avoided the use of clickbait, and did not negatively target groups or individuals. The site also had many of the key operational policies in place, including guidelines for user-generated content, a statement of editorial independence, and a clear process for correcting errors. However, there is some room for improvement on this pillar: the site includes only partial information about its funding and ownership.

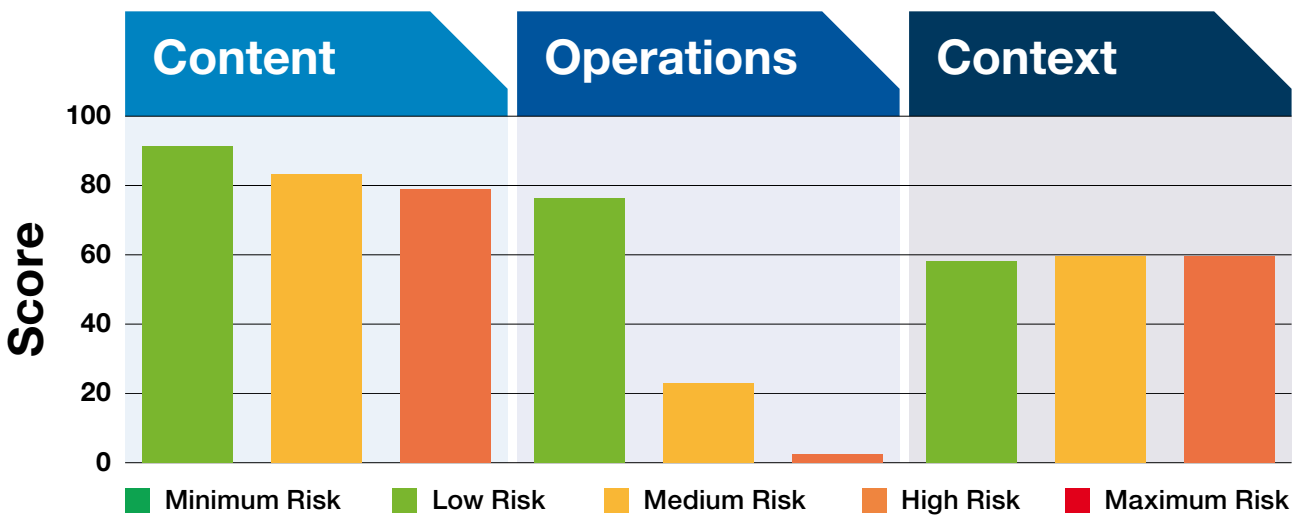
Figure 4. Overall market scores, by pillar



There are ten sites in Argentina that were rated as medium-risk sites. These sites tended to perform relatively well on the content indicators, especially for having headlines that match the story’s contents (rather than the use of clickbait) and unbiased and non-sensational content that does not negatively target groups. However, these sites performed poorly when it came to the use of bylines, which validate the authorship of a story. Additionally, they lacked some of the operational transparency and editorial safeguards, including information on their sources of funding. Such policies are associated with strong universal journalistic standards, as set by the JTI. Most of the sites that currently fall in the middle range for risks could move into a lower-risk group with improvements to their site’s operational and editorial policies.

Finally, the remaining 21 sites—almost two thirds of our sample—received a high-risk rating. These sites, however, tended to perform relatively well on the content indicators. In fact, many of them show high scores when it comes to publishing content that is timely and relevant and that does not negatively target any specific individuals or groups. Regarding their ratings on perceptions of brand trust, they did not perform badly either. On average they are rated with 60 out of 100. However, they scored very poorly on operational policies. Most of the sites within the high-risk category entirely fail to meet universal standards for editorial and operational policies (see Figure 4). For instance, this group includes 14 sites that scored zero on the entire Operations pillar. Nearly one-half of the media sites in the Argentine sample failed to provide any of the information or policies which are universally associated with good editorial and operational practices as set out by the JTI.

Figure 5. Average pillar score by risk rating level



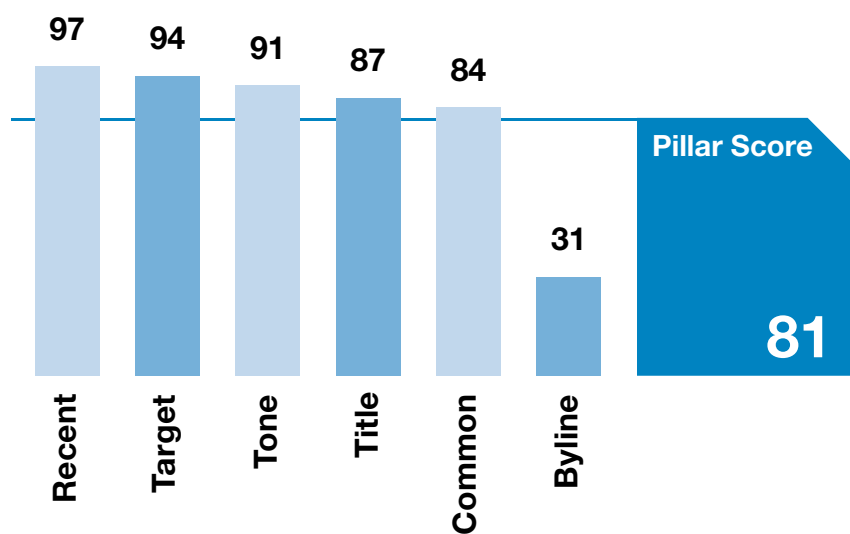
Pillar Overview

CONTENT PILLAR

The Content pillar is based on an assessment of ten anonymised articles from each of the 32 domains. These articles are drawn from among the most frequently shared pieces of content during the data collection period. All article scores are based on a scale of zero (worst) to 100 (best), as assessed by the country reviewers.

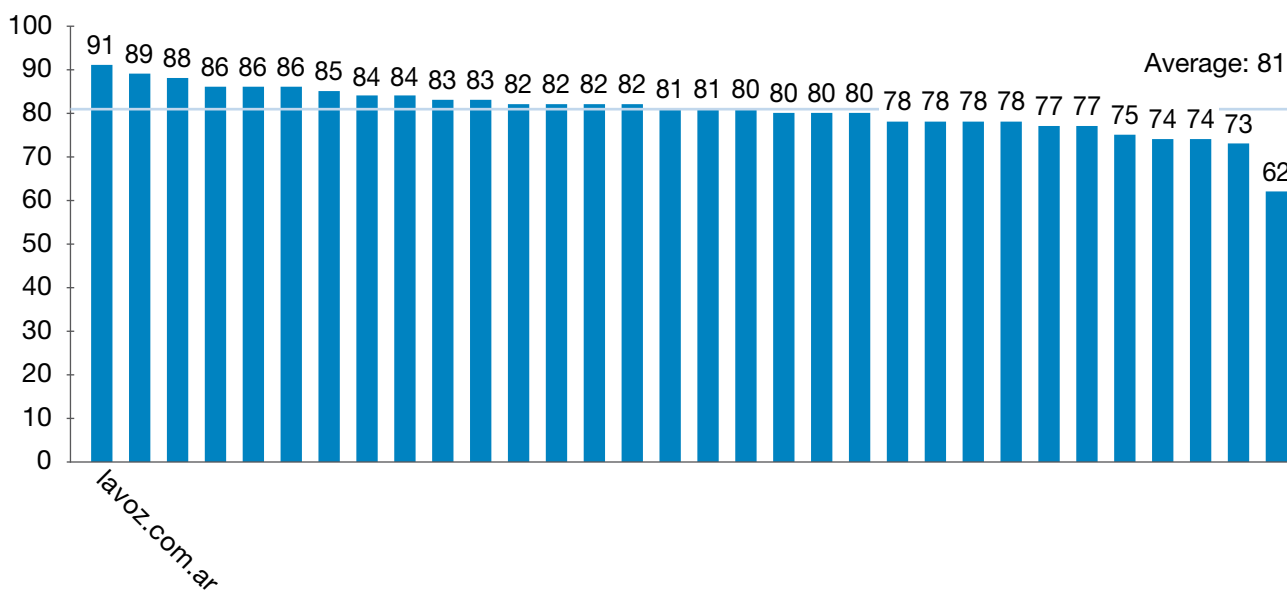
Overall, the Argentine media market showed low disinformation risks in terms of content. In fact, the Content pillar average score is 80 out of 100.¹⁹ Most of the individual indicators—such as those related to headlines, the targeting of groups or individuals, and coverage of recent events—received strong scores on average (see Figure 6). Further analysis shows that there is a positive correlation between the use of headlines that accurately reflect their stories and content that is not sensational and does not negatively target groups or individuals.²⁰

Figure 6. Average Content pillar scores by indicator



However, some areas are lagging. For example, most sites in the Argentine media market scored poorly when it comes to publishing bylines. There may be editorial reasons not to publish a byline (i.e., the story is produced by an editorial team, or to ensure the safety of a journalist). Nevertheless, targeted violence against journalists is not common in Argentina.²¹ Attributing authorship is one way in which media outlets can substantiate the fact that their articles are penned by reputable journalists. Given Argentina’s challenges with decreasing trust in the media,²² bylines might help to provide transparency about the source of the article and accountability for its content.

Figure 7. Content pillar scores by site



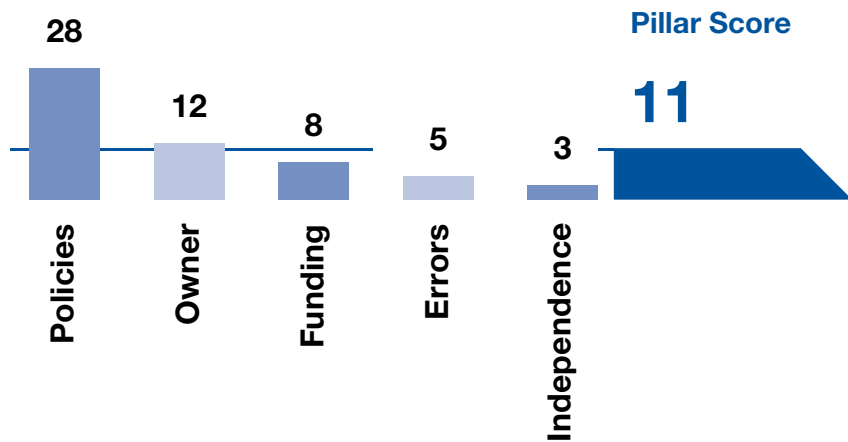
OPERATIONS PILLAR

The Operations pillar assesses the operational and editorial integrity of a news site. The indicators for the operations pillar are taken from the standards which have been set by journalists as part of the Journalism Trust Initiative (JTI).²³ 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.²⁴ These policies are particularly relevant in the context of declining public trust in journalism. In Argentina, trust has declined between 2018 and 2019, from 41 percent to 39 percent for ‘news overall’ and from 51 percent to 47 percent in ‘news I use’.²⁵

However, none of the sites in our sample had a perfect score, and most were lacking even the most basic components under assessment. Only six out of the 32 websites assessed provided at least partial information regarding who owns the outlet. Only two websites fully disclosed information regarding their beneficial owners and funding. Of the four other outlets that got partial points on this question, three are part of the Clarín Group, which as a publicly traded company has to comply with legal reporting mandates. The information was found on the website of the parent company, often several clicks away, within its financial report to shareholders. Furthermore, only four out of 32 websites provided any information regarding their revenue sources. Transparency of ownership and funding are important for avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring editorial independence.

All 32 sites in our sample have the potential to score perfectly on all the indicators of the operations pillar if they adopt and disclose such operational policies and information. As the JTI points out,²⁶ adopting these standards raises credibility in the eyes of the public, compels traditional media to reassess their practices in the digital age, and encourages new media outlets to be more transparent about their business models.

Figure 8. Average Operations pillar scores by indicator



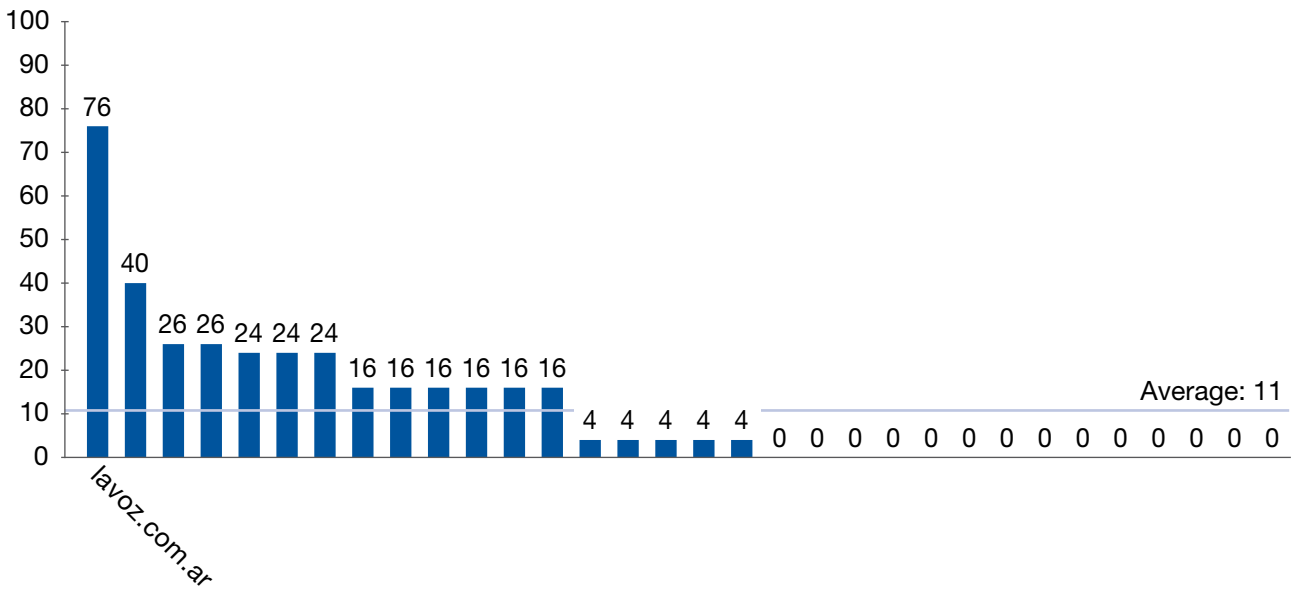
While some of the more popular sites in Argentina have established some of the policies stipulated in the JTI standards, most sites have not (see Figure 9). Only two sites have published some form of corrections policy and process, while only one site had published a statement of editorial independence. Such information is critical to ensuring transparent and accountable media, and yet policies were not easily accessible. For example, although other strategies such as monitoring the behaviour of users commenting on news forums may be more effective, publishing a clearly defined code of conduct for a site’s comment sections can help to keep user-generated comments civil and free of harassment.²⁷ A strong editorial code of conduct can help to review and correct erroneously published content. The highly consolidated media market makes it all the more important to ensure editorial independence in non-equivocal terms.

The policies on commenting also provide interesting insights into the market. Of the 32 websites in the sample, 23 had a comments section. Of these 23 websites, 14 outsourced the management of the comments section to a third party, 13 of them to Facebook through a plugin. Besides indicating that media outlets are sharing with Facebook a substantial amount of information on their users, this finding suggests that media outlets are outsourcing the policies and the enforcement of these policies as well. In the case of the non-Facebook plugin, the policies governing comment-section participation were provided only in English. Both of these issues require greater transparency from the media outlets, which should include a translation of—and links to—Facebook’s policies in their own policy documents.

Most of the local news outlets performed poorly on this pillar, yet a number of national and regional news outlets were also lacking transparency about their operational policies. This finding suggests that in order to minimise risk in the Argentine media market, all publishers should rethink their standards for public disclosure as per the JTI’s key policies.

A shift in policies and practices could be supported by the Argentine government²⁸ and press bodies and associations.²⁹ Supportive government measures could help to strengthen the transparency, independence and editorial integrity of the Argentine national media landscape. Press bodies could encourage members to proactively adopt and implement operational and editorial transparency measures, and provide funds and technical support for the smaller media outlets eager to make steady progress on this front.

Figure 9. Operations pillar scores by site



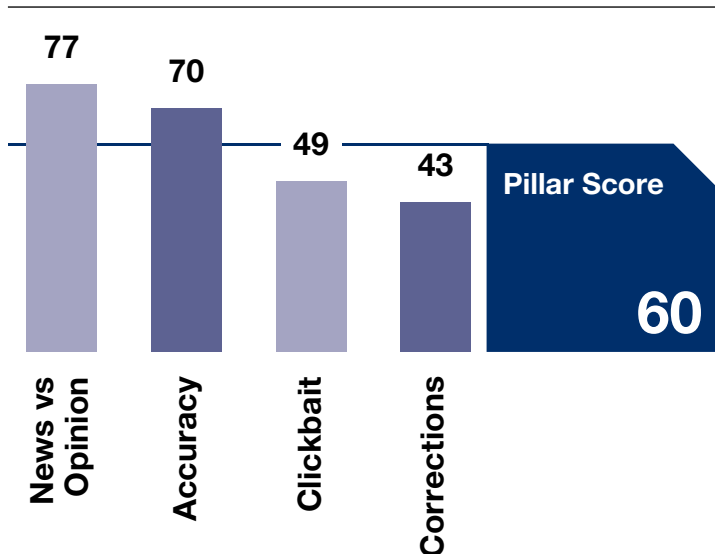
CONTEXT PILLAR

A site’s performance on the Context pillar is a good measure of perceptions of brand trust in a given media site. The Context pillar findings are based on an independent survey conducted to measure online users’ perceptions of brand trust in the media sites included in our sample for Argentina. All scores are based on a scale of zero (worst) to 100 (best), as rated by online users. This pillar is scored based on a survey of informed online readers—who report being familiar with the sites they assess—and asks whether the site makes clear the distinction between news and opinion pieces, is generally perceived to provide accurate news coverage, publishes corrections when needed, and uses clickbait.

Context pillar scores have significant room for improvement for many domains, although online users’ perceptions can be shifted only over the medium to long term. This is partly due to the fact that perceptions can be ‘sticky’ and take time to realign with a site’s current realities. That said, our analysis indicates that respondents’ perceptions do reflect several of the Content and Operations indicators, so adopting the content and operations standards measured in those pillars may have the additional effect of improving perceptions in the eyes of the country’s readers.

The findings show a twofold picture. Whereas accuracy and clarity in the distinction between news versus opinion show high averages, the perception of clickbait and a lack of corrections draw the average on this pillar down to 59 out of 100, a figure which is in line with the crisis of confidence in the country’s media reported by other studies.³⁰ Fourteen of the sites received a ‘passing grade’ (a score of 70 or higher) for accuracy, and all sites achieved this rating level for clearly labelling news versus opinion. In contrast, those surveyed reported that many news sites traffic in clickbait titles and do not visibly correct their published errors (see Figure 9). Indeed, our study found that only two Argentine news sites disclosed any policy regarding the correction of errors, showing an alignment between the perceptions and the available policies on this front.

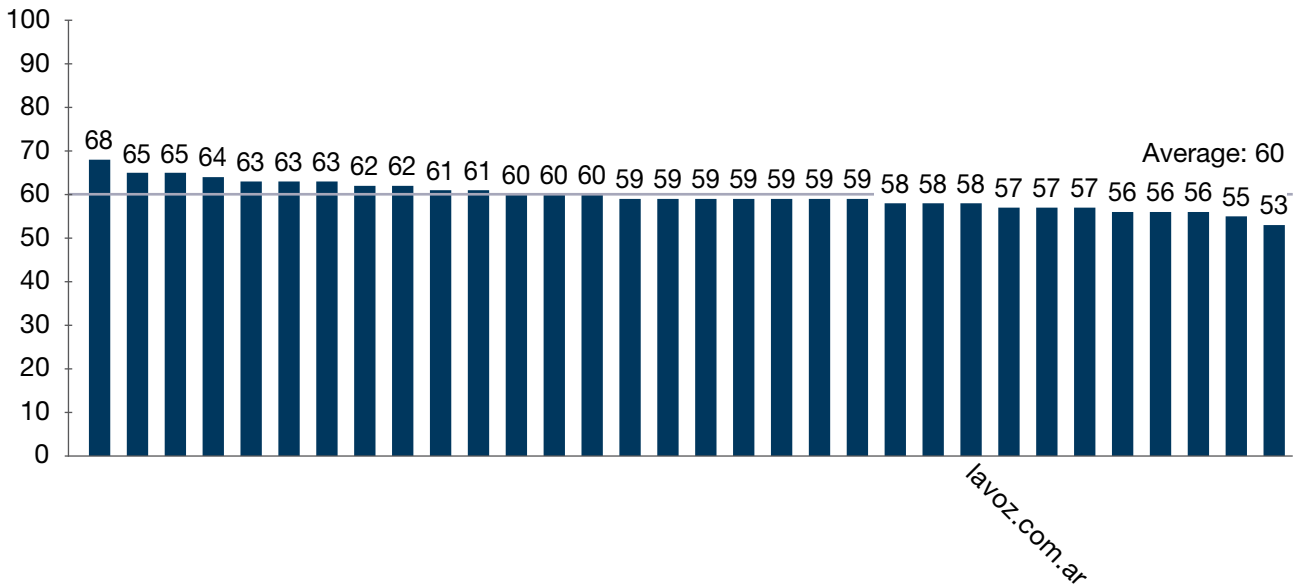
Figure 10. Average Context pillar scores by indicator



When it comes to perceptions of clickbait, however, our analysis of headlines found that the sampled news sites generally used headlines that accurately reflected the content of their stories, which is a low indicator for clickbait. While this discrepancy between our findings and public perceptions could be the result of a bias on the part of survey respondents, which results in a small set of cases of clickbait driving public perception, GDI's assessment did not score the use of emotional language in headlines, which can also influence perceptions.

Overall, the set of responses under this pillar offers a clear outlook on actionable solutions for poor performance areas and to help build greater reader trust in these sites. For example, further analysis reveals a strong correlation between sites that are perceived by informed online users as providing accurate news and those that are also perceived as correcting their errors and clearly labeling news and opinion stories.³¹ Such relationships can provide a guide to sites for improving certain practices and communicating these to online users as part of strengthening trust in the media ecosystem.

Figure 11. Context pillar scores by site



Conclusion

Our assessment of the disinformation risk of news sites in Argentina found a relatively homogeneous set of media sites; most of which show a lot of room for improvement.

While only one site presented low risk ratings, nearly a third of the sites showed medium-risk ratings and nearly two-thirds of the sites showed a high risk of disinforming their online users.

Argentine media sites typically demonstrate low risk in our framework when it comes to the assessment of content. Still, these domains' overall ratings are brought down by operational shortcomings, especially regarding transparent information about a site's true or beneficial owners, its funding, and other operational and editorial policies. In a context of political polarization across the country, economic consolidation within the sector, and decreasing trust in media,³² addressing these weaknesses takes on particular urgency.

News sites could address these shortcomings by taking actions that:

- Focus on adopting journalistic and operational standards that increase transparency about overall policies of the site.³³
- 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.
- Ensure that sites publish a statement of editorial independence and policies for user- and algorithmically-generated content.
- Improve and make more visible a site's correction practices for published errors. It is important that such site corrections are clearly seen and understood, rather than being hidden 'below the fold' on a web page.
- Ensure that sites in Argentina publish bylines. Publishing the identity of the author is an easy way to ensure transparency and accountability. What is more, it gives the audience the opportunity to check whether the author is an actual person or a false identity being used to publish disinformation.

The need for a trustworthy, independent rating of disinformation risk is pressing. The launch of this risk-rating framework will provide useful 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.

Annex: Methodology

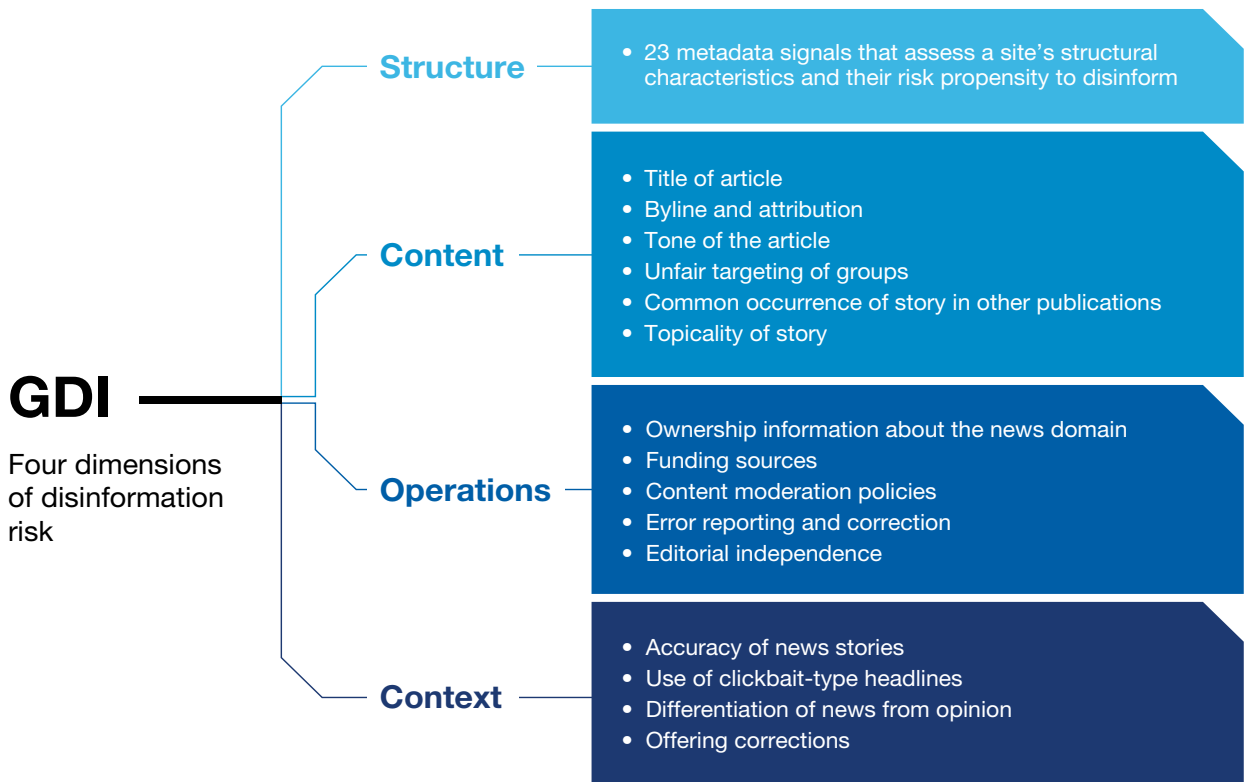
Pillar scoring

The findings presented in this report are based on the GDI methodology for the manual review of domain-level disinformation risk. Site level risk ratings are based on site scores for the Content, Operations and Context pillars of the GDI. Together, these three pillars consist of 15 indicators of disinformation risk.

The Content and Operations pillars of the GDI risk ratings capture discrete, observable features of a domain by analysing a snapshot of a particular moment in time. This approach is effective at mitigating bias and standardising

our analysis across domains and countries, but it is limited in scope. Historical information about a domain’s content and practices is not captured by these pillars—nor are less observable disinformation flags (such as regularly disinforming readers by saying nothing about a story or topic). The Context pillar assesses long-term trends and indicators that are harder to measure. In this report, two-thirds of a domain’s score is based on a snapshot of observable features (through the Content and Operations pillars), while the final third comes via a public perceptions survey that contextualizes our findings. Table 2 gives the GDI indicators by pillar.

Table 1. Global Disinformation Index Indicators



The Content pillar produces a score based on six indicators reviewed by two dedicated country analysts across ten articles published by a domain. These ten articles were randomly selected from among that domain’s most frequently shared articles within a two-week period and then stripped of any information that could identify the publisher. The indicators included in the final risk rating are: title representativeness, author attribution, article tone, topicality, and common coverage of the story by other domains.

The Operations pillar is scored at the domain level by the same country analysts. GDI selected five indicators from the Journalism Trust Initiative’s list of trustworthiness signals in order to capture the risk associated with a domain’s potential financial conflicts of interest, vulnerability to disinformation in its comments sections, and editorial standards. This is not meant to capture the actual quality of journalism, as this pillar rates a domain based on its public disclosure of operations, which may differ from actual operations. The indicators included are: disclosure of true beneficial owners, transparency in funding sources, published policies for comments sections and the flagging of algorithmically-generated

content, a clear process for error reporting, and a public statement affirming editorial independence.

The Context pillar score is based on results from a survey of online users’ perceptions of a domain’s content and operations. Incorporating survey data in calculating the risk rating captures a wider range of opinions and a longer time horizon, as online users’ perceptions are based on a site’s long-term behaviour and performance. This pillar complements the Content pillar, which goes into greater depth but analyses only ten articles. The survey captures four indicators: accuracy, clear differentiation of news and opinion articles, use of clickbait titles, and error reporting.

Domains are placed into one of five risk categories based on their final risk score. The cutoffs for the categories are determined by combining the risk ratings for domains in all countries in the current version of the index, and calculating this global sample’s mean and standard deviation. Domains are placed into a category based on the number of standard deviations that separate their rating from the global mean score. Table 3 shows each category and its cutoffs.

Table 2. Overview of risk bands

TOTAL DOMAIN SCORE	DISINFORMATION RISK LEVEL	DISINFORMATION RISK CATEGORY
< -1.5 SD from mean	5	Maximum risk
≥ -1.5 and ≤ -0.5 SD from mean	4	High risk
> -0.5 and ≤ 0.5 SD from mean	3	Medium risk
> 0.5 and ≤ 1.5 SD from mean	2	Low risk
> 1.5 SD from mean	1	Minimum risk

Data collection

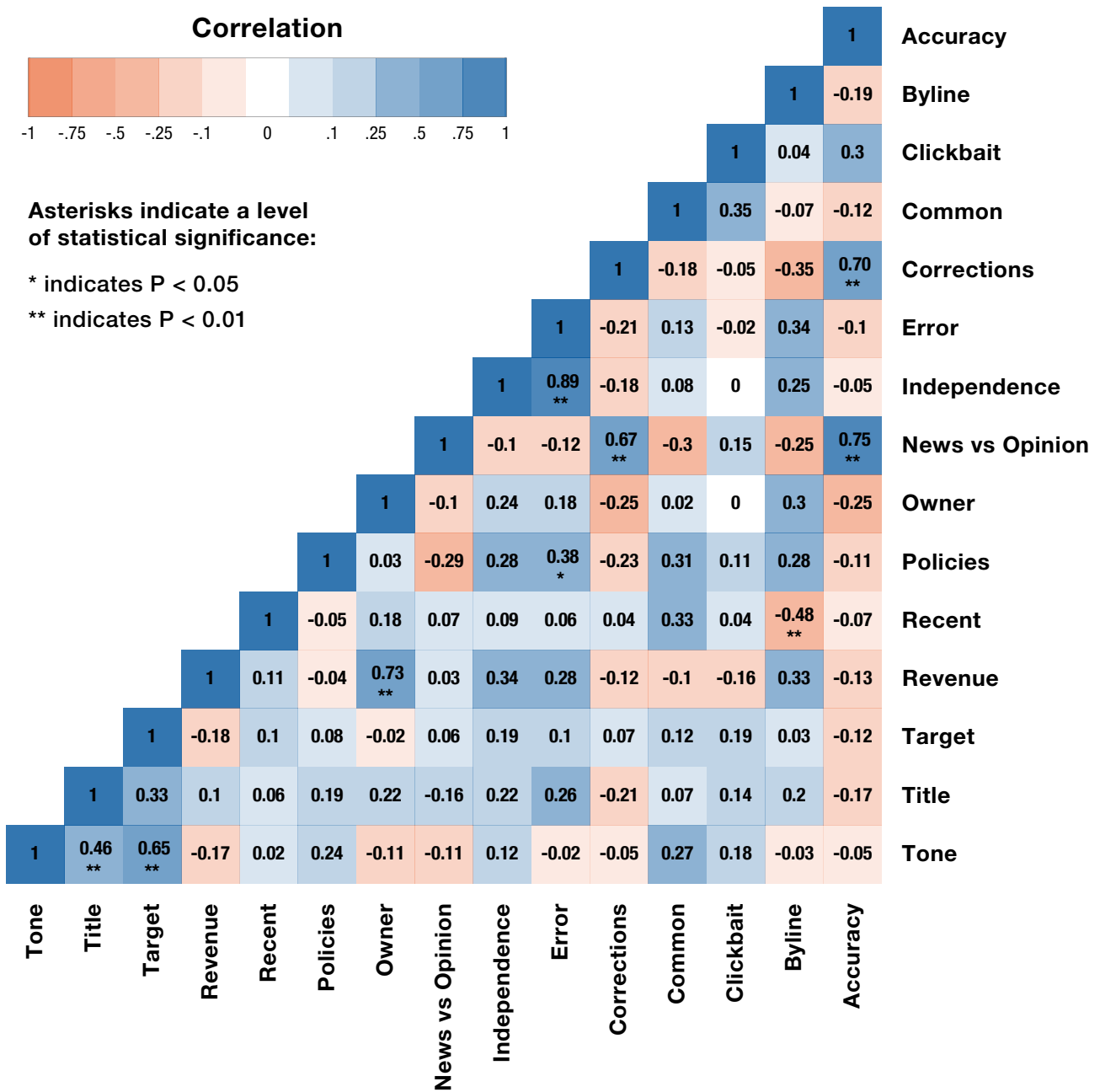
Each of the Argentine domains was assessed by two analysts who were trained on the GDI framework by our staff according to a codebook that provides detailed instructions for assessing each indicator.

The survey was conducted by YouGov and includes 518 respondents drawn from sophisticated online users. An online survey was conducted between 29 June and 9 July 2020. Each respondent was asked a series of questions about domains that they indicated they were

familiar with. Each respondent assessed up to ten sites from the sample, based on their familiarity with the site. The maximum of respondents for a site was 210 and the minimum 26. These numbers suggest a fairly robust survey size that allows for a robust analysis.

The following figure visualises the relationships between each of the GDI indicators. The blue squares indicate statistically significant direct correlations, while the red squares indicate statistically significant inverse correlations.

Table 3. Correlations matrix*



*The correlation matrix in Table 3 should be interpreted carefully. Some of the correlation coefficients are calculated on very few observations available.

Endnotes

- 1 GDI defines disinformation in terms of the verb ‘to disinform’: ‘to deliberately mislead; opposite of inform.’
- 2 The human review elements of the framework were developed in collaboration with Alexandra Mousavizadeh (head of insights for Tortoise Media and co-founder of the GDI). The framework was advised by, vetted by, and finalised with the support of a technical advisory group (TAG), including Ben Nimmo (Graphika), Camille François (Graphika), Miguel Martinez (co-founder & chief data scientist, Signal AI), Nic Newman (Reuters Institute of Journalism), Olaf Steenfadt, (Reporters without Borders), Cristina Tardáguila (the Poynter Institute’s International Fact-Checking Network), Amy Mitchell (Pew Research), Scott Hale (Meedan and Credibility Coalition), Finn Heinrich (OSF) and Laura Zommer (Chequeado).
- 3 The ‘Structure’ pillar is assessed by a machine-learning algorithm prototype that is trained on metadata from thousands of websites known for regularly disinforming readers. It identifies these domains according to technical features. For example, use of ads.txt, security protocols, and site-specific email aliases. For more on our methodology, see the appendix.
- 4 For more on our methodology, see the appendix and full methodology report at: <https://disinformationindex.org/research/>.
- 5 In this round of reports for 2020, media market assessments will be produced for the following countries: Argentina, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, India, South Africa, UK and the US. Additional countries may also be added.
- 6 All sites included in the report were informed of their individual scores and risk ratings, as well as the overall market averages.
- 7 The GDI looks forward to working with the entire industry in this effort. There is strong demand for such a risk assessment of sites, and a notable concern that less trusted, less independent actors may seek to fill this gap.
- 8 Reuters (2020) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 23, 2020.
- 9 The Grupo Clarín also controls around 42 percent of fixed telephone lines, as well as many local, regional and national news outlets, TV stations and radio stations. “Grupo Clarín.” Accessed November 10, 2020. <https://argentina.mom-rsf.org/en/owners/companies/detail/company/company/show/grupo-clarin/>. Also see: Rossi, G. (2017) “Argentina’s Dangerous Path Toward Media and Communications Dominance.” Public Knowledge, July 21, 2017, and Quipu (2017) “Concentración extrema: Cablevisión + Telecom.” QUIPU, July 1, 2017.
- 10 Reuters (2020) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 23, 2020, p. 89.
- 11 Reuters (2020) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 23, 2020. Also see: Reuters (2019) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 24, 2019.
- 12 CAAM, “Inversiones Publicitarias.” Accessed November 10, 2020. <https://www.agenciasdemedios.com.ar/inversiones-publicitarias/>.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Casas, X. (2020) “Consumo: con una caída de 5,4%, agosto fue el peor mes del año.” Infobae, September 15, 2020.
- 15 The World Bank, “GDP (Constant 2010 US\$) - Argentina | Data.” Accessed November 10, 2020. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD?locations=AR>.
- 16 Reuters (2020) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 23, 2020.
- 17 Rossi, G. (2017) “Argentina’s Dangerous Path Toward Media and Communications Dominance.” Public Knowledge, July 21, 2017.
- 18 The countries assessed to date are (in alphabetical order): Argentina, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, United Kingdom (forthcoming), US (forthcoming), and South Africa (forthcoming).
- 19 For the 32 sites, the content scores showed a standard deviation (SD) of 5.58, which is a measure of dispersion of a set of values. A low standard deviation indicates that the values tend to be close to the mean, while a high standard deviation indicates that the values are spread out over a wider range. Our findings imply that most sites have a mean score that is within 5.58 points of the general mean (assuming a normal distribution). If the standard deviation were zero, then all sites would have scored a mean of exactly 80.
- 20 For more information, please see the Annex.
- 21 RSF. “Argentina: Endangered State Media, Police Violence | Reporters without Borders.” Accessed November 10, 2020. <https://rsf.org/en/argentina>.

22 According to the Digital News Report 2020, trust in media in Argentina has significantly decreased across all media categories. In 2020, 33 percent of respondents claimed they trust news overall, compared to 39 percent in 2019 (Reuters (2020) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 23, 2020).

23 For more information on the JTI, which has adopted an ISO standard for the industry, please see: <https://jti-rsf.org/en/>.

24 The Operations pillar looks at whether relevant policies are in place. It does not assess the level of robustness of the policy based on good practice, and does not look at how the policies are being implemented. However, other indicators in the framework do capture some of the relevant practices, such as by measuring perceptions on how often sites correct errors or are viewed as presenting accurate content.

25 Reuters (2019) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 24, 2019.

26 European Committee for Standardization. “Draft CWA by the CEN/WS - Journalism Trust Initiative Is Made Available for Public Review and Commenting.” Accessed November 10, 2020. <https://www.cen.eu/news/workshops/Pages/WS-2019-013.aspx>.

27 Stroud, N. J., Scacco, J. M., Muddiman, A., Curry, A. L. (2015) “Changing Deliberative Norms on News Organizations’ Facebook Sites, Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication.” Volume 20, Issue 2, 1 March 2015 (p. 188-203).

28 See, for instance, articles 18 and 58 of the ‘Ley de Medios’ (Media Act) <http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/155000-159999/158649/norma.htm>.

29 See: <http://adepa.org.ar/> and <https://www.fopea.org/>, as well as existing projects aimed at ensuring transparency around media ownership within the sector, such as <https://argentina.mom-rsf.org/en/owners/companies/> and <https://mapademediosfopea.com/>.

30 Reuters (2019) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 24, 2019.

31 Please see annex.

32 Reuters (2019) “Argentina,” Reuters Institute Digital News Report, May 24, 2019.

33 Such as those set by the Journalism Trust Initiative. For more information on the JTI, which has adopted an ISO standard for the industry, please see: <https://jti-rsf.org/en/>.



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