

**IDENTIFICATION AND TRANSPARENCY
OF AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA
IN THE ONLINE DOMAIN**

2021

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See the project materials at: Mediometrics -

<https://www.regioncenter.info/en/media-metrics>.



"Region" Research Center

EUROPEAN
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Identification and Transparency of Audiovisual Media in the Online Domain – 2021

Article 20 of the Law on the audiovisual media adopted in 2020¹ defines the release/outlet data of the television and radio companies, as well as the mandatory procedure for making them public. Whilst applying for licences, television and radio companies submit full packages of data about themselves to the relevant body, which is the Television and Radio Commission. The data (the official name of the trademark of the media service provider, the license number, the name of the founder, the size of coverage, the link to the official website if any) of the media outlets having received licences are posted on the latter's website².

However, the products of television and radio companies are consumed in the online domain too via their official websites and social network pages. Moreover, there are television and radio companies, which in addition to their official websites and social network pages, also have online media. For example, the official website of the Public Television 1tv.am and the news portal 1Lurer.am, the official website of Shant television company shanttv.am and its news portal shantnews.am. The radio company Aurora in addition to its official website has a news portal auroranews.am. The television company Free News broadcasts its products to the online audience not via a separate website but the online media outlet freenews.am, which had been operational much earlier and its various social network platforms.

In fact, in Armenia too the former differences between television and radio companies and classic online media outlets in the online domain are gradually reducing.

Considering all of the aforementioned circumstances, **for the first time** we have researched the level of transparency of television and radio companies in the online domain. It was our task to find out:

- How the television and radio companies operating in Armenia present themselves to the audiences consuming their products in the online domain?
- What are the identification data that they make public, what is the level of their transparency in the official websites and social networks?

¹ Law on the audiovisual media, <http://parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=7300&lang=arm>.

² See <http://tvradio.am/type/tv/>, <http://tvradio.am/type/radio/>.

Simultaneously, we have produced a database for identification of audiovisual media categorized according to their level of transparency³.

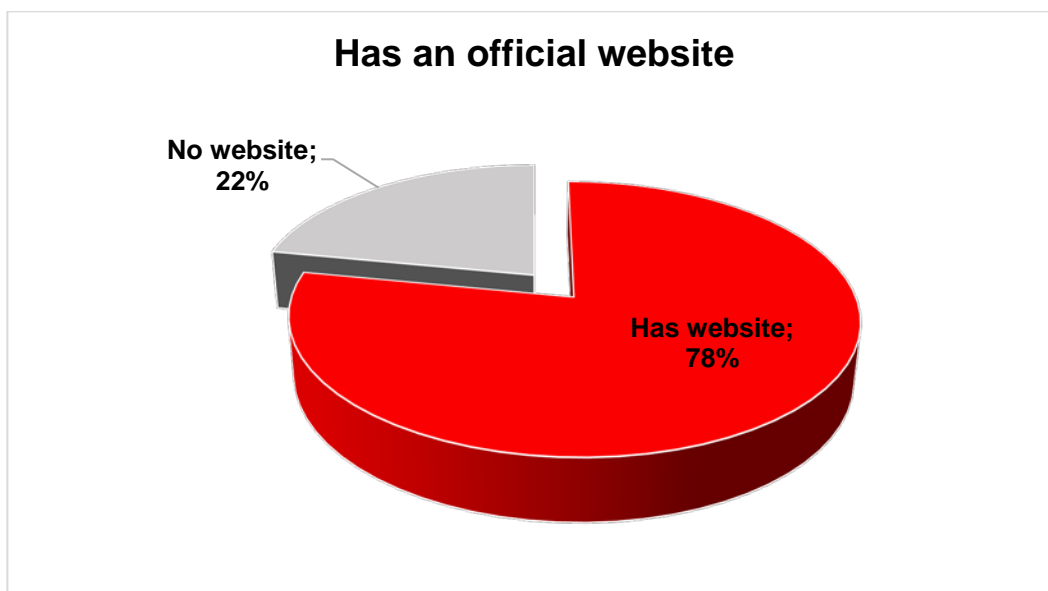
Although at present the current law does not have requirements for the presence of audiovisual media in the online domain and transparency for online audience

Presence of Television and Radio Companies in the Online Domain

The 41 television and radio companies with state coverage and local/marz companies have different levels of online presence.

78% of them (32 television and radio company) offer their online products via at least 1 official website and 2-3 social networks, whereas 22% (9 television and radio companies) offer their online products via social networks only. These companies either do not have official websites (yet) or their websites are not operational.⁴

See the chart below:



³ See Television and Radio - 2021: Transparency Rating, Database of Identification Data, <https://www.regioncenter.info/hy/media-metrics>.

⁴ All the data on television and radio in this report are based on the data recorded in the period of September-October 2021.

Audio-visual media with 41 trademark names in fact operate 44 official websites and 110 pages of 8 diverse social networks. The most used social network is Facebook (with 42 (95%) out of 44 websites having a presence here). Next in the order of reduction comes the YouTube (27 websites - **61%**), Instagram (17 websites -**39%**), Twitter (**13** websites-**30%**), Telegram (4 websites -**9%**), OK (3 websites -**7%**), VK (2 websites - **5%**), LinkedIn (2 websites - **5%**).

Not only audiovisual media with state coverage but also a number of local/marz media have wide online presence. However, this kind of online presence is not directly proportional to the level of transparency of the audiovisual media (publicity of the full packages of release data).

How Have We Measured the Completeness of “Identification Certificates” of the Audiovisual Media in the Online Domain?

Methodological Notice

We have examined the level of identification and transparency of television and radio companies in the online domain exclusively on the basis of their release data, applying the same approaches that were applied to online media.⁵

We have examined whether:

- the television and radio companies inform their online audiences since when they have operated;
- publicise information about their founding body/person, editor/executive director;
- post any contact details (telephone, e-mail, office address);
- post on online platforms their codes of ethics;
- inform the public of their financial flows.

Thus, we have set 8 criteria for the study of transparency of television and radio companies in the online domain.

⁵ See “Identification Certificates” of the Armenian Online Media – 2020, <https://www.regioncenter.info/hy/node/1750>, as well as: the Transparency and Identification of Online Media – 2021, <https://www.regioncenter.info/hy/media-metrics>.

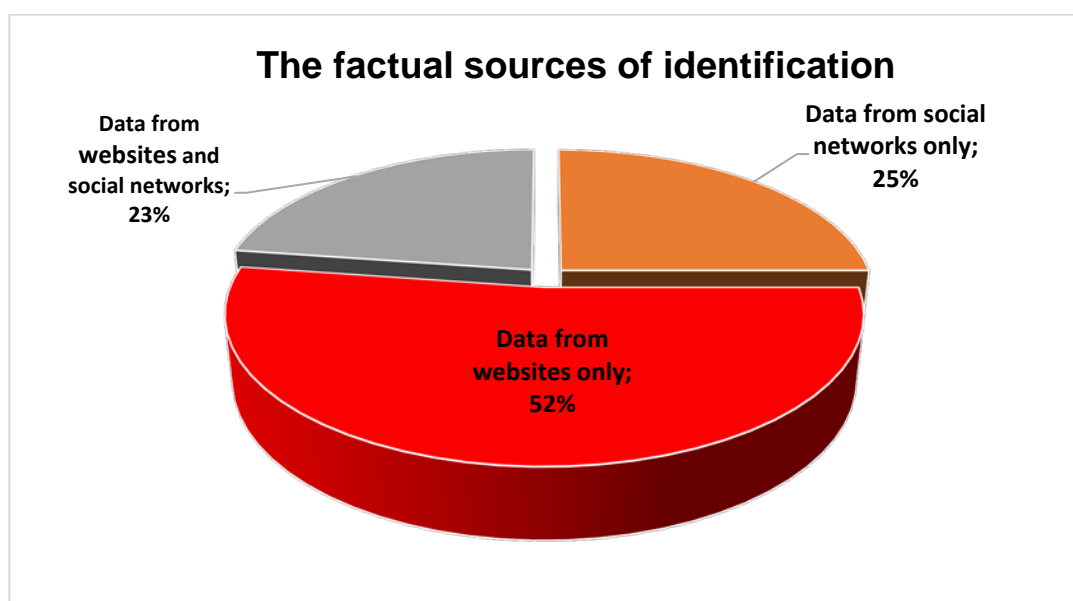
We have detected the existence/absence of these criteria on the basis of not only the official websites of television and radio companies (name of the media outlet.am) but also all their social network platforms.

First, as we have already indicated above, a number of media outlets do not operate official websites and use only social networks.

Second, according to our preliminary observations there are companies that post part of their release data on their official websites and the other part – on social networks. In all such cases we have assessed the completeness of the packages of release data on the basis of the principle of complementarity. For example, if a company has posted on its website its telephone number only, and the address on its social network pages, starting date of its operation, then we have assessed that this particular media outlet has posted 3 release data in total.

And, indeed, it appeared that the source of the 52% of the registered packages of release data are exclusively the official website, 25 % - exclusively their social network platforms. The remaining 23% are the packages whose data has been extracted both from official websites and social network platforms.

See the chart below, as well as the table at the end of the report.



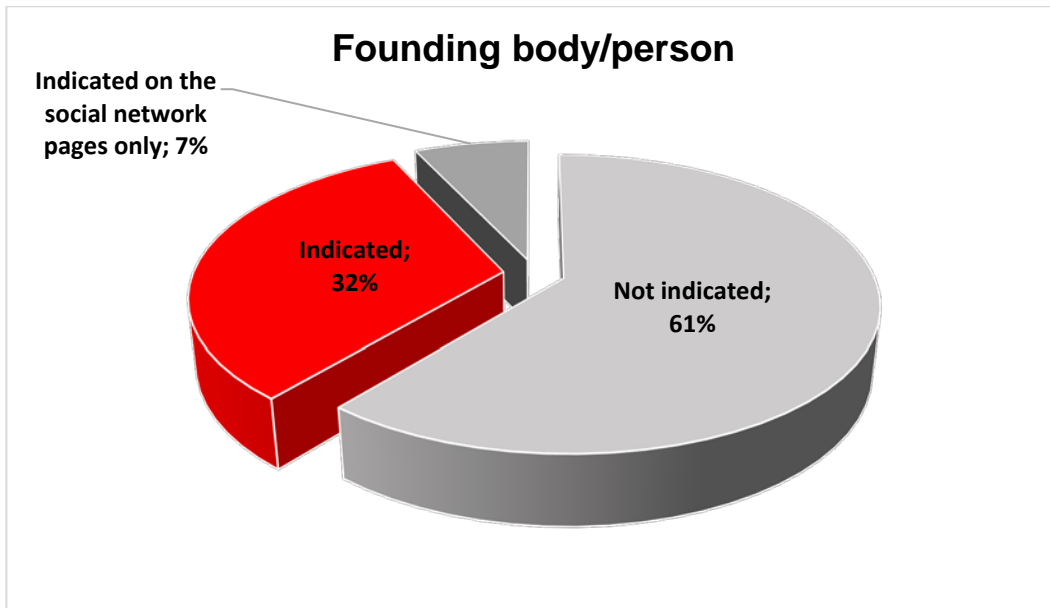
The “Identification Certificates” of Audiovisual Media in the Online Domain

The least public data are those on the governing tiers of audiovisual media outlets. The data on the identity of the executive director/editor-in-chief/other manager of the media outlet are not public in the case of 77% of audiovisual media outlets in any manner: neither via the official website nor any social network page.

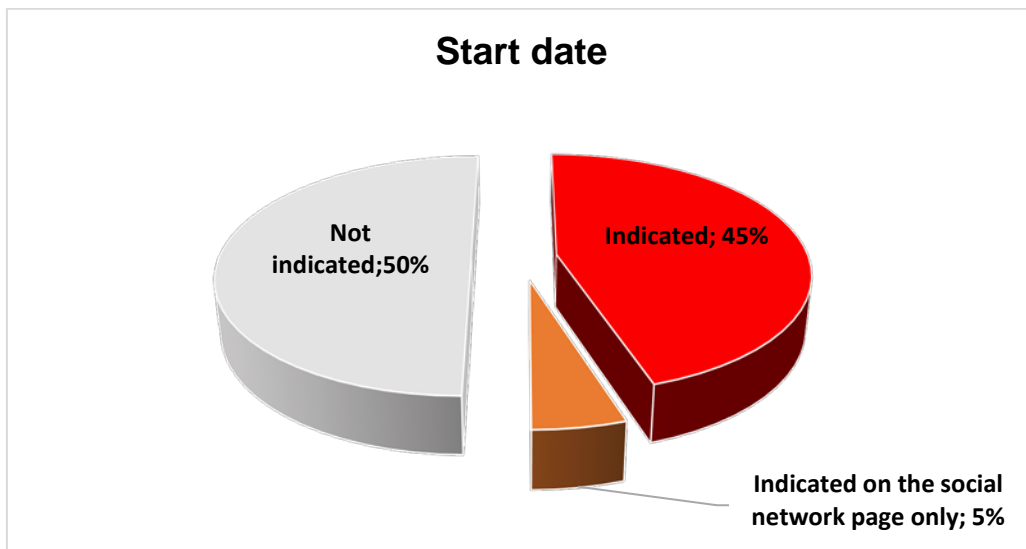


Next in the scale of non-transparent data come the data on the founding body/person. 61% of the television and radio companies have not posted the names of their founding structures/persons. Although the information on the founding body is included in the mandatory packages during licensing tenders, it can also be found on the official website of the Television and Radio Commission.

See the chart below:

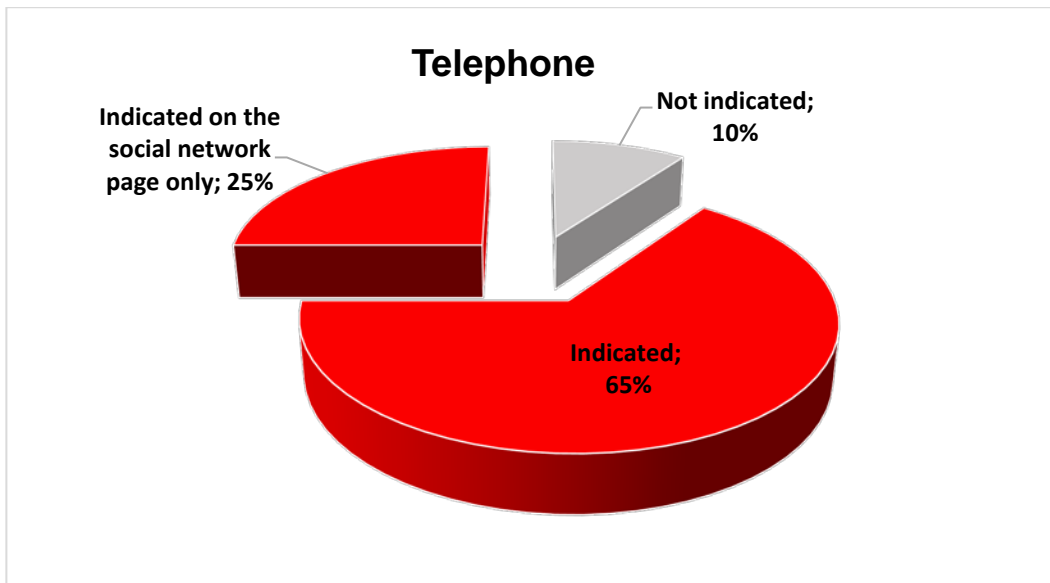


The start date of operations of television and radio companies is among the release data with 50/50 level of transparency. Thus, half of the 44 online platforms (50% of official websites/social network pages) inform their audiences about the starting date of the media operations. These data remain unidentified for the other audiences of the other 50% of the media. There is no such information on the online platforms of this category.

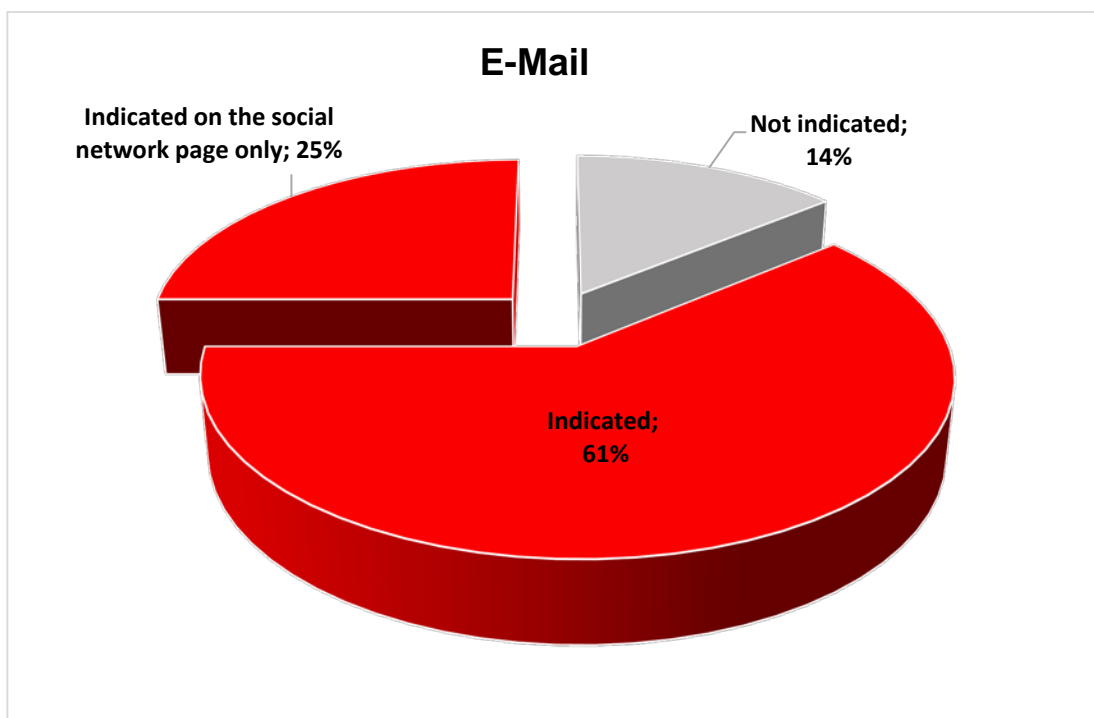


The most publicized information is the telephone number of the TV and radio offices. 90% of the online platforms of television and radio companies have posted telephone numbers on online pages. However, 25% of them do that exclusively via their social network pages. And included among them are not only the companies posting online products via social networks only, but also those that have official websites (New Armenia Television Company, Radio Marshall - FM 103.5, shantnews.am, auroranews.am).

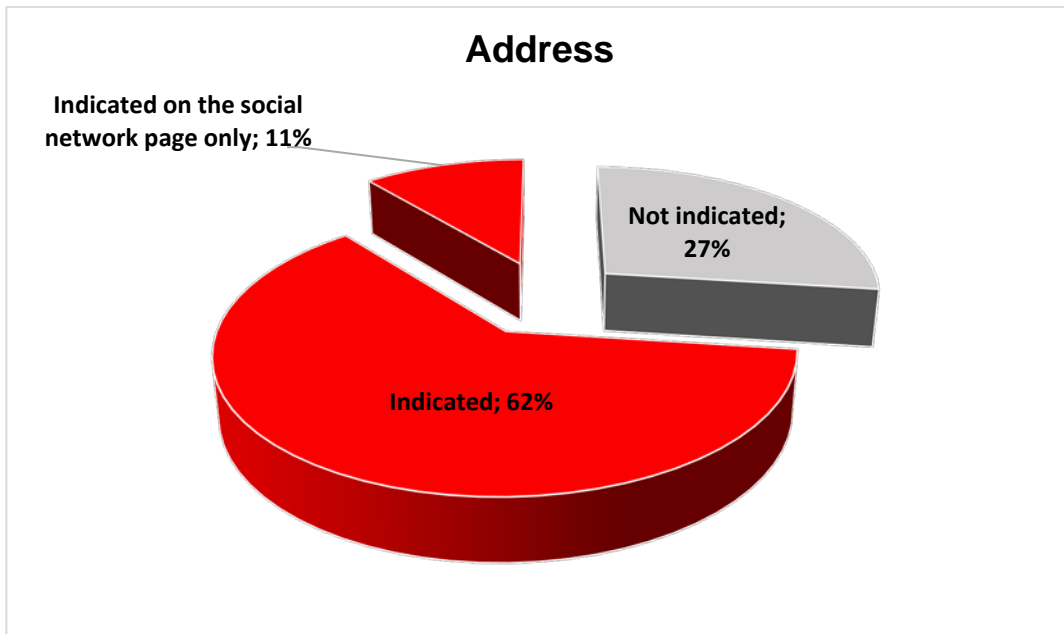
See the chart below:



The e-mail address of the audiovisual media outlets comes next in the ranking of posted data. 86% of the television and radio companies have posted their e-mails on their websites/social network pages. 61% do that via official websites, 25% - via social networks. Included among the media outlets posting their e-mails via social networks are Radio Vem, PopFM 89.3, Radio Van, Radio Marshall - FM 103.5, Kotayk TV, shantnews.am. These are also the media outlets having official websites.



Third in the transparency ranking come the data on the physical address of television and radio companies. 73% of online platforms – either via the official website or the social network page – inform their audiences of the location of their office by posting the physical address thereof.

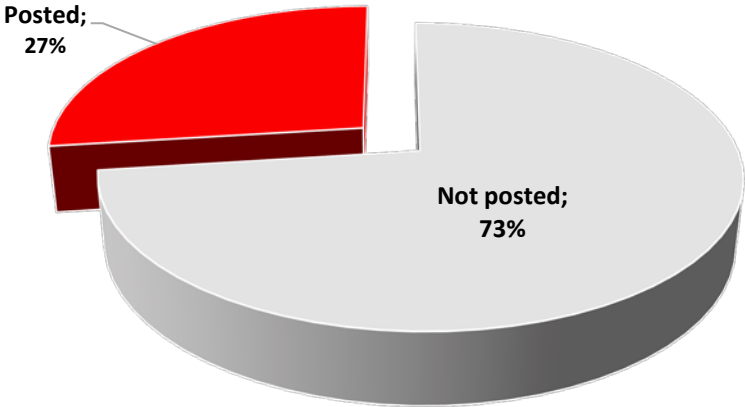


Compared with the other above-mentioned data the lowest level of transparency is conferred on the financial flows and information of the codes of ethics of the audiovisual media.

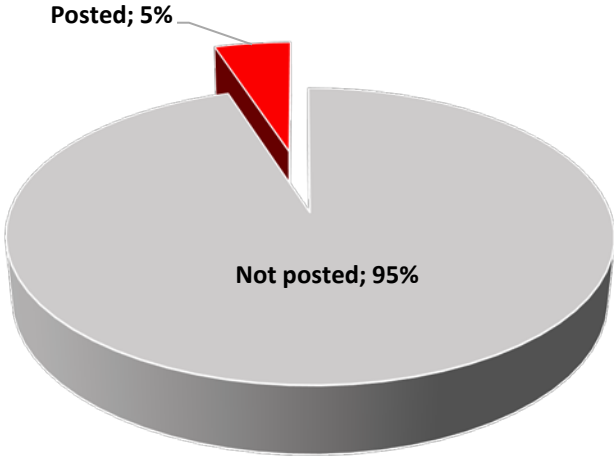
Of the 44 audiovisual media platforms 12 (27%) have posted on their financial flow, while 2 have presented the codes of ethics of their outlets (5%, Shoghakat and Kyavar television companies).

See the charts below:

Financial report on the website



Codes of ethics on the website



Transparency Ranking of the Audiovisual Media in the Online Domain

On the basis of the above 8 release data we have produced the database of 44 audio-visual media platforms and their transparency ranking in the online domain.⁶

Here too, as in the case of the online media, three transparency categories have been specified.

Transparent TV/radio company: these are the media outlets having posted 6-8 release data on their platforms. This is the category of 9 television and radio platforms (20%) with a rate of transparency at 66.6% -100%.

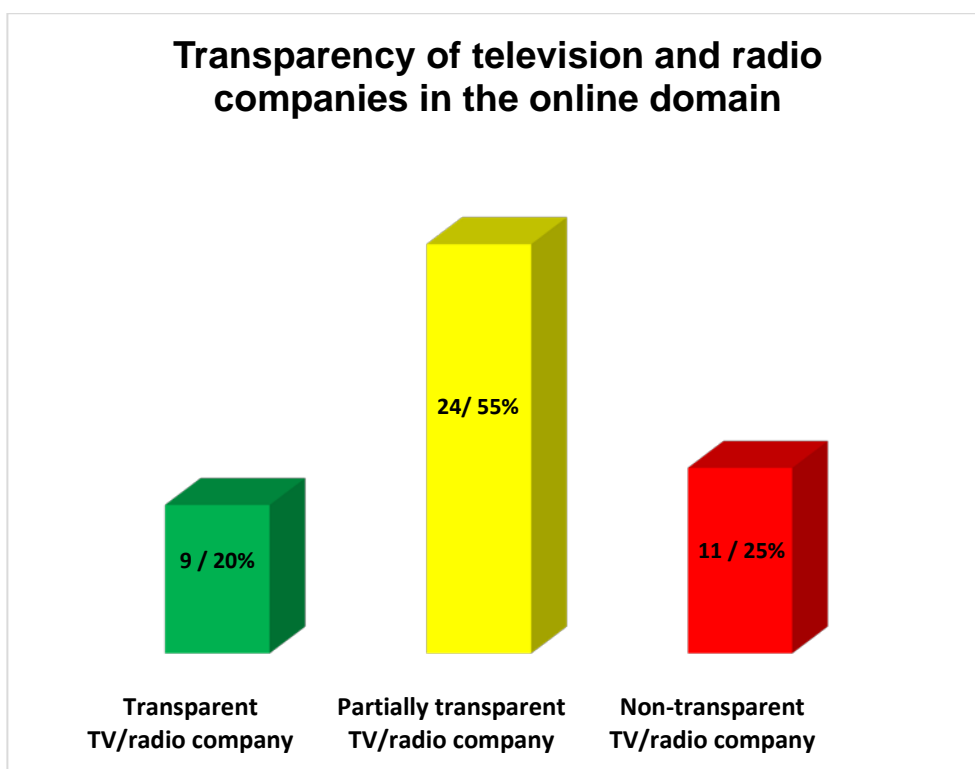
Partially transparent TV/radio company: these are the media outlets with 3-5 release data posted on their platforms. This is the category of 24 television and radio platforms (55%) with a rate of transparency at 33.3%- 66.5%.

Non-transparent TV/radio company: these are the media with 0-2 release data posted on their platforms. This is the category of 11 television and radio platforms (25%) with a rate of transparency at 0%- 33.2%.

See the chart and table below with the data of the level of transparency of a TV/radio company by 2021.

⁶ See Television and Radio - 2021: Transparency Rating, Database of Identification Data, <https://www.regioncenter.info/hy/media-metrics>.

Transparency of television and radio companies in the online domain



Ranking of the Audiovisual Media in the Online Domain

The factual sources of the release data of a TV/Radio company	Number of the posted factual data of 8 release data	Range of transparency ranking 0%-33.3%-non-transparent media outlet 33.3%-66.6%- partially transparent media outlet 66.6%-100% -transparent media outlet
Shoghakat TV shoghakat.am	8	100%
Public TV 1tv.am	7	87.50%
ATV atv.am	7	87.50%
Kyavar TV kyavartv.am	7	87.50%
Armnews TV armnewstv.am	6	75%
RadioFM-105.5 1055.am	6	75%
Radio Aurora radioaurora.am	6	75%

Radio VEM vem.am + social network	6	75%
Radio Jan FM 90.7 radiojan.am	6	75%
Yerkir Media TV yerkirmedia.am + social network	5	62.50%
Armenia TV armeniatv.am	5	62.50%
Shant TV shanttv.com	5	62.50%
5 th Channel TV 5tv.am + social network	5	62.50%
Fortuna TV fortunatv.am	5	62.50%
Tsayg tsayg.am	5	62.50%
Radio VAN radiovan.fm + social network	5	62.50%
Radio Yerevan arradio.am	5	62.50%
Public TV 1Lurer.am	4	50%
Kentron TV kentron.tv	4	50%
Delta TV deltatv.am	4	50%
Zangezur TV zangezur.tv + social network	4	50%
Armenian Public Radio armradio.am	4	50%
Radio MarshallFM 103.5 radiommarshall.am + social network	4	50%
Radio Impuls impuls.am	4	50%
Radio Hay FM 104.1 radiohay.am	4	50%
Lratvakan Radio FM 106.5 lratvakan.am	4	50%
Shant TV shantnews.am + social network	4	50%
21 TV Social networks	3	37.50%
Nor Hayastan TV norhayastan.com + social network	3	37.50%
Geghama TV Social network	3	37.50%
Kiss FM Armenia kissfm.am	3	37.50%

Radio POPFM Social network	3	37.50%
Autoradio autoradio.am	3	37.50%
Armenian Second TV Social network	2	25%
ARMA TV Social networks	2	25%
Kotayk TV kotayktv.am + social network	2	25%
Tavoush TV Social network	2	25%
Radio Shant FM 104.1 Social network	2	25%
Radio Chanson FM 90.1 www.chanson.am	2	25%
Armnews FM armnews.fm	1	12.50%
Nur TV Social network	1	12.50%
Radio MIG FM 105.7 Social networks	1	12.50%
Radio Aurora auroranews.am + social network	1	12.50%
Free News TV Social network	0	0%