

# tgcom24.mediaset.it

The website of Tgcom24, an all-news TV network owned by a media company that is controlled by former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.



This website mostly adheres to basic standards of credibility and transparency.

Score: 82.5/100

## Ownership and Financing

Tgcom24 is owned by Mediaset Spa, one of Italy's largest media companies. According to its corporate website, Mediaset Spa owns broadcast, production, film, and advertising properties, including more than 10 television stations and some radio stations.

Fininvest Spa is Mediaset's main shareholder with approximately 40 percent of the shares. According to April 2017 information provided by Il Sole 24 Ore website, Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi owns the majority of the shares in Fininvest.

Pier Silvio Berlusconi, Silvio Berlusconi's son, is Mediaset's CEO and a board member, along with Silvio Berlusconi's daughter, Marina Berlusconi.

Tgcom24 generates revenue from advertising and sponsored content.

- ✓ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22 points)
- ✓ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✓ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✓ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✗ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✓ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✗ Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✗ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

## Content

Tgcom24.Mediaset.it covers national and international politics, the economy, sports, and culture. Content is organized in numerous sections, such as News (Cronaca), Politics, World (Mondo), People, Economy, Lifestyle, Women (Donne), and Sport. Typical headlines on the site include "Brexit, the Supreme Court declares the suspension of Parliament illegal" ("Brexit, la Corte Suprema dichiara illegale la sospensione del Parlamento"); "[Giuseppe] Conte: 'I ask the Italians for an agreement against tax evasion, we will all pay less [taxes]'" ("Conte: 'Chiedo patto agli italiani contro l'evasione, pagheremo tutti meno'"); and "Naples, Whirlpool workers protest in front of the US consulate" ("Napoli, protesta degli operai Whirlpool davanti al consolato Usa").

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

Users can watch Tgcom24 live on the site's homepage. Many of its text articles include video clips that were originally broadcast on the network.

Links to other Mediaset properties, such as the radio station R101 and shopping site MediaShopping.it, are listed in a Tgcom24 Recommended (TGcom24 Consiglia) section.

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#### Credibility

Articles and videos on Tgcom24.Mediaset.it are fact-based and straightforward, and cite credible sources such as firsthand interviews and reputable media outlets, including Ansa, Il Corriere della Sera, and Il Fatto Quotidiano. An editorial staff based in Italy and correspondents from around the world produce original content for the broadcast network and for the site.

Headlines and images accurately reflect content, although images are generally not attributed.

The website and network regularly cover most public appearances and comments by Berlusconi, who was a candidate for the European Parliament in May 2019. In the week before the elections, Berlusconi, the leader of the Forza Italia party, frequently appeared on the site, giving video interviews to Tgcom24 on his campaign. Domenico Catagnano, Tgcom24's deputy editor in chief, told NewsGuard in a telephone interview that the network invited other political party leaders to Tgcom24, but they did not accept the invitation.

Despite Berlusconi's connection to the network and the video coverage ahead of the election, NewsGuard did not find that the site's coverage of Berlusconi over time was one-sided.

Several stories in 2019 presented political views that oppose Berlusconi and his party, including those of the Democratic Party, Five Star Movement and League. The site also covered Berlusconi's 2012 tax fraud trial and conviction in a straightforward manner, including in a story with a mix of reactions to the verdict from both political supporters and opponents.

Opinion articles are generally published in a dedicated Blogs and Opinions (Blog e Opinioni) section.

Tgcom24.Mediaset.it regularly issues corrections, typically by publishing a separate article explaining the error and apologizing to readers.

In January and February 2020, the website's editor-in-chief, Paolo Liguori, published two video op-eds on Tgcom24.Mediaset.it that made the unsubstantiated claim that the Wuhan coronavirus was "engineered in a military laboratory where experiments were carried out to modify the SARS virus for war purposes." Liguori cited a "very reliable source," which he did not name, to back his claim. Liguori told NewsGuard in a February 2020 telephone interview that he had verified the report independently and received the information from a credible source. "Nobody has denied this news to date," Liguori said.

The claim that the coronavirus was engineered and leaked from a military lab has been denied by biologists, fact-checkers, and major health organizations. A February 2020 report by the World Health Organization said, "increasing evidence demonstrates the link between the 2019-nCoV [Wuhan coronavirus] and other similar known coronaviruses (CoV) circulating in bats." A study published the same month in Nature found that the virus is "96% identical at the whole-genome level to a bat coronavirus."

Rutgers University chemical biology professor Richard Ebright also told the Washington Post that "based on the virus genome and properties there is no indication whatsoever that it was an engineered virus."

Despite this editorial lapse, because NewsGuard has not found other articles that advance false theories such as the op-eds on the coronavirus, NewsGuard has determined that TGcom24.mediaset.it does not gather and present information irresponsibly.

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#### Transparency

Tgcom24.Mediaset.it discloses it is owned by Mediaset. The company's logo is at the top and bottom of the website and a link takes users to Mediaset's corporate site, which provides information about the company's shareholders, board members, and corporate structure.

However, although it is widely known in Italy that Berlusconi is Mediaset's main shareholder, his connection to Tgcom24 is not disclosed on the website, on Mediaset's corporate site, or in news articles that mention him. This lack of disclosure does not meet NewsGuard's standards for revealing ownership and relevant financing.

Domenico Catagnano, Tgcom24's deputy editor in chief, told NewsGuard in a telephone interview that "these kinds of decisions are not under my jurisdiction" ("non sono decisioni di mia competenza").

Most Tgcom24.Mediaset.it articles are not attributed to authors. The Tgcom24 editor-in-chief is identified in some articles, including his blog, Facts and Misdeeds (Fatti e Misfatti). However, because users can not find the editor's name in a central location, NewsGuard has determined that Tgcom24.Mediaset.it does not meet NewsGuard's standards for revealing who is in charge of the site.

Catagnano told NewsGuard that the website would consider adding a page to identify its editorial leadership and content creators.

Advertisements are distinguished from editorial content and sponsored content is clearly labeled.

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## History

Berlusconi founded Mediaset in 1993. The company was listed on the Italian stock exchange in 1996.

Mediaset launched a news website, Mediaset Online, in 1999. Its name was changed to Tgcom24 in 2001. The Tgcom24 television network launched 10 years later.

Tgcom24 broadcast the first interview with the captain of the Italian cruise ship Costa Concordia, Francesco Schettino, after it was shipwrecked near Giglio Island in 2012.

Berlusconi was convicted of tax fraud in 2012 for using offshore companies to have Mediaset purchase television rights at inflated prices, which allowed him to

avoid paying taxes in Italy. The conviction was finalized in 2013.

*Correction: An earlier version of this Nutrition Label misstated the year that the media company Mediaset was founded. The company was founded in 1993.*

*Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was last updated on February 19, 2020, to include the website's reports on a debunked theory that the Wuhan coronavirus was engineered in a military laboratory.*

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**Send feedback to NewsGuard:** [Click Here](#)

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Financing

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