

**Dr. José SIXTO-GARCÍA**

Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain. jose.sixto@usc.es. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2988-0975>

**Dr. Rubén RIVAS-DE-ROCA\***

Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain. rubenrafael.rivasderoca@usc.es. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5842-4533>

**Dr. Xosé SOENGAS-PÉREZ**

Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain. jose.soengas@usc.es. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3246-0477>

## Transparency and Consumption in Spanish Digital Native Media: An Analysis of their Relationship and Limits

### Transparencia y consumo en los medios nativos digitales españoles: un análisis de su relación y límites

**Deadlines** | Received: 14/07/2025 - Reviewed: 18/09/2025 - Published: 01/01/2026

#### Abstract

The media play a public service role, putting people in contact with events. To perform this function, media transparency is an essential element of democratic societies, understood as a way of accountability. However, in today's communication scenario, media trust is increasingly being challenged. In this context, this research selects the most popular digital native media in Spain (n=10) in order to identify the possible relationship between those with more transparency alternatives and higher audience ratings. Through a qualitative analysis, we explore the websites of these media to catalogue the transparency mechanisms they offer according to three variables: corporate transparency, self-regulation and audience participation. The first two variables address the public information of the media, which includes items such as its editorial line or income, while the third considers all those mechanisms that appeal to the public and try to encourage its interaction. Possible coincidences are sought between more transparency and more consumption in order to check whether transparency is a factor that increases the trust that audiences place in the media. The results reveal that there is no binding relationship between transparency, consumption and trust. Instead, mechanisms for audience participation are prioritized over the conception and development of self-regulation or co-regulation systems, which lead to rethinking the value attributed to journalistic transparency.

#### Keywords

Digital media; transparency; audiences; consumption; trust.

#### Resumen

Los medios de comunicación desempeñan una labor de servicio público, que pone a las personas en contacto con los acontecimientos. Para realizar esa función, la transparencia mediática se erige en un elemento esencial de las sociedades democráticas, entendida como una forma de rendición de cuentas. Sin embargo, en el escenario comunicativo actual la confianza de los medios está cada vez más entredicho. En ese contexto, la presente investigación selecciona los medios nativos digitales más consumidos en España (n=10) para identificar la posible relación entre aquellos que poseen más alternativas de transparencia y mayores índices de audiencia. Mediante un análisis cualitativo se exploran las webs de estos medios para catalogar los mecanismos de transparencia que ofrecen en función de tres variables: transparencia corporativa, autorregulación y participación de los públicos. Las dos primeras variables abordan la información pública del medio, como su línea editorial o ingresos, mientras que la tercera contempla todos aquellos mecanismos que interpelan al público y tratan de fomentar su interacción. Se buscan posibles coincidencias entre más transparencia y más consumo, con el propósito de comprobar si la transparencia es un factor que aumenta la confianza que los públicos depositan en los medios. Los resultados revelan que no existe ningún tipo de relación vinculante entre transparencia, consumo y confianza. En cambio, priman los mecanismos de participación de las audiencias frente a la concepción y el desarrollo de sistemas de autorregulación o coregulación, lo que obliga a repensar el valor que se le atribuye a la transparencia periodística.

#### Palabras clave

Medios digitales; transparencia; audiencias; consumo; confianza.

## 1. Introduction

Unlike matrix media, digital native media (Cebrián Herreros, 2009) were born and grown entirely online. Today they are already an indispensable part of digital journalism, which in its third decade of life is characterised by its technological dimension, by the need to continue searching for new methodologies to analyse its complexity (Pérez-Seijo et al., 2020), as well as to incorporate contributions and approaches that come from other fields of knowledge beyond the Social Sciences (Steenen et al., 2019).

Digitisation has enabled news companies to test various forms of value creation through machines (Sangil et al., 2023), although there is still a need for more innovative innovation, in the sense of truly ground-breaking innovation (Sixto-García & López-García, 2023). In digital journalism, networked environments and practices favour the expansion of opportunities and spaces for news (Carlson, 2023; Waisbord, 2019) and sometimes even digital media can take precedence over journalism (Duffy & Ang, 2019).

Digital journalism is not only a fully consolidated reality in the media scene, but also in the scientific field, as platforms, technology, audiences and business models have been studied, as well as other cross-cutting issues such as methods or journalistic theory itself (Salaverría, 2019; Westlund et al, 2023). However, there are no previous studies that analyse transparency in digital native media, despite the fact that there are several people that question how news should be broadcast (Carlson, 2024) at a time when journalism, although it has always acted as an element of oversight and control of power, is going through a strong crisis of credibility, enhanced by polarisation and the increase in misinformation (Pérez-Curiel & Casero-Ripollés, 2022).

Several authors have explored the transparency of mainstream media in Spain, reporting a range of requirements to be met (López Cepeda & Manfredi, 2013; Pauner Chulvi, 2023), although these transparency mechanisms are evaluated modestly by both journalists and citizens (Ramon et al., 2020). In this country, specific media models such as elDiario.es, characterized by its efforts to improve transparency mechanisms, are also analysed (González Esteban, 2014; Rius Baró, 2019).

In fact, in the academic debate, transparency has experienced exponential growth in recent decades and is a fully established concept (Adeoye & Ran, 2023; Gorwa & Garton-Ash, 2020). The literature review identifies two key moments: Barack Obama's Memorandum for Transparency and Open Government statement in 2009 and the Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018 (Campos-Domínguez & Díez-Garrido, 2023). Some studies that analysed the transparency of Spanish and Portuguese media point out that less than half of the most popular media comply with minimum transparency standards (Renedo-Farpón et al., 2023).

In Spain, from a legal point of view, Law 19/2013, of 9 December, on transparency, access to public information and good governance does not include the media in its subjective scope of application, except in the case of the Corporación RTVE as a public company or those media that as private entities receive public aid or subsidies for one year of over 100,000 euros, or when at least 40% of their total annual income comes from public aid or subsidies, provided that they reach at least 5,000 euros. The transparency of digital native media generally responds to a deontological approach, without coercive capacity, as they are not obliged to exercise active advertising or to provide public information.

We assume that in digital media, transparency refers to the possibility of knowing the sources of information, the ways of obtaining information, the organisation and management of the media or the possibilities that audiences have to contact the media. In this sense, the following research questions are posed:

- Which transparency mechanisms do Spanish digital native media offer? (RQ1).
- Are the most popular digital media those with the most transparency options? (RQ2).
- Is it possible to determine a direct relationship between more transparency, greater trust and higher consumption? (RQ3).

## 2. Transparency to build trust

Trust in the media is at historic lows, leading to a drastic reduction in news consumption, an increase in citizen polarisation and, ultimately, a threat to the survival of journalism (Wilner et al., 2022). After increasing during a time of heightened information tensions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the most recent data show that trust has stabilized at 40% (Newman et al., 2025), lower than in past decades. The assessment of trust in the media should not be limited exclusively to audience measurement systems (Mangold, 2023), as what really matters is that citizens use the media to inform themselves and that they trust them (Strömbäck et al., 2020).

A large part of the public bypasses traditional media and prefers to be informed through social media (Groshek & Koc-Michalska, 2017), even though the absence of control mechanisms for the information disseminated also poses a threat to the credibility of the news (Dabbous et al., 2022), although additional studies revealed that trust in networks positively affected the dissemination of information and reduced privacy concerns (Cao et al., 2023). Other research points to a preference for unconventional sources of information (Kalogeropoulos et al., 2019; Mourão et al., 2018), while work by Doll and his team (2023) points to general trust in the media being conditioned by political ideology.

More than a decade ago Williams (2012) stated that trust in the media was determined by trust in information, journalists and media corporations. However, eleven years later, other studies such as Hutchens and his collaborators (2023) concluded that the comments made by audiences about published information were also a determining factor in whether a media outlet was more or less trustworthy. Even the influence of news parody can condition whether a media outlet is more or less trustworthy (Peifer, 2018).

Paying to consume news does not increase trust or credibility in the media either (Vara-Miguel et al., 2023). Peifer and Partain (2023) found that in the United States, audiences questioned the trustworthiness of the media because there was a lack of transparency in the knowledge of sources and the news production system was not well explained to audiences, while also highlighting the effectiveness of citizens' forums and their link to more engaged journalism. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Stivas and Cole (2023) stated that the combination of transparency and trust helped improve governance systems. Open access repositories have also been identified as infrastructures that favour transparency and a possible increase in trust in the media (Zamith, 2024). Also the j-vlog as a hybrid form of professional-amateur reporting was analysed as an alternative for journalists to realise journalistic transparency (Meng & Wang, 2025).

Likewise, professional ethics understands transparency as an indicator of ethical reporting (Campos-Domínguez & Redondo-García, 2015), while the accountability that comes with disclosing the media's operations is a core value of the profession (Steel et al., 2025). However, the consolidation of a culture of transparency remains slow in many journalistic organizations (Becker & Christofoletti, 2020).

In Europe, the lack of transparency as a safeguard for editorial independence is one of the greatest challenges facing the media, especially in the light of the recent European Media Freedom Act (Seipp et al., 2023). There is a consensus that information transparency of companies, including media companies, is crucial to ensure audience satisfaction, but what is less clear is which data should be provided to meet this requirement (Fu et al., 2023).

Traditionally, the media have always been seen as public service institutions (McQuail, 2010), connecting people to events because of their broadcasting role (Peters, 1999). To undertake this function with guarantees, transparency in the media is now an indispensable element in all democratic societies (Andersen, 2009), since marketing began to involve the public in order to achieve a better society and, in particular, with the development of corporate social responsibility (Bowen, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2012). Rodríguez-Navas and his collaborators (2021) understand that transparency must be conceived as a model of online communication, since there is emission of information and reception by users, who end up becoming prosumers of the content by redistributing it or generating new ones.

A decisive aspect in guaranteeing information transparency comes from the fact that the public can know the sources of financing of the media and the origin of the income. For this reason, the field of communication has almost always been linked to media accountability (Schedler, 1999; Schedler, 2021), so that, like institutions and governments, the media are also required to have transparency mechanisms in order to exercise responsibility for the content they publish.

Media accountability must be conceived as a dynamic of interaction between a media and the sets of values of the people who receive its messages (Plaisance, 2000). This transparency linked to accountability has been widely analysed internationally (Eberwein et al., 2011; von Krogh, 2012), with studies showing that transparency practices on the Internet vary between countries due to different perceptions among journalists and media, or the editorial objectives of the latter (Heikkilä et al. 2012).

On the other hand, it has never been easier to create a news site than in the digital era (Tenor, 2018), which implies that all entrepreneurs are not necessarily aware of the accountability that their media should exercise with respect to society. For example, media accountability so far ignores the disruptive force of technology and algorithm-driven platforms (Zaid et al., 2023), although all studies on transparency agree in highlighting its goal of keeping citizens informed so that they can make responsible decisions (Díez-Garrido, 2024).

### 3. Methodology

This research analyses the transparency of digital native media in Spain. The methodology employed consists of a multiple case study, which develops multi-method strategies combining exploratory and descriptive approaches (Gómez-Diago, 2010; Rivas-de-Roca et al., 2020). Digital native media, understood as those designed specifically for the Internet, are analysed (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2023).

Specifically, this study examines 10 digital native media in Spain (see Table 1), so it is a specific and homogeneous sample of elements that share similar characteristics (Etikan et al., 2016). These media were identified according to the Digital News Report Spain (Novoa-Jaso et al., 2024) as the digital natives most consumed by respondents in a previously given list. Furthermore, all these news companies comprise the study sample for an R&D&I project on digital native media in Spain.

**Table 1. Media sample (n = 10)**

| <b>Media</b>            | <b>Web</b>  |
|-------------------------|---|
| Público                 | <a href="https://www.publico.es/">https://www.publico.es/</a>                   |
| <i>El Confidencial</i>  | <a href="https://www.elconfidencial.com/">https://www.elconfidencial.com/</a>   |
| <i>elDiario.es</i>      | <a href="https://www.eldiario.es/">https://www.eldiario.es/</a>                 |
| <i>El Español</i>       | <a href="https://www.lespanol.com/">https://www.lespanol.com/</a>               |
| <i>Huffington Post</i>  | <a href="https://www.huffingtonpost.es/">https://www.huffingtonpost.es/</a>     |
| <i>OK Diario</i>        | <a href="https://okdiario.com/">https://okdiario.com/</a>                       |
| <i>Libertad Digital</i> | <a href="https://www.libertaddigital.com/">https://www.libertaddigital.com/</a> |
| <i>ElNacional.cat</i>   | <a href="https://www.elnacional.cat/">https://www.elnacional.cat/</a>           |
| <i>Vozpópuli</i>        | <a href="https://www.vozpopuli.com/">https://www.vozpopuli.com/</a>             |
| <i>Esdiario.com</i>     | <a href="https://www.esdiario.com/">https://www.esdiario.com/</a>               |

Source: own elaboration.

The analysis of the media was carried out by scanning their websites as of November 2024. Sixteen items based on previous studies (Groenhart & Bardoel, 2012; Renedo-Farpón et al., 2023; Caro-González et al., 2024) were used to identify transparency mechanisms. Three variables were established (see Table 2): corporate transparency, self-regulation and audience participation, aligned with Ramon et al. (2016).

From an operational perspective, corporate transparency is defined here as the clear disclosure of information about the media outlet's business operations, which should include information about its structure, editorial objectives, and funding. Self-regulation refers to the existence of internal standards that the media outlet voluntarily establishes to ensure its quality, while participation refers to mechanisms that allow the public to interact with it.

Specifically, the first two variables are related and address the media's public information, including aspects such as its editorial line or revenues, but also strategies adapted to ensure the quality of content. The third variable considers all those mechanisms that engage the audience and try to encourage their interaction. It is true that the existence of some categories in this last block, such as the inclusion of a button to share the news on social media, may be related to the search for web traffic, but it is also a participation tool collected in previous studies (Caro-González et al., 2024).

All items were explored from a quantitative point of view by dichotomisation, in an approach similar to previous studies (Renedo-Farpón et al., 2023). In addition, item 1.4 included quantity, if any. At the method implementation level, two researchers participated, codifying the data jointly to ensure the reliability of the process, after an initial phase of checking the websites of the selected media outlets. The minimum criterion required to consider compliance with each item is that there is at least one section on the website with information about it.

**Table 2. Transparency item analysis sheet**

| Variable                   | Items  |
|----------------------------|--|
| V1. Corporate transparency | 1.1 Corporate information  |
|                            | 1.2 Organizational structure of the media (staff)                    |
|                            | 1.3 Identification of the editorial line                             |
|                            | 1.4 Revenue information  |
|                            | 1.5 Donor/sponsor publication  |
| V2. Self-regulation        | 2.1 Publication of code of ethics, handbook of ethics or style guide |
|                            | 2.2 Reader's ombudsman   |
|                            | 2.3 Publication of ethical limitations on advertising                |
| V3. Audience participation | 3.1 Accessible form of contact                                       |
|                            | 3.2 Allow comments   |
|                            | 3.3 They publish information on comment policy                       |
|                            | 3.4 Content submission option  |
|                            | 3.5 Ways to share the news piece                                     |
|                            | 3.6 Letters to the editor section                                    |
|                            | 3.7 Benefits for subscribers/members                                 |

Source: own elaboration.

The quantitative analysis is complemented by the qualitative analysis, in the sense that the dichotomous assessment of each item includes an analytical description and a description of the transparency information available in each media outlet. The audience data are also taken from the Digital News Report Spain (Novoa-Jaso et al., 2024). The secondary data analysis allows us to see whether there is a possible link between levels of transparency and consumption, based on trust in these media. To this end, a ranking of the publications with the most transparency is established, and a comparative analysis is made with the ranking of the most popular media.

#### 4. Results

Compliance with the identified transparency mechanisms reaches at least 50% in seven of the ten selected media (Table 3), a value calculated on the total of the variables, and not on the three items. In fact, the average percentage of compliance is 52.49%. However, these figures are modest, as only *elDiario.es* achieves a high figure (87.5%), followed by three media (*Público*, *El Español* and *Libertad Digital*) at a similar level, which is close to two thirds of the indicators.

**Table 3. Percentage of media transparency by order of compliance (%)**

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| <i>elDiario.es</i>      | 87,5 |
| <i>Público</i>          | 62,5 |
| <i>El Español</i>       | 62,5 |
| <i>Libertad Digital</i> | 62,5 |
| <i>El Confidencial</i>  | 56,2 |
| <i>OK Diario</i>        | 50   |
| <i>ElNacional.cat</i>   | 50   |

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| <i>Vozpópuli</i>      | 37,5 |
| <i>Esdialario.com</i> | 31,2 |
| <i>El Huffpost</i>    | 25   |

Source: own elaboration.

There are publications that show an extremely low use of transparency mechanisms: *Vozpópuli*, *Esdialario.com* and *El Huffpost*. In any case, the types of indicators show differences that warrant exploration based on qualitative information on transparency provided by each media entity. In this sense, the order established in the table between media with the same percentage is due to their volume of qualitative information.

#### 4.1. Corporate transparency and self-regulation

Corporate transparency is the block with the greatest amount of information in the media, which contrasts with a relative absence of self-regulation mechanisms. Following the established ranking, *elDiario.es* complies with all the indicators of corporate transparency. This media incorporates a text in which it defines itself as follows: "elDiario.es is a digital media founded in 2012 by a group of journalists who do not give up, despite the crisis, the pressures of power, and the lack of press credibility. We believe in journalism, despite everything. At elDiario.es we believe that society needs independent and professional information with social values. We want to give a voice to so many citizens who are drowning in a monotonous and suffocating supply of information."

It also provides information on its list of managers and workers by sections (131 employees), as well as its editorial line, for which it has a statute that establishes the guiding principles and priorities of the media. In addition to this, there is information on revenues. In 2023, the revenue of *elDiario.es* was 13,828,403 euros, which gave it a profit of 1,428,765 euros.

With regard to advertising, it states that no advertiser may account for more than 10% of total revenues. This is related to the existence of self-regulation systems. In this sense, *elDiario.es* includes ethical principles in its statute and reports limitations on advertising, given that advertisers only buy advertising to communicate their services and products, and not to obtain differential treatment in the newsroom. However, the newspaper does not have a reader's ombudsman. It did have a "Community Ombudsman" in the early days, but it is now considered that readers do not require an intermediary because the statute provides them with self-advocacy mechanisms.

This high level of compliance is experienced to a lesser extent in *Público*. The digital media, heir to the obsolete paper version, describes itself as a free, independent and progressive-oriented publication. Its website provides information on the composition of the team, in terms of names, positions and photographs. The editorial policy is channelled through the "10 flags of *Público*", which function as editorial principles.

Although it does not disclose the exact amount of revenue or its donors and sponsors, it does report that 95% of that revenue comes from advertising, of which institutional advertising accounts for 5-8%. *Público* does not have an ethics manual or an ombudsman, but it vetoes any advertising that collides with its editorial principles. The "10 flags of *Público*" serve as a basic document to guide ethical limitations on advertising.

*El Español*, which provides information on all items of corporate transparency, with the exception of donors and sponsors, has a similar level of transparency. This newspaper defines itself as an independent media guided by a mission, vision and values based on truthfulness and plurality of information. Its revenue in 2023 was 25.6 million. This corporate transparency contrasts with the absence of elements of self-regulation.

The above situation is repeated in *Libertad Digital*, although this media incorporates a small manual that addresses stylistic issues. The publication defines itself as "a refuge for ideas and intellectuals who wanted to guarantee the existence of a safe harbour where they could disseminate them". In addition, it describes its staff and states that it recorded revenues of 7 million euros in the last available financial year (2022). It is important to note the identification of a series of values that articulate its editorial line (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Headline of the section “Our Values” of *Libertad Digital*



Source: *Libertad Digital*.

For its part, *El Confidencial* is in an intermediate position with respect to all the media in the sample. It lacks self-regulation mechanisms and does not provide data on revenues or donors and sponsors, but it does provide corporate information on its purpose and the composition of its staff, while identifying its editorial line with four values and principles. Its aim is to “defend a citizen's right to know the truth”.

This idea of the sense of the media is not present in *OK Diario*. Instead, this digital media details its management team and section chiefs, as well as its editorial principles through ten sentences that give the OK to certain measures such as lowering taxes or a united Spain. Advertising rates are reported, but once again there is a lack of self-regulation figures. In terms of revenue, it shows a turnover of 9.7 million euros, although this figure is not updated (2021).

*ElNacional.cat* achieves the same percentage of compliance as *OK Diario* (50%). This Catalan newspaper was founded by the journalist José Antich, which is mentioned in the corporate information available. Its website gives an account of the organisational structure of the media (composition of the editorial staff with their emails) and provides a general idea of its editorial line: “El Nacional.cat is committed solely to serve the reader as the ultimate objective of the informative task. The newspaper assumes the values of journalism as a tool to explain and better understand reality and its application in the digital environment.” The newspaper does not provide information about its income, nor does it publish the names of its donors or sponsors. In terms of self-regulation, it does not have an ethics manual, a style guide or a readers' ombudsman, nor does it publish ethical limitations on advertising, although it does report on its support of Self-control.

In the lowest segment of the transparency scale are *Vozpópuli*, *Esdiarario.com* and *El Huffpost*. Apart from lacking self-regulatory mechanisms, *Vozpópuli* has hardly any corporate information. It only cites its editorial team, providing names and email addresses of each member. In editorial terms, they state that sports content is not a priority. On the other hand, they list a series of areas of journalistic specialisation in which they consider themselves to be leaders: “economy and business, reporting on corruption, politics, technology, culture and science.”

*Esdiarario.com* follows a similar system, since they only mention the management and editorial team in corporate terms. This media has a style manual that includes the separation between news and opinion, the editorial statutes or the recognition of conflict situations and cases of special protection.

The last newspaper in the sample (*El Huffpost*) does not have a similar system. The only corporate or self-regulatory item they include information on is the organisational structure of the media by identifying its management and editorial staff.

Regarding the joint evaluation of all the media, the composition of the staff is diagnosed as the lowest common denominator of the mechanisms analysed, within a tendency to prioritise the dissemination of corporate data over the development of self-regulation.

#### 4.2. Audience participation

Public participation is a block with notable differences between the different digital native media, ranging from the proliferation of participation channels to mere contact, although advantages are detected in almost all of them for subscribers and/or registered users. The first media in the ranking (*elDiario.es*) addresses all the defined items, with the exception of letters to the editor. It has an easy form of contact by email and telephone, and only allows subscribers, known as members, to publish comments, for whom a comments policy is established. These members enjoy benefits such as nightly

news previews, ad-free browsing, face-to-face meetings with staff and a free paper magazine. Anyone can share the journalistic piece on social networks (Facebook and X) or send content to the media through the "leads" section (see Figure 2), which serves to uncover relevant cases and send information confidentially. In addition, the newsletter "Up-to-date" and the podcast "One subject per day", which are produced daily to explain current affairs, are freely accessible.

**Figure 2. Guidelines for sending tips to the editorial staff of *elDiario.es***

**Pistas**

**Danos una pista** ¿Tienes una pista que pueda llevarnos a destapar una información relevante?

Puedes hacernos llegar documentación o datos confidenciales a la redacción por correo electrónico: [pistas@eldiario.es](mailto:pistas@eldiario.es).

Puedes contar con que, como marca nuestro código deontológico, protegeremos tu identidad en todo el proceso si así lo deseas. Para que este canal sea útil, te pedimos que no mandes aquí notas de prensa o comunicados masivos.

TEMAS DE INTERÉS [Guía TV](#) [Audiencias TV](#) [Noticias actualidad](#) [Salarios 2024](#) [Estado embalses](#) [Comprobar Lotería Navidad 2024](#) [Zonas inundables](#) [Calendario laboral Madrid 2025](#) [Calendario laboral 2025](#) [Podcast](#) ...

**elDiario.es**  
Periodismo a pesar de todo

**Necesitamos tu apoyo económico para hacer un periodismo riguroso y con valores sociales**

Descubre nuestras apps

Source: *ElDiario.es*

The benefits for subscribers to *Público* are very similar, as they are limited to aspects such as browsing without advertising, participation with comments, attendance at events or the receipt of a commercial monograph. It is possible to contact this media by email and telephone, although the latter option is exclusively for subscribers. Only subscribers can comment, but registered users can read these comments, for which there are no open guidelines.

In the case of *El Español*, there is a paywall, so being a subscriber opens the door to unlimited access to content, in addition to advantages such as newsletters or advertising-free browsing. This media repeats the parameters of *elDiario.es* by incorporating all the transparency items for the audience, except for the letters to the editor. The newsroom and section managers can be contacted by email, while comments are restricted to registered users, to whom a prior filter is applied, as explained in the comments policy. Any reader can share the news on social networks or instant messaging services such as WhatsApp and Telegram, although the option of sending content is only possible for subscribers who eventually publish in the so-called "subscriber's blog".

The availability of audience participation mechanisms is lower in *Libertad Digital*, a media that in global terms reached the same percentages of compliance as *Público* and *El Español*. The difference lies in the fact that *Libertad Digital* limits itself to having a contact email, allowing registered users to publish comments, sharing the piece on social networks and offering a few advantages to members in the form of advertising-free offers and navigation. The biggest disruptive element is the possibility of listening to articles as an accessibility mechanism.

*El Confidencial* has most of the audience participation mechanisms, as it only lacks the option of sending content. This media offers contact by email and telephone, while only allowing subscribers to publish comments, although reading is accessible to any visitor to the website. This is why it publicly discloses its comments policy: "In order to promote and maintain that atmosphere of useful and free exchange of views, we have established a set of simple rules that aim to ensure the proper conduct of such discussions. Failure to comply with them will result in the removal of the comment, or even expulsion from The Community in the case of repeated behaviour that disregards previous warnings." It also has buttons for sharing news pieces on social networks and an outdated letters to the editor section, which was only accessible to subscribers. These users have other benefits such as unlimited access to the paywall, exclusive newsletters and events.

*OK Diario* offers some level of participation formulas, dispensing only with the sending of content and the letters to the editor section. This media provides email and telephone addresses as forms of contact, and allows registered users to publish comments, for which it defines a policy that tries to avoid hate speech or propaganda. Any user can share the news on social networks, but members, among which there is a premium category, have advantages such as advertising-free browsing, newsletters or cultural offers.

*ElNacional.cat*'s formulas are quite similar to those of *OK Diario* (both have a 50% compliance with the set of transparency mechanisms). The Catalan publication does not have a paywall either, but offers benefits to subscribers, who are the only ones allowed to publish comments. *ElNacional.cat* has an email and telephone number as contact formulas and also allows the sharing of journalistic texts on social networks. It also has an option to send content, which contrasts with the absence of a comments policy or a section for letters to the editor.

Although *Vozpópuli* only reached 37.5% of overall compliance with transparency standards, and in terms of audience it is in a similar position to the two previous newspapers. Once again, email and telephone are identified as contact formulas, while news can also be disseminated in networks. In addition, *Vozpópuli* accepts comments from registered users, for whom it has developed a comments policy centred on respect and prior moderation. Registered users enjoy preferential tickets to events, a newsletter from the director and an exclusive WhatsApp channel. Neither the option of sending content nor a section for letters to the editor are among the alternatives, but it is important to note that the subscription system and the financial contributions system work independently, in the form of a donation of a chosen amount.

Both *Esdiario.com* and *El Huffpost* show little concern for audience involvement. The former limits itself to including a contact email, allowing the distribution of news in networks and offering a Google account registration option, which leads to unlimited access to content and other services such as newsletters. *El Huffpost* includes an accessible form of contact (email and telephone), the possibility of sharing the pieces on social networks and a content submission option to suggest ideas or blogs.

In the sample as a whole, the conclusions of the qualitative analysis point to the existence of direct contact mechanisms and news sharing buttons as the preferred ways of incorporating audiences. In addition, the registration options offered by the media enable certain benefits for members or subscribers, although these benefits or the articulation of comments are relatively different from one media outlet to another.

### 4.3. Relationship between consumption and transparency

The results of the transparency index can be related to the weekly audience data collected by the Digital News Report in Spain. This comparison makes it possible to analyse whether there is a coincidence between the most popular media and those that offer greater transparency options, while at the same time exploring a possible link between transparency, trust and consumption.

The data (see Table 4) show a coincidence in that *elDiario.es* is the media with the greatest transparency and is the most consulted. *El Español* experiences a similar situation, since it is in third position in both rankings. However, these cases are exceptions, since this correlation is not observed in the rest of the media. This means that a lack of transparency does not lead to a lack of trust that reduces audience.

**Table 4. Coincidence between transparency ranking and consumer ranking**

| Transparency ranking              | Audience transparency        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>1. <i>elDiario.es</i></b>      | <b>1. <i>elDiario.es</i></b> |
| <b>2. <i>Público</i></b>          | 2. <i>OK Diario</i>          |
| <b>3. <i>El Español</i></b>       | <b>3. <i>El Español</i></b>  |
| <b>4. <i>Libertad Digital</i></b> | 4. <i>El Confidencial</i>    |
| <b>5. <i>El Confidencial</i></b>  | 5. <i>El Huffpost</i>        |
| <b>6. <i>OK Diario</i></b>        | 6. <i>Público</i>            |
| <b>7. <i>ElNacional.cat</i></b>   | 7. <i>Libertad Digital</i>   |
| <b>8. <i>Vozpópuli</i></b>        | 8. <i>Esdiario.com</i>       |
| <b>9. <i>Esdiario.com</i></b>     | 9. <i>Vozpópuli</i>          |
| <b>10. <i>El Huffpost</i></b>     | 10. <i>ElNacional.cat</i>    |

Source: own elaboration.

*Público* and *OK Diario* are particularly interesting cases. *Público* has a high transparency index (second position) whose percentage of compliance is similar to *El Español* and *Libertad Digital*, although with qualitative nuances. On the other hand, in terms of audience ratings, *Público* is in sixth position. The opposite is the case of *OK Diario*. Despite being the sixth media in terms of transparency, its audience rating rises to the second position.

Likewise, the media with the least transparency (*El Huffpost*) presents intermediate audience levels (fifth place). Therefore, the most popular digital media are not always the ones with the best transparency strategies. The fact that some widely read media such as *elDiario.es* or *El Español* are highly transparent, and that others such as *Vozpópuli* and *Esdiaario.com* are at the bottom of both rankings, does not prevent us from stating that the relationship between transparency, trust and consumption is weak and casual.

It would be interesting to compare this data with the public's perspective, which would allow us to understand to what extent the credibility associated with transparency is a value that fuels the audience to consume a product, as well as whether transparency itself constitutes a positive feature for them. In the specific case of *elDiario.es*, its percentage of compliance with transparency mechanisms (87.5%) is well above the rest. This high level of transparency could be linked to greater citizen trust, but this is only an indication that would require specific research to determine whether this is really the case.

The following table (Table 5) summarises the results obtained for each item of the three variables analysed by each media outlet.

**Table 5. Transparency items complied with by media and models**

| Variable | Items | Media members  | Models  |
|----------|-------|--|---|
| V1       | 1.1   | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>El Nacional.cat</i><br><i>El Español</i>  | Literal definition of the media and general principles                            |
|          | 1.2   | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>El Huffpost</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>El Nacional.cat</i><br><i>Vozpópuli</i><br><i>Esdiaario.com</i> | Team composition: names, positions, and sometimes email addresses and photographs |
|          | 1.3   | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>El Nacional.cat</i>   | Editorial principles (statute in <i>elDiario.es</i> )                             |
|          | 1.4   | <i>Público</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i>   | Raw data or percentage distribution   |
|          | 1.5   | <i>elDiario.es</i>   | Percentage restrictions on what a sponsor can provide                             |

|    |     |  |   |
|----|-----|--|---|
| V2 | 2.1 | <i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>Esdiario.com</i>   | Style manual in <i>Libertad Digital</i> ; ethics manual in <i>elDiario.es</i> (statute) and <i>Esdiario.com</i> |
|    | 2.2 |  |   |
|    | 2.3 | <i>Público</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i>   | Advertising must be identified and comply with editorial principles   |
| V3 | 3.1 | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>El Huffpost</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>ElNacional.cat</i><br><i>Vozpópuli</i><br><i>Esdiario.com</i> | Email and telephone number, on different occasions for members  |
|    | 3.2 | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>ElNacional.cat</i><br><i>Vozpópuli</i>  | Only subscribers  |
|    | 3.3 | <i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>OK Diario</i>  | Description of comment management   |
|    | 3.4 | <i>Público</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>El Huffpost</i><br><i>ElNacional.cat</i>   | Sending content by email (except subscriber's blog in <i>El Español</i> )                                       |
|    | 3.5 | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>El Huffpost</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>ElNacional.cat</i><br><i>Vozpópuli</i><br><i>Esdiario.com</i> | Social media share button   |
|    | 3.6 | <i>El Confidencial</i>   | Conventional letter section   |
|    | 3.7 | <i>Público</i><br><i>El Confidencial</i><br><i>elDiario.es</i><br><i>El Español</i><br><i>OK Diario</i><br><i>Libertad Digital</i><br><i>El Nacional.cat</i><br><i>Vozpópuli</i><br><i>Esdiario.com</i>                      | List of benefits for members, such as access to content, events, promotions, etc.                               |

Source: own elaboration.

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

Although Groenhart and Bardoel (2012) see transparency as one of the pillars of ethics and deontology in journalism, this is not the case of digital native media in Spain. In general terms, these media do not exercise transparency as an inexcusable part of good journalism, nor is it possible to determine a direct relationship between transparency and trust. The lack of correlation may be linked to the public prioritizing other variables, such as content, when seeking information, even though not all transparency mechanisms are used equally.

In the analysed media audience participation mechanisms are more important than the conception and development of self-regulation or co-regulation systems. The existence of deontological codes, editorial statutes or ethical codes is anecdotal among digital native newspapers. Something similar happens with style books, another indispensable element of deontology in journalism as a guarantee of the orthographic, syntactic and lexical quality of the stories.

Among the formulas contemplated by these media to interact with the public, social networks stand out as spaces in which web content is disseminated. This coincides with the results of the research carried out by Castro-Higueras and his team (2024), also in the networks chosen (Facebook and X) to increase communication and the participation and involvement of social communities. According to their research, these communities are ideologically in line with the media outlet, so they don't appear to be solely focused on audience growth.

A large part of the sample belongs to the second generation of native publications, as classified by Salaverría (2021). These publications are characterized by having staff made up of journalists with a consolidated professional career, but who had been dismissed from their companies or who had left them on their own initiative. This is in line with the fact that the websites offer contact mechanisms with these professionals, so that it is the journalists themselves, with their personal brand, who contribute to increasing media credibility and trust.

The results include cases of accountability based on the publication of income and expenditure balances. Although this option is valued as a transparency mechanism, there is no evidence of the existence of practices that offer open data on the sources of financing or the detailed list of expenses. On the other hand, there is evidence of a lack of relationship between advertising funding and interference in news content.

Although Regulation 2024/1083 establishing a common framework for media services in the EU highlights the importance of transparency, and journalists believe that these mechanisms promote the quality of information (Ramon et al., 2020), their presence is limited in the digital natives considered, which denotes a dissociation. Advertising becomes, precisely, one of the priority means of financing in this type of media. As pointed out by Vázquez-Herrero in a previous study (2021), there is an exploration of business models that combine advertising with payment by subscription. Subscribers have full access to content and to all audience participation formulas, so that the paywall marks the boundary between the readers' connection with the media outlet. Advertising becomes, precisely, one of the priority means of financing in this type of media. As pointed out by Vázquez-Herrero in a previous study (2021), there is an exploration of business models that combine advertising with payment by subscription. Subscribers have full access to content and to all audience participation formulas, so that the paywall marks the boundary between the readers' connection with the media outlet.

In relation to RQ1, there is heterogeneity in the transparency mechanisms offered by the digital native media. While *elDiario.es*, *Público*, *El Español* and *Libertad Digital* comply with a considerable number of the items contemplated in corporate transparency, self-regulation and the offer of audience participation mechanisms, in other cases these alternatives are not significant. The identification of the corporate and organizational structure of the workforce is the most repeated pattern, followed by the provision of corporate information and the identification of the editorial line, although the latter is based more on values and attributes than on the organizational mission or vision. In the information on accountability, there is a lack of transparency in terms of the source of income and destination of expenditures, as well as a lack of updated information on published fiscal years.

The options for audience participation differ among the digital native media, with formulas that border on co-creation by allowing readers to send additional comments, for example in *elDiario.es*, on cases in which the possibilities for participation are limited to email contact. The greatest commitment to public involvement is based on the visibility of buttons or widgets for sharing news on social networks, mainly on X and Facebook.

On the other hand, discrimination of audiences is confirmed, depending on whether or not there is access to open content for registered users or subscribers. In the second case, the differentiation can

be seen in registration forms that enable audience loyalty options through newsletters. In the case of subscribers, it is the paywall that limits the exclusivity of the content or attendance at events or meetings in which the management of the media or the editorial staff participate. Sometimes it is the diversity options, in particular the reading of texts through artificial voice systems, which allow greater accessibility.

According to RQ2, there is no direct relationship between offering greater transparency options and achieving a greater number of readers. The coincidences that occur between both circumstances are casuistic and only the case of *ElDiario.es* raises certain doubts about the possibility of such a coincidence. This result concerning the disconnection between more transparency and a greater offer of participation mechanisms for audiences coincides with the findings of Sixto-García, Duarte-Melo and Andrade (2024) when analysing this same situation in the most popular media in Portugal, where it was not possible to identify any kind of direct or binding relationship. In other European countries such as Austria, it is also evident how audience expectations are only partially aligned with journalistic values such as accountability, of which transparency is a part (Juarez Miro et al., 2025).

Therefore, in relation to RQ3, some widely read media such as *elDiario.es* or *El Español* are highly transparent, while others such as *Vozpópuli* or *EsDiario.com* are at the lower end of both the transparency ranking and the audience ranking, so it is not possible to establish a link between transparency, consumption and trust. Neither the most transparent media are the most popular nor are the least transparent those with the lowest audience in Spain. Transparency does not increase the trust that audiences place in a given media outlet for information, since there is no relationship between these variables, and this opens up future lines of research on the factors that encourage consumption. Furthermore, the value of journalistic transference must be put in perspective for it to be perceived as such by the audience.

Our study is in line with previous approaches to the Spanish context, which illustrate the limited reach of media-driven accountability instruments (Ramon et al., 2016), explained by the low level of trust they generate. Therefore, the value of journalistic transfer must be emphasized so that the audience perceives it as such, considering that audience sensitivity to transparency has a structural component connected to the existence of different journalistic cultures (Eberwein et al., 2011). The functioning of transparency within these journalistic traditions is an element worth exploring in future studies.

## 6. Specific contribution of each author

| Task                        | Author 1 | Author 2 | Author 3 |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Conceptualisation           | X        | X        | X        |
| Content curation            |          | X        |          |
| Formal analysis             | X        | X        |          |
| Funding acquisition         | X        |          | X        |
| Investigation               | X        | X        |          |
| Methodology                 | X        | X        |          |
| Project administration      | X        |          |          |
| Recourse                    | X        | X        |          |
| Software                    |          | X        |          |
| Supervision                 |          |          | X        |
| Validation                  | X        | X        |          |
| Visualisation               | X        | X        | X        |
| Writing: original draft     | X        | X        |          |
| Writing: review and editing |          | X        | X        |

## 7. References

- Adeoye, Olumide, & Ran, Bing (2023). Government transparency: paradoxes and dilemmas. *Public Management Review*, 26(8), 2194-2217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2023.2181981>
- Andersen, Thomas Barnebeck (2009). E-government as an anti-corruption strategy. *Information economics and policy*, 21(3), 201-210. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoecopol.2008.11.003>
- Bowen, Howard R. (2013). *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*. University of Iowa Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ct20q1w8f>
- Campos-Domínguez, Eva, y Redondo-García, Marta (2015). Meta periodismo y transparencia informativa en el periodismo del siglo XXI. *OBETS. Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 10(1), 185-209. <https://doi.org/10.14198/OBETS2015.10.1.07>
- Campos-Domínguez, Eva, y Díez-Garrido, María (2023). Digital transparency and political communication. *Profesional De La información*, 32(1), e320104. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2023.ene.04>
- Cao, Xingping, Luo, Zeyuan, & Hu, Jiajing (2023). How social media trust and ostracism affect tourist self-disclosure on SNSs? The perspective of privacy management strategy. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 27(13), 2083-2100. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2023.2223909>
- Carlson, Matt (2023). Whose Site Are We On? The Emerging Politics of Digital Journalism Studies. *Digital Journalism*, 11(4), 691-707. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2023.2182802>
- Carlson, Matt (2024). Sustaining journalistic continuity in the face of change: Announcing a new editor at the New York Times. *Journalism*, 25(10), 2061-2078. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849231207185>
- Caro-González, Francisco Javier, Rivas-de-Roca, Rubén, Garrido-Lora, Manuel, y García-Gordillo, Mar (2024). Indicador de Compromiso Social (ICS) en el Periodismo de Proximidad: Hacia un Modelo de Calidad en los Medios Locales. *Profesional De La información*, 33(2), e330219. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0219>
- Castro-Higueras, Antonio, Pérez-Ruff, José-Patricio, Rodríguez-Vázquez, Ana-Isabel, y López-García, Xosé (2024). Medios Nativos Digitales y Sus Comunidades Virtuales: Estrategias de Interacción y Participación en Redes Sociales. *Profesional De La información*, 33(1), e330015. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0015>
- Cebrián-Herreros, Mariano (2009). Comunicación interactiva en los cibermedios. *Comunicar*, 17(33), 15-24. <https://doi.org/10.3916/c33-2009-02-001>
- Christofolletti, Rogerio, y Becker, Denise (2020). Retos para la adopción de la transparencia en la agenda de ética periodística en América Latina. *Sintaxis*, (5), 11-39. <https://doi.org/10.36105/stx.2020n5.01>
- Dabbous, Amal, Barakat, Karine Aoun, & de Quero Navarro, Beatriz (2022). Fake news detection and social media trust: a cross-cultural perspective. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 41(14), 2953-2972. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2021.1963475>
- Díez-Garrido, María (2024). Transparencia y Cuarto Poder en España. Un estudio sobre el valor del acceso a la información para el periodismo y en la lucha contra la desinformación. *Doxa Comunicación*, (38), 391-415. <https://doi.org/10.31921/doxacom.n38a1914>
- Doll, Meagan E., Moy, Patricia, & Beckers, Kathleen (2023). In Peace Journalism we Trust? Effects of Peace Journalism on News-item Credibility and Media Trust. *Journalism Studies*, 24(16), 1999-2019. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2023.2274589>
- Duffy, Andrew, & Ang, Peng Hwa (2019). Digital Journalism: Defined, Refined, or Re-defined. *Digital Journalism*, 7(3), 378-385. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1568899>
- Eberwein, Tobias, Fengler, Susanne, Lauk, Epp, & Leppik-Bork, Tanja (Eds.) (2011). *Mapping Media Accountability – In Europe and Beyond*. Herbert von Halem Verlag.
- Etikan, Ilker, Musa, Sulaiman Abukabar, & Alkassim, Rukayya Sunusi (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Fu, Shaoling, Yu, Yiting, Su, I-Hsuan, Ling, Ziqi, Tan, Kim Hua, & Ma, Ruiji (2023). The influence of corporate social responsibility information transparency on the consumption of green agricultural products on digital platforms. *International Journal of Logistics Research and Applications*, 28(8), 842-859. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13675567.2023.2242284>

Gómez-Diago, Gloria (2010). Triangulación metodológica: Paradigma para investigar desde la ciencia de la comunicación. *Razón y palabra*, 72. <https://shre.ink/S3yo>

González Esteban, José Luis (2014). La transformación del ecosistema mediático español: el caso de eldiario.es. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, 5(2), 159-173. <https://doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM2014.5.2.10>

Gorwa, Robert, & Garton-Ash, Timothy (2020). Democratic transparency in the platform society. En Persily, Nathaniel, & Tucker, Joshua A. (Eds.), *Social media and democracy: The state of the field, prospects for reform*. SSRN *Anxieties of democracy* (pp. 286-312). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108890960>

Groenhardt, Harmen, & Bardoel, Jo (2012). Conceiving the transparency of journalism: moving towards a new media accountability currency. *Studies in Communication Sciences*, 12(1), 6-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scoms.2012.06.003>

Groshek, Jacob, & Koc-Michalska, Karolina (2017). Helping populism win? Social media use, filter bubbles, and support for populist presidential candidates in the 2016 US election campaign. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(9), 1389-1407. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1329334>

Heikkilä Heikki, Domingo, David, Pies Judith, Głowacki, Michal, Kuś Michal, & Baisnée, Olivier (2012). *Media accountability goes online. A transnational study of emerging practices and innovations*. (MediaAct Working Paper; No. 14). <https://shre.ink/S3yk>

Hutchens, Myiah J., Romanova, Ekaterina, & Shaughnessy, Brittany (2023). The Good, the Bad, and the Evil Media: Influence of Online Comments on Media Trust. *Journalism Studies*, 24(11), 1440-1457. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2023.2216811>

Juarez Miro, Clara, Banjac, Sandra, & Hanusch, Folker (2025). Audience Expectations of Journalists: Demands, Beliefs and Assessments. *Digital Journalism*, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2025.2558008>

Kalogeropoulos, Antonis, Suiter, Jane, Udris, Linards, & Eisenegger, Mark (2019). News media trust and news consumption: Factors related to trust in news in 35 countries. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 3672-3693. <https://shre.ink/S3yl>

Kotler, Philip, & Keller, Kevin Lane (2012). *Marketing Management*. Pearson education.

López Cepeda, Ana María, y Manfredi, Juan Luis (2013). Análisis de la transparencia de las páginas web de los principales medios de comunicación audiovisuales en España. *Tripodos*, 1(32), 45-62. <https://shre.ink/S3FP>

Mangold, Frank (2023). Improving media trust research through better measurement: An item response theory perspective. *Journal of Trust Research*, 14(1), 8-38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21515581.2023.2229791>

McQuail, Denis (2010). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory (6th ed)*. SAGE.

Meng, Jing, & Wang, Haiyan (2023). Performing Transparency in vlog News: Self-disclosure of Chinese Journalists in vlog Reporting on COVID-19. *Journalism Practice*, 19(1), 134-150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2169189>

Mourão, Rachel R., Thorson, Esther, Chen, Weiye, & Tham, Samuel M. (2018). Media repertoires and news trust during the early Trump administration. *Journalism Studies*, 19(13), 1945-1956. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1500492>

Newman, Nic, Ross Arguedas, Amy, Robertson, Craig T., Nielsen, Rasmus Kleis, & Fletcher, Richard (2025). *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2025*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. <https://doi.org/10.60625/risj-8qqf-jt36>

Novoa-Jaso, María Fernanda, Sierra-Iso, Aurken, Labiano-Juangarcía, Roncesvalles, y Vara-Miguel, Alfonso (2024). *Digital News Report España 2024: Calidad periodística y pluralidad: claves para la confianza informativa en la era de la inteligencia artificial (IA)*. Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Navarra. <https://doi.org/10.15581/019.2024>

Pauner Chulvi, Cristina (2023). Transparencia algorítmica en los medios de comunicación y las plataformas digitales. *Revista Española de la Transparencia*, (17), 107-136. <https://doi.org/10.51915/ret.308>

Peifer, Jason T. (2018). Liking the (Funny) Messenger: The Influence of News Parody Exposure, Mirth, and Predispositions on Media Trust. *Media Psychology*, 21(4), 529-557. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15213269.2017.1421470>

- Peifer, Jason T., & Partain, Laura P. B. (2023). Citizen Forums: Examining a Journalistic Transparency Initiative's Capacity to Foster Understanding, Connection, and Trust. *Journalism Practice*, 19(3), 467–487. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2202207>
- Pérez-Curiel, Concha, y Casero-Ripollés, Andreu (2022). La lucha contra la desinformación en la sociedad post-pandemia: un reto para el periodismo y más allá. En Caro-González, Francisco Javier, Garrido-Lora, Manuel, y García-Gordillo, Mar (Eds.), *El problema de la verdad. Retos y riesgos en la comunicación* (pp. 83-98). Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones.
- Pérez-Sejjo, Sara, Gutiérrez-Caneda, Beatriz, y López-García, Xosé (2020). Periodismo digital y alta tecnología: de la consolidación a los renovados desafíos. *index.comunicación*, 10(3), 129-151. <https://doi.org/10.33732/ixc/10/03Period>
- Peters, John Durham (1999). *Speaking into the air: A history of the idea of communication*. University of Chicago Press.
- Plaisance, Patrick Lee (2000). The Concept of Media Accountability Reconsidered. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 15(4), 257-268. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327728JMME1504\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327728JMME1504_5)
- Ramon, Xavier, Mauri-Ríos, Marcel, y Alcalá-Anguiano, Fabiola (2016). Transparencia informativa, autorregulación y participación del público. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, (25), 101-125. <https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v0i25.4423>
- Ramon, Xavier, Mauri-Ríos, Marcel, y Díaz-Campo, Jesús (2020). Instrumentos de rendición de cuentas impulsados por los medios de comunicación: percepción de los periodistas y ciudadanos españoles. *Revista de Comunicación*, 19(1), 221-241. <https://doi.org/10.26441/RC19.1-2020-A13>
- Renedo-Farpón, Cristina, Canavilhas, João, y Díez-Garrido, María (2023). Transparency mechanisms in the media: analysis of Spain and Portugal. *Profesional De La información*, 32(1), e320105. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2023.ene.05>
- Rius-Baró, Josep-Carles (2018). *La regeneración del periodismo: el modelo de eldiario.es (2012-2017)* [tesis doctoral, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona]. Dipòsit Digital de Documents de la UAB. <https://shre.ink/S3FG>
- Rivas-de-Roca, Rubén, García-Gordillo, Mar, y Caro-González, Francisco J. (2020). La construcción del periodismo 'localizado' en medios digitales europeos. Estudio de casos. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, (75), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2020-1414>
- Rodríguez-Navas, Pedro Molina, Medranda Morales, Narcisa, & Muñoz Lalinde, Johamna (2021). Transparency for participation through the communication approach. *ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information*, 10(9), 586. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijgi10090586>
- Salaverría, Ramón (2019). Digital journalism: 25 years of research. Review article. *Profesional De La información*, 28(1), e280101. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2019.ene.01>
- Salaverría, Ramón (2021). Veinticinco años de evolución del ecosistema periodístico digital en España. En Salaverría, Ramón, y Martínez-Costa, María-Pilar (Eds.), *Veinticinco años de evolución del ecosistema periodístico digital en España* (pp. 21-31). Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones. <https://doi.org/10.52495/c1.emcs.7.p92>
- Sangil, Luis, Campos-Freire, Francisco, y Pérez-Latre, Francisco J. (2023). Monetization of digital newspapers: Experimentation with brand extension and buying influence. *Profesional De La información*, 32(1), e320115. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2023.ene.15>
- Schedler, Andreas (1999). Conceptualizing Accountability. En Schedler, Andreas, Diamond, Larry, & Plattner, Marc F. (Eds.), *The Self-Restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies* (pp. 13-28). Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Schedler, Andreas (2021). An ambiguous tool of demos accountability: taking the metaphorical concept of majoritarian tyranny seriously. *Political Research Exchange*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2021.2007734>
- Seipp, Theresa, Fathaigh, Ronan Ó., & van Drunen, Max (2023). Defining the 'media' in Europe: pitfalls of the proposed European Media Freedom Act. *Journal of Media Law*, 15(1), 39-51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17577632.2023.2240998>

- Sixto-García, José, Duarte-Melo, Ana, y Andrade, José Gabriel (2024). The relationship between the most consumed digital media in Portugal and audience participation mechanisms. *Frontiers in Communication*, 9, 1466140. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1466140>
- Sixto-García, José, y López-García, Xosé (2025). Innovative innovation in journalism. *Journalism*, 26(1), 65-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849231219359>
- Steel, John, Firmstone, Julie, Conboy, Martin, Fox, Carl, Elliott-Harvey, Charlotte, Mulderrig, Jane, Saunders, Joe, & Wragg, Paul (2025). Journalism and Ethical Praxis: A Thematic Analysis of Journalism Ethics Across Five European Countries. *Journalism Practice*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2025.2480746>
- Steensen, Steen, Grøndahl, Anna M., Hågvær, Yngve Benestad, & Kjos, Birgitte Fonn (2019). What Does Digital Journalism Studies Look Like? *Digital Journalism*, 7(3), 320-342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1581071>
- Stivas, Dionysios, & Cole, Alistair (2023). The importance of trust and transparency in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. Evidence from sixteen EU member states. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2023.2193733>
- Strömbäck, Jesper, Tsfati, Yariv, Boomgaarden, Hajo, Damstra, Alyt, Lindgren, Elina, Vliegenthart, Rens, & Lindholm, Torun (2020). News media trust and its impact on media use: toward a framework for future research. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 44(2), 139-156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2020.1755338>
- Tenor, Carina (2018). Hyperlocal News And Media Accountability. *Digital Journalism*, 6(8), 1064-1077. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2018.1503059>
- Unión Europea (2024). *Reglamento (UE) 2024/1083 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de abril de 2024, por el que se establece un marco común para los servicios de medios de comunicación en el mercado interior y se modifica la Directiva 2010/13/UE (Reglamento Europeo sobre la Libertad de los Medios de Comunicación)*. Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea. <https://shre.ink/S3Ft>
- Vara-Miguel, Alfonso, Medina, Mercedes, y Gutiérrez-Rentería, María Elena (2023). Influence of news interest, payment of digital news, and primary news sources in media trust. A moderated mediation model. *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 21(4), 315-339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2023.2214447>
- Vázquez-Herrero, Jorge (2021). Medios nativos digitales de referencia. En Salaverría, Ramón, y Martínez-Costa, María Pilar (Eds.), *Medios nativos digitales en España* (pp. 83-94). Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones. <https://doi.org/10.52495/c5.emcs.7.p92>
- Vázquez-Herrero, Jorge, Negreira-Rey, María-Cruz, & López-García, Xosé (2023). Research on digital native media: an emerging topic in the field of digital communication. *Profesional De La información*, 32(2), e320202. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2023.mar.02>
- von Krogh, Torbjörn (2012). *Understanding Media Accountability. Media Accountability in Relation to Media Criticism and Media Governance in Sweden 1940–2010*. Mid Sweden University.
- Waisbord, Silvio (2019). The 5Ws and 1H of Digital Journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 7(3), 351-358. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2018.1545592>
- Westlund, Oscar, Hess, Kristy, Saldaña, Magdalena, & Tandoc, Edson. C. (2023). 10 Years of Digital Journalism (Studies): The Past, the Present, the Future. *Digital Journalism*, 11(4), 595-608. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2023.2201469>
- Williams, Ann E. (2012). Trust or Bust?: Questioning the Relationship Between Media Trust and News Attention. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56(1), 116-131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2011.651186>
- Wilner, Tamar, Wallace, Ryan, Lacasa-Mas, Iván, & Goldstein, Emily (2022). The Tragedy of Errors: Political Ideology, Perceived Journalistic Quality, and Media Trust. *Journalism Practice*, 16(8), 1673-1694. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1873167>
- Zaid, Bouziane, Shin, Don Donghee, El Kadoussi, Abdelmalek, & Ibahrine, Mohammed (2023). Watching the Watchdogs: A Conceptual Model for Media Accountability in a Non-Western Country. *Journalism Practice*, 17(4), 755-774. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1946416>
- Zamith, Rodrigo (2023). Open-Source Repositories as Trust-Building Journalism Infrastructure: Examining the Use of GitHub by News Outlets to Promote Transparency, Innovation, and Collaboration. *Digital Journalism*, 12(7), 985-1006. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2023.2202873>

**Acknowledgements**

Translator: Laura Vizcay Nespral.

**Funding**

This article is part of the R&D project Digital-native media in Spain: Strategies, competencies, social involvement and (re)definition of practices in journalistic production and diffusion (PID2021-122534OB-C21), funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and "ERDF/EU".

Esta publicación es parte del proyecto de I+D+i Artificial intelligence in digital media in Spain: effects and roles (PID2024-156034OB-C22), funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and "ERDF/EU".

**Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.