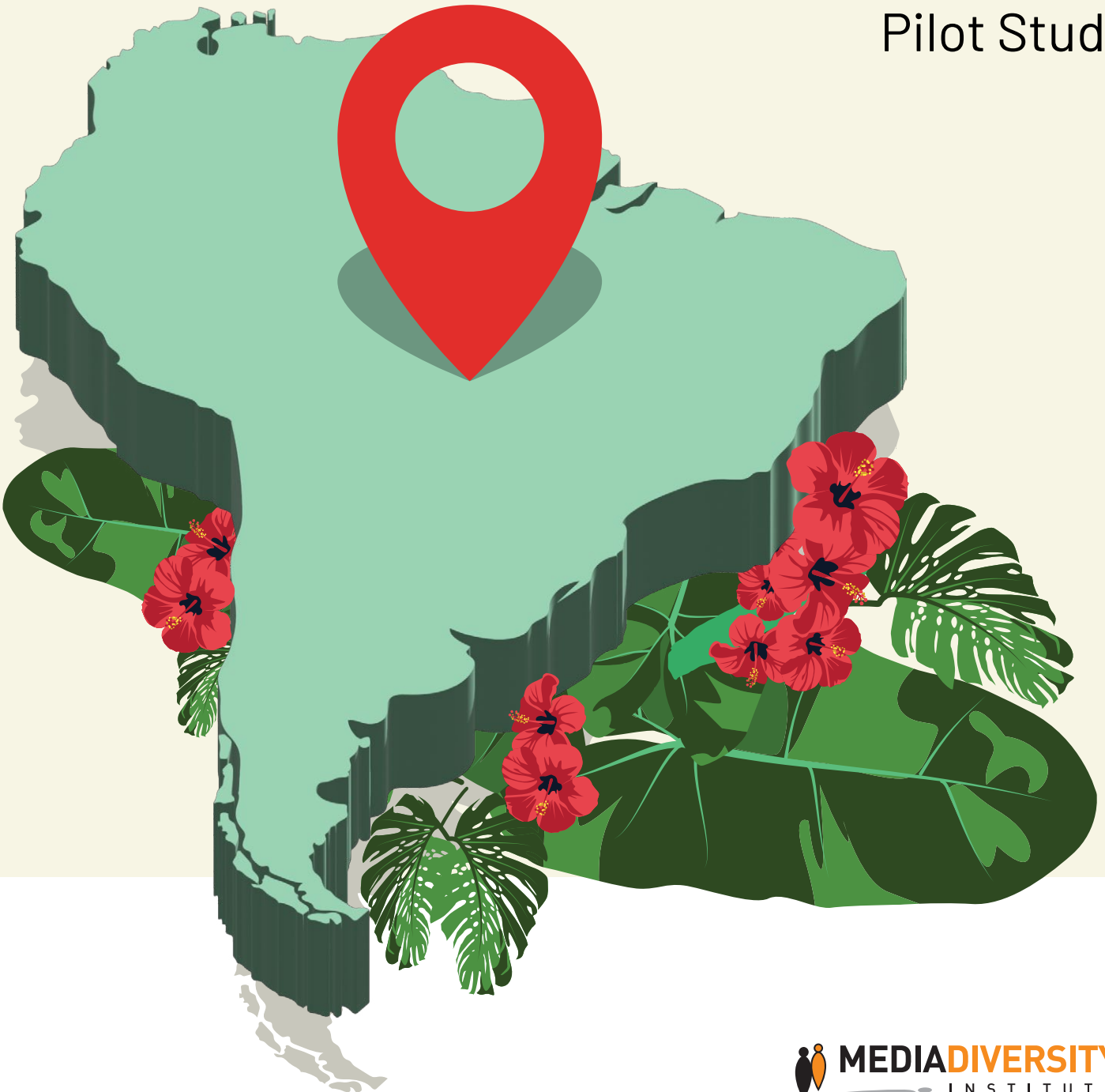


# THE MEDIA DIVERSITY INDEX 2026

South America  
Pilot Study



# THE MEDIA DIVERSITY INDEX 2026

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## SOUTH AMERICA PILOT STUDY

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MDI wishes to acknowledge several individuals whose input has been crucial to the overall Media Diversity Index pilot project. The scoring system for the index was devised by Craig Robertson and advice on the pilot questionnaire design was received from Nico Drok, Epp Lauk and Greg Treadwell. MDI thanks the authors involved in the South America data-gathering discussed in this report. Its introductory sections were written by Naomi Sakr, who also edited the report.

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# INTRO DUCTION

The Media Diversity Index is a pilot project of the MDI Media Diversity Research Centre. With the findings on five South American countries considered in this report, the pilot has entered its third phase, following earlier iterations covering eleven countries in mainland Europe in 2024 and the UK in 2025.

Combined, the three phases of the project are a step towards developing a global index that stakeholders inside and outside the media industry can use as a benchmark for evaluating the performance of media in specific countries regarding diversity and inclusion. The index covers both governance and content and is created through an expert survey, whereby responses gathered translate into scores. Hitherto, the media development sector has used a number of indexes to monitor, evaluate and rank national information systems in relation to press and internet freedom, civil and political rights, the trustworthiness of journalism and so on. The Media Diversity Index is eventually intended as an annual exercise that will complement these rankings by pioneering a set of indicators and a scoring system that can act as a barometer for progress or backsliding in the field of media diversity.

In line with that objective, the index also has the potential to inform government and civil society efforts to promote media diversity. While the comparative scores tend to attract most attention, the survey responses behind them help to identify policy areas where targeted advocacy could achieve results. They can bring groups together from different sectors, including industry practitioners, diversity advocates and academic researchers, to mobilise the skills and structures needed for monitoring and campaigning.

The indicators reflect the environment for media diversity on two levels. The first is the underpinning of national regulatory and representative bodies operating in the media sector, in terms of their powers and how proactive they are in using the powers they have. The second seeks to track the extent to which media outlets promote and ensure diversity and inclusion both internally, through their workforce and recruitment, and externally, through their approach to representation.

A pilot project such as this is necessarily limited in scope because the main purpose is to test the methodology. In the current phase, the target was to score just five of the 12 countries in South America. The five were selected on the same criteria as those in Europe, namely those with glaring discrepancies between their rankings in two other relevant indexes: the Economist Intelligence Unit 2024 Democracy Index and the Reporters sans frontières (RSF) 2025 Press Freedom index. The number of countries covered by both indexes (167 and 180) is reasonably similar and some countries (eg Brazil, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay) are ranked within a few places of each other in both. Yet, although their rank order is the same in both the EIU and RSF indexes, the five countries discussed here ranked very differently in each. The difference ranged from 33 places for Argentina, to 40 and 44 for Chile and Uruguay respectively, to 52 and 55 for Peru and Colombia. The fact that indexes which are linked to political, civic and media representation can yield such different results demonstrates the value of an index devoted to media diversity.

# OVERVIEW

The five countries covered have various systems of political accountability but the ways these are monitored and defined globally give only a vague indication as to the potential effectiveness of media in those countries in comprehensively representing the population in all its diversity. The EIU Democracy Index, released in February 2025, classes Uruguay as one of only two “full democracies”, along with Costa Rica, among the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. In the EIU classification, which features full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime and authoritarian, Argentina, Chile and Colombia are classified as flawed democracies while Peru has a hybrid regime.

In the Media Diversity Index, in contrast, the focus is specifically on the accountability of media systems in relation to the inclusion of all social groups. Here, as shown in Table 1, Uruguay and Colombia achieve better scores than the other three countries, reflecting an institutional framework in both cases that has some potential to recognise and promote diversity through media but suffers from gaps in implementation and fragmented or flawed monitoring. The scores (see Table 2) put Uruguay and Colombia on a par with European countries that the index classed as Tier 2 with scores between 43 and 48 out of 80, reflecting a situation where inclusivity may be aspired to in principle without being translated into policy. Peru’s position in third place out of five, in a context of institutional weakness in that country, is due in part to the activity of civil society organisations, with provisions that promote self-regulation of media professionals and opportunities to file complaints about discriminatory reporting.<sup>1</sup>

In Chile, a lack of provisions or regulations on matters of discrimination, minorities or incitement to violence or hatred in media content extends to workforce composition, except for people with disabilities. Yet the diverse ethnic and cultural makeup of Chilean society means that both media content and its producers are often diverse. Meanwhile Argentina’s low score reflects the dismantling of systems since the election of Javier Milei as president at the end of 2023. For example, powers given to the converged regulator and Audience Ombudsman under an Act of 2009 regarding discriminatory content, hate speech and public complaints have been neutralised by wholesale changes carried out under Milei.

**Table 1: The MDI Pilot Diversity Index - South America**

<b>MDI score (out of 80*)</b>	<i>For comparison:</i>	<i>EIU rank (out of 167)</i>	<i>EIU score (out of 10)</i>	<i>RSF rank (out of 180)</i>	<i>RSF score (out of 100)</i>		
<b>Uruguay</b>	46.25	<b>Uruguay</b>	15	8.67	<b>Uruguay</b>	59	65.18
<b>Colombia</b>	42.75	<b>Chile</b>	29	7.83	<b>Chile</b>	69	62.25
<b>Peru</b>	38.75	<b>Argentina</b>	54	6.51	<b>Argentina</b>	87	56.14
<b>Chile</b>	34.75	<b>Colombia</b>	60	6.35	<b>Colombia</b>	115	49.80
<b>Argentina</b>	24.00	<b>Peru</b>	78	5.69	<b>Peru</b>	130	42.88

\*Out of 80 distinct possible responses, answers were weighted so that Yes/No scored 1/0 and ordinal variables were scored on a five-point scale from 1 to 0 (1; 0.75; 0.5; 0.25; 0).

1. The World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2025 ranks Peru 93 overall out of 143 countries but its breakdown for Peru by issue/factor ranks it higher for performance on open government, including the right to information, civic participation and complaint mechanisms, and also for a number of fundamental rights. This index ranks Uruguay at 23, Chile at 35, Argentina at 65 and Colombia at 95.

**Table 2: The MDI Pilot Diversity Index - 17 countries (Europe and South America)**

**MDI scores out of 80\***

<b>United Kingdom</b>	65.25	<b>Austria</b>	45.25	<b>Cyprus</b>	35.25
<b>Belgium</b>	62.50	<b>Latvia</b>	44.75	<b>Chile</b>	34.75
<b>Lithuania</b>	59.75	<b>Estonia</b>	44.25	<b>Albania</b>	33.25
<b>Portugal</b>	59.25	<b>Slovakia</b>	43.00	<b>Malta</b>	28.75
<b>Greece</b>	47.75	<b>Colombia</b>	42.75	<b>Argentina</b>	24.00
<b>Uruguay</b>	46.25	<b>Peru</b>	38.75		

\* See note to Table 1.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS BY COUNTRY

Measuring aspects of media diversity can be objective to a degree, where the assessment is based on laws, mandates, published guidelines and reports. The survey included some Yes/No answers for the most clear-cut examples of relevant action. Other parts offered options on a five-point ordinal scale, weighted in a way that limits the impact of any answer that had to rely at least in part on subjective judgement in the absence of solid data.

The indicators are assessed under headings that group four types of action: law, licensing and regulation; media workforce diversity and recruitment policies; ensuring access and representation; consultation and handling complaints. A number of actors are identified as having the potential to influence each area of action. Six are considered in the survey: licensing authorities; self-regulatory bodies; public service or state media; commercial media; unions or associations (of journalists or actors); and national human rights institutions (NHRIs).

How much independence these bodies enjoy is clearly a factor in any campaign to promote more inclusive media practice. In 2025 the annual State Media Monitor classified the public broadcasters of Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay as “state controlled” and placed Chile in a category for public media that its typology calls “captured”. This refers to public service or state-owned media not predominantly financed through state budget resources but where the state is using its status as owner and/or its control over the management of these outlets to influence their editorial agenda.

Independence is also critical for national human rights institutions, which have to adhere fully to the UN Paris Principles to qualify for A status. The NHRIs of all five countries are rated A, meaning that they are deemed to be independent of government, with a broad constitutional or legal mandate to protect and promote human rights at the national level and able to address the full range of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

The one existing index that informs the scoring here deals with gender equality in media coverage and workforces. This is the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), “Who Makes the News?”, which has calculated the average gender gap in the news in a snapshot every five years since 1995 and completed its seventh round of global monitoring in 2025. The GEM-Index

2025 calculates the average gender gap in the news (percentage of women – percentage of men) for six indicators: (1) all news subjects or sources ('people in the news'), (2) reporters, (3) news subjects or sources in economy and business news, (4) news subjects or sources in news about politics and government, (5) spokespersons and (6) experts. A score of +100 means that all persons in the news are women, while a score of -100 indicates that all persons in the news are men, and 0 indicates gender equality. All five countries discussed here saw their GMMP 2025 scores shift by a few percentage points in favour of women compared with 2020. Often, however, this reflects women's visibility as presenters rather than sources or subjects of news.



## ARGENTINA

Ana Bizberge

**Regulatory powers:** Legal provision relating to licensing, local content, accessibility requirements and community media has been impacted and partially undermined by changes introduced during Mauricio Macri's administration (2015-19) and most recently under President Javier Milei. Argentina's Audiovisual Communication Services Act (No. 26,522), enacted in 2009, prohibited content that promotes gender-based violence, discrimination, hate speech, or derogatory stereotypes. The Act created the Audiovisual Communication Service Federal Authority (AFSCA, for its acronym in Spanish) with powers to take action against media outlets along with an Audience Ombudsman to receive complaints about infringement of audience rights, issue recommendations and provide information, including to the media. AFSCA was abolished in 2015 and replaced by a converged agency, the National Communications Authority (ENACOM, for its acronym in Spanish) with less federal and political representation than AFSCA. Since President Milei took office, ENACOM has no political independence at all.

**Regulation of online content:** Neither ENACOM nor the Audience Ombudsman have powers over online platforms, although the Olimpia Law (Law No. 27,736) on Protection against Digital Violence, was enacted in October 2023 to amend an existing law on violence against women with the aim of calling out and punishing gender-based violence on social media as well as cyberbullying and data hacking. With the accession of Javier Milei as president, however, the Audience Ombudsman, having come under the control of the executive branch of government, is not functioning as previously intended, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (which had filed a complaint to ENACOM in 2023) has been abolished, and ENACOM has been brought under government control and failed to provide information about its activities. Reports by human right bodies have documented a rise in violence against media practitioners, especially female journalists.

**Children's programming:** Although the Audiovisual Services Act explicitly addresses the protection of childhood and adolescence (Articles 68-72 and 81) and requires broadcasters to meet quotas for national, local, and independent content (article 65 and 67) it does not establish specific quotas for children's programming or its origination.

**Self-regulation** on matters of diversity is most clearly apparent in the case of the Foro de Periodismo Argentino (FOPEA - Argentine Journalism Forum). A leading association in terms of size and prestige, FOPEA foregrounds values of democracy, honesty, transparency, pluralism, and diversity and makes membership conditional on adherence to its code of ethics, stating

that “failure to comply is sufficient grounds for expulsion from FOPEA”. Section 4 on Respect for Citizenship limits mention of matters such as religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities unless it is essential to the situation and provided any reference is not “offensive or discriminatory”. The same section requires journalists to “respect and promote diversity”, “avoiding reproducing prejudices, generalisations, stereotypes, stigmatisations or provocative remarks of any kind regarding minority groups and vulnerable collectives”. They are likewise instructed to report within a “comprehensive gender perspective, avoiding the use of sexist language and denouncing all acts of gender-based violence (physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and/or symbolic)”. The code is also strict and explicit about limits on reporting about children and adolescents.

Other journalism bodies such as the Sindicato de Prensa de Buenos Aires (SiPreBA - Buenos Aires Press Union) and Federación Argentina de Trabajadores de Prensa (FATPREN - Argentine Federation of Press Workers), to which SiPreBA belongs, do not explicitly ban named forms of discriminatory reporting. The Asociación de Entidades Periodísticas Argentinas (ADEPA - Association of Argentine Media Organisations), representing mostly media owners, has a code of conduct that discourages it. Point 10 of the ADEPA code notes: “Generalisations that affect people because of their ethnicity, nationality, ideology, religion, sex, education or economic status, or that are based on prejudices of any other kind, will also be avoided.” ADEPA’s code additionally states that “Journalism is guided by respect for people and the protection of children; constitutional principles, democratic values, and institutions; social harmony, civic participation, and pluralism; the recognition and defense of fundamental rights; and the promotion of freedom, solidarity, education, and justice, as well as the fight against human trafficking and gender-based violence”.

**National human rights institution:** Argentina’s NHRI, the Defensoría del Pueblo, has expressed concerns about rising antisemitism in Argentina based on reports issued by the Delegation of Argentine Jewish Associations (DAIA) but without specifically mentioning the media.

**Access:** Article 66 of the Audiovisual Services Act deals with accessibility, stating that “broadcasts of free-to-air television, locally produced content on subscription services, and domestically produced news, educational, cultural, and general-interest programmes must incorporate additional visual aids, such as closed captions, sign language, and audio description, to ensure accessibility for people with sensory disabilities, older adults, and others who may have difficulty accessing the content”. In 2022, ENACOM issued Resolution 570/2022 requiring pay TV news programmes to include sign language and closed captioning. Although these provisions are still in place, oversight of compliance, which was already patchy, is limited under the Milei administration.

Access to telecoms services has also been affected by new measures. Soon after taking office, Milei issued Emergency Decree 302/24 of April 9, 2024, which revoked Article 15 and amended Article 48 of the Digital Argentina Act 27.078/2014 and revoked Emergency Decree 690/2020 enacted during the Alberto Fernandez administration. He thereby revoked the declaration of essential public service status for ICT services, mobile telephony, and access to telecommunications networks for and between licensees, as well as the regulation of prices for the Internet, fixed and mobile telephony, and pay TV, and the mandatory universal basic service for low-income sectors. The public service status of the basic telephone service was maintained, along with the requirement that prices for ICT services must be “fair and reasonable,” but now without state intervention to guarantee this by setting reference rates when operators fail to reach an agreement.

Milei also abolished the Universal Service Fund (Decree 6/2025), established in 2014 by the Digital Argentina Act with the aim of ensuring equitable access to telecommunications services throughout the country, particularly in rural, remote, or economically disadvantaged areas. The measure was taken following a series of audits that detected irregularities in the distribution of resources. However, the government decided to maintain the 1 per cent tax on earned income levied on ICT companies to finance that fund. According to ENACOM Resolution 1182/2025, the new Universal Fund allows the mandatory 1 per cent contribution to be converted into direct investment in infrastructure (within pre-approved programmes involving expansion of last-mile networks, the development of data centres, and integration with artificial intelligence technologies). It also includes preliminary assessments, annual monitoring, and technical audits.

**Community media and minority languages:** The Audiovisual Services Act acknowledges non-profit media (Articles 2 and 21), including community media (Article 4) and provides for affirmative action measures, such as reserving 33 per cent of the spectrum (Article 89). It distinguishes between licensing through competitive bidding (Articles 32-34), direct allocation and authorisation. The latter applies to national universities and state and non-state entities; direct allocation applies to low power broadcasters. Article 97-F created a fund for supporting community-based services, border services, and services for Indigenous Peoples. Named the Competitive Development Fund for Audiovisual Media (FoMeCa for its acronym in Spanish) it was funded by 10 per cent of the taxes and fees paid by audiovisual communication services to the regulatory agency. However, the Milei administration first suspended FoMeCa and then replaced it altogether with a new Fund for the Promotion of Audiovisual Projects. Unlike its predecessor, the new fund does not establish explicit priorities for community media, does not guarantee specific funding lines for the nonprofit sector, and nor does it include evaluation criteria related to the right to communication, diversity of voices, or local roots. The potential participation of these media outlets is currently contingent upon competing on a formally equal footing with commercial production companies or other entities with greater financial, technical, and administrative capacity.

Article 9 of the Audiovisual Services Act (26.522/2009) states: “Programming broadcast through the services covered by this law, including commercials and programmes previews, must be presented in the official language or in the languages of the Indigenous Peoples, with the following exceptions: a) Programmes intended for audiences located outside the country’s borders; b) Programmes intended for the teaching of foreign languages; c) Programmes broadcast in another language that are simultaneously translated or subtitled; d) Special programming intended for foreign communities living or residing in the country; e) Programming resulting from reciprocal agreements; f) The lyrics of musical, poetic, or literary compositions; g) International broadcasts received within the national territory.”

**Workforce recruitment:** The dismantling of various institutions under the Milei administration creates obstacles to compliance with regulations on diversity in recruitment that were put in place in 2021. These mandated inclusion but not on a comprehensive basis. Law 27.635 on gender equality in the media was enacted in 2021 with the Ministry of Women given responsibility for enforcing it. It applies to both public and private media, but in different ways: it is mandatory for public media but establishes a system of incentives for private commercial and nonprofit media. In 2026 the Ministry of Women no longer exists. Law 27.636, also enacted in 2021, required public media outlets in Argentina (RTA S.E., Télam, Contenidos Públicos) to promote diversity by implementing a 1 per cent employment quota for transvestites, transsexuals, and transgender individuals.

**Representation:** Article 121, inc B, of the Audiovisual Services Act requires public media to “respect and promote political, religious, social, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic pluralism”. However, a report on freedom of expression in Argentina compiled jointly in 2025 by FATPREN, SiPreBA and the Dirección de la Carrera de Ciencias de la Comunicación at Buenos de Aires University found that, since Milei took office, there had been a “coordinated and sustained attack on media pluralism, policies on historical memory, diverse public debate, and criticism, which has had a disproportionate and severe impact on vulnerable groups, women and members of the LGBTQ+ community, independent journalists, educational and cultural communities, and human rights advocates”. The report argued that measures implemented by the Javier Milei administration had “undermined the ability of public media to promote diversity and pluralism” and that content relating to events such as provincial elections and important demonstrations received no coverage.

A report compiled by the Observatorio Iberoamericano de la Ficción Televisiva (Obitel – Ibero-American Observatory of Television Fiction) noted that despite a “tradition of white fiction” in Argentina, in 2024 there were works of fiction that introduced ethnic and racial representations, gender diversity, and working-class characters. However, the authors also showed that LGBTQ+ representations were linked to more privileged socio-economic groups.<sup>2</sup>

A summary of the GMMP monitoring exercise in 2025 showed that men appeared in the news three times as often as women, women accounted for only 14 per cent of the sources consulted by male journalists while only 1-2 per cent of items on politics and government in legacy media and online debated or challenged gender stereotypes.<sup>3</sup>

**Consultation mechanisms:** Since Milei took office, the agencies responsible for media and telecommunications have been placed under government control and report directly to the executive branch. There is no representation from diverse groups. The 2009 Audiovisual Services Act created the Advisory Council on Audiovisual Communication and Children (CONACAI), which operated under the previous regulatory authority, AFSCA. Although amendments to the 2009 law under the Macri administration in 2015 paralysed CONACAI, it partly resumed its functions in 2020. However, under the Milei government it has stopped functioning.

The Ombudsman’s Office for the Audience had been conducting an annual survey of news programmes (including a focus on portrayals and narratives regarding children and adolescents) since 2014. The 2023 report, published in 2024, is the latest available.<sup>4</sup> These publications have been discontinued.

**Exposing discrimination at work:** Neither FOPEA nor ADEPA convenes meeting for this purpose. However, SiPreBa conducts a comprehensive annual survey prior to Journalists’ Day on June 7 that addresses many issues, including workplace discrimination. The survey is open to both members and non-members. The role of workplace representatives is to support their constituents in these matters.

A group called Actrices Argentinas (Argentine actresses), founded in 2018 to advocate for the legalisation of abortion, speaks out publicly against sexual harassment and workplace abuse, provides support to victims of gender-based violence and advocates for equal rights in the cultural industry. They speak out and offer support in prominent cases.

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2. <https://obitel.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/anuario2025/index.html>

3. <https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/GMMP2025-InformeNacional-Argentina.pdf>

4. <https://defensadelpublico.gob.ar/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/informe2023.pdf>

**Handling complaints:** The National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Racism in Argentina was under the Ministry of Justice, handling complaints in general and coordinating with the Audience Ombudsman Office regarding media-related cases. The Milei administration dissolved the institute in 2024 (Decree 696/2024) and the Audience Ombudsman's Office currently lacks the political authority to make decisions regarding the handling of complaints. Additionally, there has been a significant reduction in staff, leaving the office with minimal personnel.

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## CHILE

*Ingrid Bachmann*

**Regulatory powers:** Chile's only national media regulator, the Consejo Nacional de Televisión (CNTV – National Television Council) regulates television and in practice the regulation applies solely to over-the-air TV as the CNTV lacks the capacity to monitor cable or satellite television. Its rulings on matters such as inappropriate content, including pornography or excessive violence, may incur some sanctions and fines but the penalties are generally not major in terms of their consequences. The law regulating the working of CNTV, as well as the Press Freedom Law, has general provisions about promoting pluralism, respecting the diversity of society and not “promoting hatred”, but there is nothing specific about hate speech.

**Regulation of online content:** There is no regulatory body with powers relating to social media companies and online platforms and no measures to require social media companies and online platforms to protect children from harmful content through protective measures such as age verification, content moderation, search moderation or response to complaints.

**Children's programming:** Although there are no licensing conditions relating to locally originated programming for children, there is a public television channel, NTV, that since 2021 airs educational and cultural programming aimed at children and young people. There is also a publicly funded platform for producing and distributing children's programming, CNTV Infantil, formerly named Novasur until its rebranding in 2017. Created in 2000, it celebrated its evolution in 2025 with a review of its history, which CNTV's president introduced by describing CNTV Infantil as a “pioneering” project that had created “nearly 300 series and 2,500 episodes”. It developed an audience early on through collaboration with the Regional Association of Open Television Channels (ARCATEL), meaning that, in 2025, CNTV Infantil content was transmitted by more than 90 channels across all regions of Chile, reportedly reaching 1.74 million children between the ages of 4 to 12. Through alliances and international co-productions, CNTV Infantil says it has sought to position itself as a model for airing high-quality children's content in Latin America and beyond.

**Self-regulation:** There is a Media Ethics Council acting as a self-regulatory body for journalistic ethics, which was created by three trade bodies: the Asociación Nacional de la Prensa (ANP – National Press Association) representing print and digital media owners, the Asociación de Radio Difusoras de Chile (Association of Radio Broadcasters), the primary trade association representing commercial radio stations, and the Asociación Nacional de Televisión (Anatel – National Television Association) representing the main free-to-air TV networks. While it has an established process for complaints about news content, the Council is not widely known and its sanctions have no teeth.

The Colegio de Periodistas de Chile (Journalism Association of Chile) is a voluntary body with a code of ethics which is not mandatory or binding and is seen to have limited credibility. Article 30, the only one of the code's 32 articles to make such a specification, states that the "journalist will contribute to raising public awareness about the situation of those sectors of the population living in precarious and unequal conditions".

**National human right institution:** The Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos (INDH, the national human rights institution) focuses on major human right violations, including crimes against humanity, torture and forced disappearance of persons. Media violations, such as cases of alleged antisemitism or Islamophobia (rarely named as such) or prejudiced reporting and discrimination and incitement to violence or hatred, are perceived as falling within the remit of CNTV but are not explicitly mentioned in regulatory bylaws.

**Access:** In July 2024, under Law 21.678, the internet (in general, not specifically broadband) was declared as "a public telecommunications service". Among other things, this means that the Undersecretary of Telecommunications (Subtel) can oversee the quality and continuity of service more strictly, could subsidise internet bills for the poorest households, and could facilitate and promote total connectivity. Of itself this does not guarantee total universal broadband services but there has been an intense effort to increase connectivity in isolated areas (so-called "last mile" projects) with important inroads achieved. However, rural and outlying regions are still lagging in a context of overall impressive rates of internet penetration (and thus, access to digital media) in the country.

There are provisions for television to provide sign language interpretation for news, coverage of emergencies, and some cultural programming.

**Community media and minority languages:** Non-profit community media have de facto but not legal recognition. Despite inroads in acknowledging Indigenous languages and languages of minorities, most media content is produced in Spanish, and there are no requirements to provide content in other languages.

**Workforce recruitment:** There are no provisions about quotas regarding workforce composition, except those regarding people with disabilities that apply to all businesses in general, not only media. Still, experts agree that media content producers are often diverse regarding matters of age, gender, identity or nationality, which is attributed to the diverse makeup of Chilean society, even though figures could be more representative of the actual distribution of different demographics. Minority ethnic groups are very underrepresented.

According to bylaws, members of CNTV are individuals of outstanding professional and personal merit, "selected on the basis of pluralism" (mainly politically and professionally, but current composition is also diverse in terms of gender, age and field of expertise).

**Representation:** Portrayals of different groups in society on public and commercial media, in both factual and entertainment content, tend to reflect efforts towards serving under-18s, women and LGBTQ communities while faith groups and people with disabilities are poorly represented. Fictional content, such as telenovelas, have a noticeable trend towards predominantly all-white casts, with limited representation of racialised minorities. CNTV publishes detailed studies of free-to-air television content in terms of genre and has commissioned academic studies of TV treatment of gender. Despite this focus, women are in a minority in news content. GMMP monitoring in 2025 showed no improvement since 2015, with women representing 32 per cent of subjects and sources in both years. Their presence is lowest in print and radio news.<sup>5</sup>

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5. [GMMP2025-InformeNacional-Chile.pdf](#)

**Consultation mechanisms:** Consultation with children regarding audiovisual content takes place through the Comité de la Niñez (Children’s Committee), a CNTV Infantil initiative, which invites annual applications for a 16-strong group of boys and girls that meets between March and December to imagine, discuss, propose and give opinions on the CNTV Infantil productions.

Laws on the governance of CNTV and Televisión Nacional de Chile (TVN) refer to diversity and pluralism but do not stipulate diversity in committees or boards created for consultation purposes. Law 19.132 on TVN, which was enacted in 1992 and amended in 2018, states that its seven-member board must reflect diversity, with a deliberate aim of achieving gender balance. According to bylaws, members of CNTV are individuals of outstanding professional and personal merit, “selected on the basis of pluralism”.

Subtel has a Civil Society Council made up of representatives from civil society organisations, including consumer associations, foundations, and other technology-related actors, with regional (local) councils as well. While there is no specific provision about age or gender for their compositions, these councils are diverse.

**Handling complaints:** The CNTV mostly operates in response to complaints by individuals (and not by its own initiative) regarding “principles and assets protected by law”, such as “peace,” “democracy,” “family,” or “human dignity,” or issues related to inappropriate content, including pornography, excessive violence, or alcohol advertising before 10 pm.



## COLOMBIA

*Daniel Aguilar Rodriguez and Enrique Uribe-Jongbloed*

**Regulatory powers:** The Comisión Reguladora de Comunicaciones (CRC – Communications Regulation Commission) is the national agency in charge of regulating communications and the broadcasting sector and is responsible for taking action against media outlets that incite violence as set out in RESOLUCIÓN 6383 DE 2021 (Articles 16.4.1.3, 16.4.1.4, 16.4.1.5 and 16.4.1.6). In practice it has mostly found there has been insufficient merit to open a formal investigation, prosecute or sanction content that incites violence. There is only one case in 2022 of a TV show from a local channel in Bucaramanga which actually led to a reprimand to the channel and a demand for redress from the show’s producers (RESOLUCIÓN No. 7001 DE 2022). CRC opinions issued in 2025 (eg CONCEPTO 505147 DE 2025 and CONCEPTO 503919 DE 2025) include discussion of complaints about the handling of LGBTQ+ issues on TV.

**Regulation of online content:** The law behind the CRC does not give it powers to take action against online platforms. Such powers were proposed under the National Development Plan for 2022-2026, which included elements on social justice, and are now part of the regulatory agenda set for 2026-2027. A recent Law, Ley 2489 de 2025 on Entornos digitales sanos y seguros para niños, niñas y adolescentes (Healthy and safe digital environments for children and adolescents), has been passed but the regulatory decree has not been enacted yet. Fundación Karisma and FLIP (Fundación Para la Libertad de Prensa – Press Freedom Foundation) have made comments against the actions that are to be taken as promoting censorship, not clarifying how data and privacy are going to be protected.

**Children’s programming:** The law effectively creates a requirement for local production of children’s television, partly through quotas based on scheduling windows that were stipulated under the country’s original landmark legislation for television, Law 182 of 1995. CRC published

RESOLUCIÓN 7348 DE 2024 which requires all TV broadcasts to include active audience participation, including child and adolescent audiences. The CRC data flash 2025-008 from August 2025 puts the average children's content broadcast at around 5 per cent.<sup>6</sup>

**Self-regulation:** The long history of blacklisting unions by the government or paramilitary non-governmental groups has meant that people, including those working in the media sector, avoid joining these types of organisations. In the absence of effective methods of challenging harassment and abuse, unionised crews have been added to blacklists. The advertising sector has introduced self-regulation in recent years but matters of ethics and discrimination, although mentioned in relation to existing laws, are not inscribed in rules governing membership of advertising trade bodies. The Code of Ethics of the *Círculo de Periodistas de Bogotá* (CPB – Bogota Journalists Circle) does not explicitly ban discriminatory reporting, making only a passing mention in the case of caricatures.

**National human rights institution:** Part of the remit of Colombia's NHRI, the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (People's ombudsperson) is to make sure human rights are respected in all areas of life, including media representation. It has made statements about media treatment of gender and ethnicity, including when media comments about the Vice-President Francia Marquez, a leader of the Afro-Colombian community, were found to be racist. Neither the CRC nor *Defensoría del Pueblo* have raised issues of Islamophobia or antisemitism.

**Access:** Under CRC RESOLUCIÓN No. 7276 DE 2023 there is a requirement to provide closed captioning to all TV broadcasts and sign language interpretation for news and other information programmes in certain time slots. The CRC can conduct investigations and undertakes occasional follow-up (at least biannually) as evidenced in the CRC data flash 2025-008 from August 2025, which reported closed caption use for about 92 per cent of public media programming, 72 per cent for private media and 42 per cent for local media. Sign language interpreting on screen amounted to 6.6 per cent on national programming, 5.25 per cent on national private and 8.9 per cent of local programming.

CRC's remit includes controlling internet service provision, ensuring that internet costs are not excessive, especially for rural communities. The law to ensure universal internet service (Ley 2108 of July 2021) has been enacted but there is no provision regarding broadband access yet, although proposals to make it an essential service, like water, sanitation or electricity, have been presented to Congress.

**Community media and minority languages:** Non-profit media, mainly radio, broadcast in minority languages but do not enjoy special licensing conditions. One regional TV channel, *Teleislas*, offers some broadcasting in Creole and English as well as Spanish. *Origen*, a subchannel of Colombia's Pacific region public TV, may broadcast in various Indigenous or autochthonous languages. The national public broadcaster, *Radio y Televisión Nacional de Colombia* (RTVC – recently renamed *Inravisión*), offers two shows by and about Indigenous peoples that include Indigenous languages. RTVC's website contains only one document in an Indigenous language. This is a letter that public institutions have to provide describing the main rights and duties of citizens with that institution and the channels available to them for raising complaints and requests. The letter has a version in *Wayuunaiki*, the largest Indigenous language in Colombia with about 200,000 speakers. Indigenous groups have generated a proposal under the unified Indigenous television plan (*Plan de Televisión Indígena Unificado – Concip*, 2017) which seeks to promote more TV production and broadcasts while also ensuring more access to Indigenous languages.

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6. <https://www.postdata.gov.co/dataflash/data-flash-2025-008-programacion-de-tv-abierta>

**Workforce recruitment:** The CRC has two boards of directors, one with administrative and regulatory powers which has two male and two female commissioners, and the other dealing with audiovisual content, which has two male and one female commissioners. There are no publicly available CRC studies about the make-up of media institutions' workforce. FLIP issued a report in 2025 based on a small sample of journalists, showing that only 27 per cent were female.

Radio y Television Nacional de Colombia (RTVC, the national public broadcast network which had its pre-2000 name, Inravisión, reinstated in 2026) introduced an Operational Policy on Disability and Social Inclusion in 2022, although there were already specific quotas for people with disabilities under Decree 392 of 2018. There is a more detailed procedure on how to promote, disseminate and adapt jobs for members of the population with disabilities than for other groups. In its 2025 plan of action RTVC included plans for focus groups with audiences to gauge their perception of hiring practices aimed at incorporating people from different backgrounds and identities in the workforce.<sup>7</sup>

**Representation:** The RTVC mission statement mentions its commitment to cultural and ethnic diversity and that its content should also be diverse but that is as far as it goes. The CRC produces reports about representation on screen. Apart from academic or civil society studies which tend to have small sample sizes or deal with a particular TV show, the CRC reports offer the best available evidence of overall representation patterns, although their methodology is flawed and incomplete. It should also be noted that national and regional public television have not always produced non-factual content such as comedy or drama. Such production began in 2012 for regional public TV and 2019 for national public TV, with the result that it remains a minimal fraction of TV production in those channels. This affects the findings of CRC reports which are based on the total number of broadcast hours.

CRC reports indicate that news and current affairs coverage of minority ethnic groups, children, the elderly, LGBTQ+ communities and residents of different regions is significantly more prominent on regional public channels than on commercial media. The same is said to apply to the difference in coverage of these groups in entertainment content. Faith groups have minimal coverage across all categories, according to these reports.

Pending details of GMMP monitoring in Colombia in 2025, results from the previous round in 2020 showed only 23 per cent of news presenters, 39 per cent of reporters and 23 per cent of subjects and sources in the news were female.

**Consultation mechanisms:** CRC website information indicates that consultation involves diverse groups in society. RESOLUCIÓN 7348 DE 2024 demands more forms of participation from the audiences to be presented in CRC annual reviews. This resolution encompasses greater participation of child and adolescent audiences. CRC has presented research on children's media use and attitudes every one to two years, although there is no specific mandate that requires this. The practice of publishing this information has existed since the time of CRC's predecessor, the Autoridad Nacional de Television (ANTV) which was abolished in 2019.

**Exposing discrimination at work:** Opportunities to speak out about discrimination in the workplace are provided by FLIP and the Liga contra el Silencio (League Against Silence), an alliance of Colombia media outlets and journalists that FLIP created in 2016 to combat censorship and bring marginalised issues to public attention. The ACA (Asociación Colombiana de Actores (ACA – Colombian Actors Association) offers information and encourages people to speak out.<sup>8</sup>

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7. <https://www.rtv.gov.co/glosario/enfoque-diferencial>

8. <https://actoresaca.com/mujer-y-genero/>

**Handling complaints:** Organisations exist within government and independently with responsibility for upholding human rights, monitoring the conduct of public servants and protecting the public interest. The Personeria (Office of the Ombudsman), a public entity present across municipalities and districts, acts as a local agent to handle complaints and provide support to vulnerable populations. The Procuraduria (Office of the Inspector General) is charged with investigating and preventing irregularities committed by people exercising public functions.

The CRC has a comprehensive and transparent system for receiving complaints regarding discrimination in the media. RTVC also has a clear and well-structured system for queries and complaints. There is no self-regulatory body to handle these issues.



## PERU

*Jorge Acevedo Rojas*

**Regulatory powers:** The Ministry of Transport and Communications is the authority responsible for granting radio and television licences. While it holds sanctioning powers, these are primarily exercised in relation to technical issues such as signal failures or interference and financial compliance, including unpaid fees or taxes, rather than content-related violations. The legal framework does not establish a clear and explicit statutory obligation for the authority to act specifically against incitement to violence or hatred by licensees and there is no clear evidence of the Ministry of Transport and Communications having taken direct regulatory action against media outlets on the grounds of incitement to violence or hatred. Responses to such content rely mainly on advisory opinions, self-regulation, and public pressure rather than formal sanctions.

The Radio and Television Law (2004) created the Consultative Council for Radio and Television (CONCORTV), an advisory body without binding powers. CONCORTV monitors programming, mainly on national television, and conducts audience surveys. It may issue opinions when it identifies content that could incite violence or hatred. In partnership with the civil society association Calandria, which describes itself as specialising in strategic communication for citizen-centred development, CONCORTV has created the Observatorio de medios (Media Observatory). This is intended “to promote improvements in how the media approach, cover, and treat social agenda issues, especially regarding the prejudices and stereotypes that justify violence against women and families (children, youth, the elderly, etc)”. The Media Observatory publishes alerts about content that violates the Radio and Television Law and Regulations.

**Regulating online content:** Neither the media regulator nor OSIPTEL, a public body under the prime minister that is responsible for regulating and supervising private investment in telecommunications, have any obvious explicit legal authority to require social media platforms to implement safeguards against incitement to violence or hatred. The Ministry lacks both the mandate and technical capacity to regulate digital platforms in this area, while CONCORTV does not have binding authority. Monitoring initiatives remain largely focused on traditional media. Peru has child-protection rules and some obligations on internet providers, but no law empowering the media regulator to require social media companies or platforms to use age verification.

Proposals for legal reform are developed by a civil society organisation, Hiperderecho, an advocacy body that works on public policy analysis and educational and training activities on digital rights for Peruvian students, activists and professionals.

**Children’s programming:** Peruvian broadcast licensing and programming rules protect children and establish watershed/ethics obligations, but there is no licence condition imposing enforceable quotas of original locally made children’s content.

**Self-regulation:** The main media associations that have voluntary self-regulation mechanisms are the Consejo de la Prensa Peruana (CPP - Peruvian Press Council) and the National Society of Radio and Television (SNRTV). The CPP was formed to defend press freedom and fight for the right of every citizen to be fully informed, without which it states: “there is no democracy”. It can receive complaints and unsatisfied corrections, entrusting the Secretary General and the Ethics Tribunal with the function of resolving disputes arising from journalistic material and, eventually, ruling against transgressing newspapers and demanding the publication of its resolutions. The Ethics Tribunal has five members who are independent of other CPP bodies and are there to resolve citizen complaints about media coverage. In the case of a serious ethical violation, the Tribunal may call on the CPP president to suspend or expel the offending CPP member from the Council.

The SNRTV has a Code of Ethics, a Commission and a Tribunal which processes complaints and claims from the public. However, it is not explicitly stipulated that members may lose their membership for disseminating discriminatory information.

With approximately 12,000 members, the Asociación Nacional de Periodistas del Perú (ANP - National Association of Journalists of Peru) is the association of media professionals with the largest number of members, comprising an estimated 60-65 per cent men and 35-40 per cent women. Article 8 of its Professional Code of Ethics states a journalist “does not use sensationalism, obscenity, or blackmail” or “employ criteria of racial, ideological, or gender discrimination”. Penalties for violating the code are not public.

**National human rights institution:** The Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman’s Office) and other public human-rights bodies can investigate discrimination and may refer matters to courts or other authorities. Their power is not media-specific, but it does extend to discriminatory practices affecting rights. The *OECD Justice Review of Peru (2024)* notes that the government and legal aid providers have sought to overcome barriers faced by vulnerable populations by launching awareness campaigns through media channels. A human rights observatory operating under the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights published a report on discrimination in Peruvian media in 2019 (see below).

**Access:** The legal and policy framework aims at nationwide broadband coverage, but mountainous, Amazonian and other peripheral areas still face weaker connectivity and reduced effective access to national digital media.

Article 38 of the broadcasting law (2004) requires sign language or subtitling in informational, educational and cultural television content, and disability law reinforces accessibility. However, public evidence suggests uneven compliance and limited enforcement follow-up.

**Community media and minority languages:** Non-profit community media are legally recognised, particularly in rural and Indigenous contexts. However, they do not benefit from clearly differentiated or more lenient licensing conditions.

The Instituto Nacional de Radio y Televisión del Perú (IRTP - Peruvian Institute of Radio and Television) has television programmes in Quechua, Aymara and other Amazonian languages, through Channel 7 and National Radio of Peru.

**Workforce recruitment:** Peruvian law mandates the hiring of people with disabilities in the public sector and parts of the private sector. The General Law for Persons with Disabilities, Law No. 29973, states (Article 49.1): “Public entities are required to employ people with

disabilities in a proportion of no less than 5 per cent of their total staff, and private employers with more than 50 workers in a proportion of no less than 3 per cent". Article 49.2 continues: "Prior to any call for applications, public entities verify compliance with the 5 per cent quota, regardless of the employment regime to which they belong. Any public entity that does not comply with the employment quota is subject to the procedure established in the regulations of this Law."

Other than this provision, there is no evidence that workforce diversity among licensed media providers is systematically monitored.

Public media have a broad public-interest, educational, cultural and intercultural mission which supports diversity in principle, but there are no publicly announced targets for staff diversity. The IRTP's decentralised and intercultural programming suggests some openness to diverse recruitment, but there is little transparent workforce data showing systematic recruitment of underrepresented groups. Commercial media do not have data for workforce diversity. However, The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (CONADIS) aims to guarantee and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, in order to achieve their full and effective inclusion in society.<sup>9</sup>

In Peru there are organisations of actors and entertainment professionals that provide general information about artists' rights but this does not extend to guidance about working with performers with disabilities or using inclusive language when working with performers who identify as LGBT. The oldest union is the Peruvian Union of Performing Artists and Technicians (SAIP).<sup>10</sup>

**Representation:** The IRTP has a clear public mission around education, culture, childhood, regional inclusion and intercultural communication, but no comprehensive statutory diversity mandate covering all groups. There is documented public analysis of biased and hostile media treatment based on ethnicity and race, particularly regarding the representation of Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian peoples. The Observatorio de Derechos Humanos (Human Rights Observatory), a virtual platform under the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, released a report in 2019 entitled "Report on Discrimination in the Media in Peru, with Special Emphasis on Ethnic-Racial Discrimination." Page 11 of the report noted that the character La Paisana Jacinta, portraying an Indigenous woman in a long-running sitcom series, "reproduces and reinforces negative stereotypes about Andean women, portraying them as dirty, ignorant, vulgar, violent, and rude; in addition to trivialising, through comedy, the problems faced by migrant women (abuse, discrimination, exploitation, etc.)".

CONCORTV has also promoted studies and published reports on discrimination in the media. A 2022 report on the presence of stereotypes in free-to-air television stated that "Stereotypes of beauty, ability, and success associated with certain European phenotypes persist, and the selection of presenters, actors, and reality TV personalities is based on these stereotypes". Paradoxically, although working-class sectors are the main consumers of free-to-air television, their presence is limited to police news, either as victims or perpetrators, or they are portrayed as disadvantaged people living in extreme poverty. Only the Andean population is presented positively when participating in traditional festivals in their places of origin, wearing their typical costumes. In other words, exoticisation persists.

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9. <https://www.gob.pe/institucion/conadis/institucional>

10. <https://www.saip-peru.com/>

The GMMP monitoring exercise for 2025 concluded that radio, television and print media continued to relegate women to roles that do not position them as professionals or experts, with men predominating as experts and spokespeople, in contrast to women who featured as witnesses and sources of popular opinion and personal experience. Male sources accounted for 69 per cent of all sources in print media, 73 per cent on radio and 69 per cent on TV.<sup>11</sup>

**Consultation mechanisms:** Peruvian law does not mandate the inclusion of diverse social groups in the leadership of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. In this case, political or partisan criteria prevail. CONCORDTV, the radio and TV advisory body, is composed of representatives of civil society organisations (universities, associations of journalists and educators, consumer associations, NGOs) and the State, but no criteria are established for gender, regional (decentralised) representation or ethnic-cultural identities. The Board of Directors of the telecoms supervisory body OSIPTEL is appointed through a public competition that is run by the government.

CONCORDTV publishes surveys every two to three years exploring children's media use and attitudes<sup>12</sup> but the ministry responsible for media has no mechanisms for consulting children about media-related policies that affect them.

**Exposing discrimination at work:** The National Association of Journalists (ANP), through its branches in various locations throughout the country, addresses these types of issues with its members but the same cannot be said for unions representing actors or performers.

**Handling complaints:** The Ombudsman's Office and related public bodies receive discrimination complaints in general terms, which can encompass discriminatory media conduct, although the route is not always media specific. Peru also has complaint pathways for broadcast content through ethics codes and, in some cases, self-regulation, but the process is fragmented, weakly standardised and not robustly transparent in discriminatory-representation cases. The Peruvian Press Council and the National Society of Radio and Television of Peru have a process for handling complaints about discriminatory information. However, filing and following up on a complaint until a result is obtained is often complicated for citizens.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications (MTC) has a system for filing complaints regarding radio and television content. However, regulations stipulate that complaints must first be submitted to the media outlet or the association to which it belongs. If a satisfactory response is not received, the MTC may receive the complaint, or citizens may file it with the Directorate of Compliance with Licensing Permits, attaching supporting documentation of the original complaint. This process can be complex and cumbersome for the public, and it is not widely known despite the efforts of CONCORDTV to publicise it.

The Peruvian Institute of Radio and Television (IRTP), comprising TV Perú Channel 7, Canal Ipe (an educational and cultural channel), and Radio Nacional, has a system for receiving complaints that can be submitted via email to [orientacionalciudadano@irtp.gob.pe](mailto:orientacionalciudadano@irtp.gob.pe)

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11. <https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/GMMP2025-InformeNacional-Peru.pdf>

12. [www.concortv.gob.pe](http://www.concortv.gob.pe)



## URUGUAY

*Martín Martínez Puga and Facundo Franco*

**Regulatory powers:** Since the emergence of broadcasting in Uruguay, radio and television frequencies have been granted by the Executive Branch and require the signature of the sitting President of the Republic. This institutional arrangement has remained largely unchanged despite the introduction of significant regulatory reforms in recent decades with the result that regulatory authority over media and communications is somewhat fragmented across different institutions. The National Directorate of Telecommunications (DINATEL) operates within the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining, while the Unidad Reguladora de Servicios de Comunicaciones (URSEC - Communications Services Regulatory Unit), created in 2001, functions as a decentralised regulatory body dealing only with technical aspects of broadcasting and telecommunications. At the same time, Antel, a state-owned public company and the country's main telecommunications company, plays a significant role in the sector, and its commercial strategies often end up shaping broader public policy directions.

The current media law (Law No. 20.383), promulgated in 2024, relaxed restrictions on media concentration and foreign ownership of media outlets. It replaced Law No. 19.307 of 2014, which was considered more consistent with human rights and freedom of expression. The 2024 law refers to the prevention of violence and discrimination only in relation to the watershed period for the protection of minors and advertising directed at children and adolescents.

Nevertheless, other national laws establish broader principles of non-violence and non-discrimination that also apply to media content. Members of the public can bring cases before the courts for discriminatory language or incitement to hatred, as illustrated by a case in September 2025, when a female performer sued a broadcaster for racist and discriminatory expressions made during a radio programme. The judge ruled in her favour, requiring the broadcaster to hand over his passport and to report to the nearest police station every 15 days for a period of 180 days.

Although no formal complaints related to violence or discrimination have been filed with URSEC or DINATEL, cases have been presented to the national human rights institution, the Institución Nacional de Derechos Humanos y Defensoría del Pueblo (INDDHH), as noted below.

**Regulation of online content:** Although Uruguay has public policies aimed at protecting children and adolescents, there is no specific regulatory framework establishing oversight mechanisms for digital platforms or assigning clear responsibilities to the media regulator in this area.

**Children's programming:** Media licensing conditions make no mention of locally originated content for children. The regulator does not conduct surveys of children's media consumption or provide for children's participation in the design of media policies.

**Self-regulation:** Uruguay does not have a formal media self-regulation body. A Journalistic Code of Ethics exists, but adherence is voluntary. In cases of non-compliance, the Asociación de la Prensa Uruguaya (APU - Association of the Uruguayan Press) may issue observations in the form of recommendations. The APU Code of Ethics covers most diversity categories. It does not explicitly mention geographic origin, although it refers to diversity of nationalities. Minority language is not included as a category, partly because Uruguay does not exhibit significant linguistic diversity due to its historical and geographical characteristics.

**National human rights institution:** INDDHH was to have had an Audience Ombudsperson under the previous media law, No 19.307 (now repealed), but this was never implemented. The body has taken action on hate speech. After a group attending a march to mark International

Women's Day on 8 March 2024 paraded an obviously antisemitic image of a woman, the INDDHH branded the incident as antisemitic hate speech and called on Uruguayan society to take steps to develop an understanding of diversity where such action would have no place.

**Access:** There is no law that explicitly mandates the guarantee of high-quality broadband access for the entire population, nor is this formally a competence of regulatory bodies such as URSEC or DINATEL. Nevertheless, significant progress has been achieved in practice, largely due to the role of Antel, the state-owned telecommunications company, which has expanded broadband access as part of its commercial and infrastructure development strategy. URSEC supervises the functioning of the sector, monitors market developments, and produces statistical data on coverage and access to services.

Uruguayan audiovisual legislation establishes accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities in certain types of content. Nevertheless, available evidence suggests that monitoring and enforcement mechanisms for these provisions are limited and at times non-existent.

**Community media:** The regulatory framework recognises community media as a distinct category compared with commercial operators, taking into account their social and non-profit nature. However, public policies aimed at promoting the sector have been scarce and sporadic.

**Workforce recruitment:** Monitoring diversity within the media workforce remains limited and fragmented. URSEC produces statistical information on employment in the telecommunications sector with a gender perspective, which represents progress in making structural inequalities visible. The gender variable began to be measured in a thematic report produced by URSEC in 2020 and was later incorporated into the regulator's annual report on the state of the telecommunications sector but without any explicit targets being set. Competitive funding schemes administered by DINATEL currently prioritise criteria such as gender equality, territorial distribution, and company size.

At the same time, some initiatives promoted by professional associations and trade unions within the cultural and audiovisual sectors reflect growing awareness of the need to promote inclusive working environments. The Oficina Nacional del Servicio Civil (ONSC - National Civil Service Office) monitors compliance with quotas for trans persons, Afro-descendants, and persons with disabilities within public institutions. Public media organisations are not analysed separately and there is no specific regulation for the media sector establishing whether such quotas should apply only to on-air personnel or to the entire workforce. Overall, the main challenge lies in the absence of systematic institutional mechanisms capable of measuring, monitoring, and promoting diversity within the media system. ONSC monitoring focuses on the Ministry of Education and Culture, under which public media formally operate alongside other executive units.

The Sociedad Uruguaya de Actores (SUA - Uruguayan Actors' Society) has adopted a protocol acknowledging the relevance of some diversity issues but does not provide detailed guidelines corresponding to the specific categories such as disability or LGBTQ.

**Representation:** The audiovisual law refers to pluralism and cultural diversity but does not establish concrete representation targets. The representation of diverse groups in Uruguayan media content lacks systematic monitoring and comprehensive academic studies that would allow generalisable conclusions. Cultural patterns persist that do not always reflect the diversity of social actors within the country although there is some evidence illustrating patterns of partial and normalised diversity within the media system. These patterns are difficult to critically assess due to the scarcity of available empirical evidence.

The Global Media Monitoring Project provides the only systematic reference regarding gender representation and shows no significant improvement in women's representation levels in recent years. The executive summary of the 2025 Uruguay report concludes that media continue to reproduce structural biases, giving women little prominence as political, economic, scientific or social actors. It warns that their overrepresentation in gender-based violence coverage does not compensate for their absence in the rest of the news agenda and can reinforce "problematic associations between women and victimisation".<sup>13</sup>

A master's thesis by Nicolás Sarauz, published in 2024 through the University of the Republic (UdelaR) and entitled *Public Service Open Television, Diversity and Plurality: The Presence of Popular Sectors and Minorities in TV Ciudad*, analysed the programming of a specific broadcaster during the period 2015–2024. Using various research techniques, the study concluded that, during the period studied, the public channel included diverse representative groups or actors from youth and adult sectors, immigrants, cooperative members, residents of different neighbourhoods, and urban musicians, among other social groups.

**Consultation mechanisms:** Historically, political and partisan interests played an important role in frequency allocation. Since the early 2000s, however, progress has been made through the creation of advisory bodies and technical institutions responsible for managing and regulating the radio spectrum. Between 2007 and 2015, several advisory spaces were created involving representatives from business associations, professional organisations, and academic institutions in the field of communication. These bodies had primarily consultative functions but were abolished by Law No. 20.383 in 2024.

Law No. 20.383 eliminated most consultative bodies except in the case of public and community media, although these mechanisms have not been effectively implemented. In 2008 an Independent Honorary Advisory Commission for frequency allocation was created and appointed in 2010. It included representatives from commercial broadcasting associations, APU, and non-governmental organisations dedicated to the promotion and defence of freedom of expression. This type of participatory structure has never existed in the telecommunications sector. As previously noted, the state-owned telecommunications company plays a significant role in shaping sectoral policies.

**Exposing discrimination at work:** The Association of the Uruguayan Press (APU) does not have specific mechanisms for receiving complaints of harassment or discrimination, which are treated the same as other issues addressed by the union. However, following some recent complaints, the union's Gender Commission stated that it will promote the development of a protocol that will first be implemented within the union and then applied in the workplace<sup>14</sup>. In 2021 the Uruguayan Actors' Society adopted a Protocol for cases of violence and harassment in the workplace and educational settings within the performing arts and audiovisual production sectors.

**Handling complaints:** Although INDDHH can receive complaints regarding discrimination in media content, the institution has not developed a specific line of work addressing this issue.

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13. <https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/GMMP2025-InformeNacional-Uruguay.pdf>

14. <https://www.carasycajetas.com.uy/sociedad/acoso-los-medios-secretaria-genero-apu-avanza-protocolo-denuncias-n93414>

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Several examples emerge from the data presented here of positive regulation, whereby – instead of banning things – measures are taken to promote desirable outcomes. Where diversity is concerned, desirable means inclusive. Good practice in this regard can be encouraged through the codes of ethics adopted by associations of media practitioners, including journalists’ unions. Media diversity is also served by transparency in such areas of media activity as gathering audience data, sharing information on workforce composition and handling complaints about media coverage or discrimination in the workplace. In light of the contribution media operations make towards either normalising or challenging disadvantages experienced by diverse groups across society, there are strong reasons to highlight pro-active steps that have been shown to challenge the structural inequalities that reproduce a cycle of disadvantage. On that basis MDI recommends the following:

- ▶ **Seek out openings** for advocates of inclusive media to establish or develop links and contacts with existing national institutions set up to serve audiences and human rights observance. Although the Audience Ombudsman set up to receive complaints about infringement of audience rights in Argentina is no longer functioning, the political will for such activity that still exists in some quarters can potentially be mobilised through the communication unit of the country’s NHRI, which has media monitoring capacity insofar as it claims to analyse, evaluate and archive relevant journalistic output. Interest in what an audience ombudsperson could achieve in terms of promoting media diversity can be seen in the example of Colombia’s Defensoria del Pueblo contesting racist coverage of the country’s vice president and in a plan for Uruguay’s NHRI to create an audience ombudsperson that was included in a previous media law but was not implemented.
- ▶ **Strengthen and extend references** to diversity across journalistic codes of conduct, following the example set in the code of Argentina’s FOPEA which is explicit in its approach to promoting diversity and avoiding reproducing prejudices, generalisations, stereotypes, sexism and so on and clear in making adherence to the code a condition of membership. Establishing such an approach as the norm is something to be achieved in stages, through the efforts of well-known and respected journalists.
- ▶ **Focus on the media needs** of children, for whom the age element of diversity often intersects with other aspects such as gender, socio-economic status, disability and so on. Advocacy on behalf of under-18s can be seen as apolitical in environments where free expression is under pressure. Serving children’s interests means offering content that is relevant to their local context, not simply relying on imports. Precedents for action in this sphere exist in the Advisory Council on Audiovisual Communication and Children (CONACAI) that used to have a role in Argentina’s regulatory authority and in legislation passed in Colombia to make the digital environment safe for children. Chile’s publicly funded channel for 4-12-year-olds offers opportunities for co-production and alliances.

- ▶ **Liaise with academic institutions** and other civil society bodies to investigate diversity of personnel in media workplaces to fill major gaps in knowledge and puncture misplaced complacency about current performance. For example, researchers in Colombia say that, whereas the community and Indigenous radio sector is perceived to have diverse representation, visits to the stations reveal a much less positive picture with women accounting for less than 20 per cent of the workforce. At present, monitoring efforts by the country's press freedom foundation, FLIP, remain limited. The 2021 regulations mandating inclusive hiring in Argentina's public and private institutions are no longer in force but their initial reception and impact could be explored. Legal requirements that exist for the hiring of people with disabilities in Chile, Colombia and Peru could be expanded to cover other groups.
- ▶ **Include reflection** on media diversity as a regular feature of gatherings that bring media specialists together, especially those where practitioners, activists and analysts meet, with the aim of mainstreaming discussion about representation of those aspects of identity – such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, regional location – that are often overlooked.

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