



المركز السوري للإعلام وحرية التعبير

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A Comparative Study on Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence in Syrian Media

Second monitoring round (2020)

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This Study is part of a project to counter hate speech in Syrian media through supporting the establishment of an Observatory of Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence, implemented with the support of UNESCO's Multi Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists (MDP)



**Multi-Donor Programme
on Freedom of Expression
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Executive Summary

The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression launched the second round of media monitoring within the project “Monitoring hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media” with the support of UNESCO and the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), in the period between February and November 2020, aiming at measuring the types and extent of hate speech in media content, and tracking and recording any changes in comparison to the results of the previous monitoring round conducted in 2019 by a pool of Syrian monitors, consisting of professional journalists trained on media monitoring methods in the first phase of the project.

The study adopted the descriptive-analytical and comparative approach to derive the conclusions. It also used the quota sample method to select (24) media outlets that represent the research community, covering all types of media (written, TV, and Radio). Taking into consideration the different Geographical distribution (media outlets working in the areas controlled by the Syrian government, those working in the areas controlled by The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, and media outlets working outside of Syria). The search tool used was an online monitoring questionnaire which was designed according to the research requirements and based on the research methodology. Three different questionnaires were designed for each media type. After the monitoring round was completed, the extracted data was accurately reviewed to identify the terms and words which implied hate speech and in which context they were used. Consequently, (3906) forms were selected, with the following distribution: (2520) Questionnaire forms for Published Media, (630) Forms for TV, and (765) Forms for Radio.

The data was analyzed based on descriptive statistical methods in order to derive the results.

The main findings of the study were the following:

- The Syrian media of various types and geographical distribution use hate speech and incitement to Violence disproportionately. The average use of public hate speech in the Syrian media was (17.99%) as a percentage of the monitored content of the study sample, which is considered a low percentage when compared with the current circumstances in Syria, and in comparison with the results of the previous monitoring round.
- The highest percentage of using hate speech, according to the media type, was the visual media (TV), as it reached an average of (26.67%) of all the media content it provided.
- There are variances in the rate of hate speech and incitement to violence in Syrian media according to the geographical distribution. The media outlets operating in the government-controlled territories, recorded the highest rate reaching (22.87%) of all the media content they deliver.
- By analyzing the monitoring forms containing hate speech and incitement to violence, the researchers collected the terms and expressions mostly used by the Syrian media of all types (written, TV, Radio), and classified them according to their geographical distribution.



First: Introduction

The UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech (UN SPA) highlights that “there is no international legal definition of hate speech, and the characterization of what is ‘hateful’ is controversial and disputed”. In the context of the Strategy and Action Plan on Hate Speech, “the term hate speech is understood as any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor”¹.

Although hate speech appears to be a relatively easy concept to define, not having a global agreement on a specific definition creates a difficulty in establishing a common basis. Nevertheless, it gives researchers sufficient scientific elasticity to define the introduction to this concept according to the objectives, methods, mechanisms and the uniqueness of the environment of the research. Formulating a clear definition of hate speech and its determinants was a great challenge. Since the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and majority of human rights Charters did not include details of what hate speech is; as indicated in the report “Incitement to racial and religious hatred and the promotion of tolerance” by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2006².

Despite the lack of a clear definition in the beginning, some kinds of speech are required to be prohibited by states. For instance, article (20) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) calls for the legal prohibition of any call to war or to discrimination or hostility³. In addition, article 4 of The International Committee on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, prohibits expression of ideas that reflect the superiority or of “racially” classified persons, the dissemination of ideas based on racial hatred, incitement to racial discrimination and incitement to acts of racially motivated violence⁴.

While these provisions use the term “hatred” rather than “hate speech”, it can be found that the ICCPR distinguishes between different types of hate speech: hate speech that must be prohibited (article 20(2), “Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law”); hate speech that may be prohibited (article 19(3) “The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subjected to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: **(a)** for respect of the rights or reputations of others; **(b)** for the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*), or of public health or morals”); and lawful hate speech that should be protected from restriction but raises concerns in terms of intolerance and discrimination and may merit a critical response by the state (**article 19(2), “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice”**)⁵; thereby showing that not all hateful speech is unlawful or prohibited (even if harmful), and that not all unlawful speech is considered a crime.

The attempt to define the concept of hate speech was challenged with the possibility of violating freedom of expression, therefore; the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) is cautious about countering hate speech. At the same time, it rejects any violation of freedom of expression, which was clear in a number of its previous publications that documented the violations of this freedom⁶. UNESCO also defends the stand that sees the free flow of information and freedom of expression, as the rule and not the exception, in line with the UN SPA. In addition, it seeks an accurate and complex approach to ensure a balance between supporting freedom of expression in terms of people’s right to express their ideas and countering hate speech when it incites violence. The organization generally prefers counter-speech to suppression of speech, based on the stance that any response that limits speech needs to be very carefully weighed to ensure that this remains wholly exceptional, and that legitimate robust debate is not curtailed. UNESCO’s support to this project is a contribution to “upheld the need for constructive international diplomacy that bridges existing divides and focuses on “mutual and reciprocal steps”⁷.

The potential conflict between freedom of expression and incitement to violence remained a matter of concern to the international legislator, until the United Nations Human Rights Committee found in its General Comment No. 34 that articles 19 (relative to freedom of expression) and 20 (relative to limitations of hatred and war propaganda) of the ICCPR are compatible and complement each other. The prohibitions listed in article 20 of the ICCPR are therefore subject to restriction in accordance with article 19(3) and must be capable of justification. The key distinction lies in the fact that article 20 provides for a specific legal response to such speech⁸. This issue was also explored in human rights organization ARTICLE 19’s ‘ 2009”The Camden Principles”, which present an advanced interpretation that avoids the potential conflict between freedom of expression, hate speech and incitement to violence⁹.

On the other hand, there is no legal prohibition of incitement to hatred in the national laws of most countries. It was a point raised at the 2011 [expert workshops](#) on the prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred, organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The "[Rabat Plan of Action](#)" on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, which was compiled following a meeting of experts the following year, points out to the insufficiency of national legislation in most countries to deal with forms of hate speech, limiting it to religious or ethnic discrimination based hatred, or being selectively used in the interest of the state¹⁰. It also proposes a six-part threshold test to establish whether expression is criminally prohibited, taking into account context, speaker, intent, content or form, extent of speech and likelihood, including imminence.

In the Syrian context, Article (12) of the Syrian Media Law promulgated by Legislative Decree No. 28 of 2011 prohibits the mass media from publishing any content that affects "national unity and national security, offends the Abrahamic religions and religious beliefs, or incites sectarian strife, or any content that may incite committing crimes, acts of violence and terrorism, or hatred and racism." Syrian law sanctions, according to the provision in the Penal Code, those who commit an act of libel and slander by any media outlet. Although these legislations may appear as if they were designed to reduce the use of hate speech and incitement to violence within the mass media, they have been used to limit freedom of expression and suppress opposing opinions, through the use of loose terms and the pretext of effecting national unity, local/national security, etc..

The reports of media monitoring conducted in several Arab countries show that hate speech in the region's media has risen following the political uprisings that started in 2011 and in parallel with the raise of social media which in many cases become a powerful tool for amplifying dangerous speech. The intensity of the repression which was deployed in response to these uprisings led to the creation of violent conflicts, and the sectarian and tribal structures of Arab societies in addition to regional and international interventions increased in complexity.

With the support of UNESCO, The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) launched, in the second half of 2017, the "[Observatory of Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence](#)". It aims at measuring and evaluating the extent of hate speech and incitement to violence by the Syrian media, through monitoring the content of the Syrian media, by a pool of Syrian monitors trained in the first phase of the project.

Thereafter, the Observatory launched its first study of a sample consisting of 24 media outlets representing the research community which consisted of various types (written, TV, and radio), and of different orientations. At the end of the first round of monitoring, The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) issued the first study of its kind about the Syrian mass media. It concluded that the Syrian media outlets; regardless of their types and orientations, use "hate speech and incitement to violence" in varying degrees, where the

average use in the media outlets that were included in the study sample was 23.5% of the total content they provide.

The study also showed that there are differences in the extent of hate speech used by the media outlets included in the sample, and the monitoring process resulted in identifying the most used words and phrases that carried signs of hatred and incitement to violence in the media. They were classified into tables according to the target entity/group in this discourse and grouped in a glossary.

In the final stage of the first study, SCM contacted media outlets that were included in the sample and informed them of their results, including the hate-speech terms that were used in their media content. SCM and UNESCO opted not to mention the results of each outlet in the circulated version of the study, and only include the overall results, as the aim of the project and the resulting study is to support and develop the work of the Syrian media and not to name and shame. On 24 July 2019, a roundtable meeting was held in Paris, bringing together representatives of most of the media outlets included in the study, along with SCM's project team and UNESCO representatives. During the meeting, the results of the study were presented, and the methodology and mechanisms of the monitoring process were explained, in addition to clarifications to the concerned media outlets about the results. Participants expressed their views about the study and its results and shared their own experiences in dealing with this discourse within the Syrian context. The attendants discussed the possibilities of using this study and the ability to convert theoretical results into practical plans in the framework of a collective cooperation. The recommendations by the representatives of the Syrian media outlets were taken into consideration as new variables in line with the initial methodology for the second round of monitoring, which would serve as a comparative study.

Based on the results of the first study and the objectives of the Observatory for Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence, focus was put on drawing the media's attention to the risks of hate speech and its role in inciting violence, especially in the Syrian case. In order to produce this comparative study, and in continuation of its endeavors to issue periodic reports to monitor the degree of hate speech in the Syrian media, SCM launched a second round of monitoring in 2020.



Second: Study Objectives

The project aims at supporting the implementation of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, the strengthening of coalitions of local and international media and civil society organizations, and the coordination of data collection and research, including on the root causes, drivers and conditions conducive to hate speech. Consequently, this comparative study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- Measuring and evaluating the use of hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian mass media, of all types and geographical distribution.
- 2- Evaluating the efficiency of awareness raising initiatives and advocacy, including meetings with the Syrian media representatives in the previous phase of the project following the first round of monitoring, and their impact on the degree and percentage of hate speech.
- 3- A new monitoring variable was added in this round which is the discourse of discrimination and hate speech against women, as part of the overall phenomenon of hate speech and incitement to violence on one hand, and on the other, as a crucial indicator for the quality of media content and the extent of its responsibility.
- 4- Enhancing the ability of media-related civil society organizations to observe the use of hate speech by the Syrian mass media, through issuing monitoring reports on a regular basis, especially in the absence of any form of reference due to the fragmentation of mass media in multiple countries.
- 5- Improving the cooperation and coordination between SCM and the Syrian media outlets to raise awareness within the Syrian media community about the reasons behind using such narratives, their forms, consequences, and the methods for encountering this unwanted phenomena.
- 6- Creating and developing a set of tools and professional standards to help reinforce self-regulation and media ethics in line with international standards, through joint cooperation, between SCM and the Syrian media outlets, to limit the use of hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media content.



Third: Study Importance

Scientifically speaking, the importance of this study comes from being an effort to strengthening a new research path at the Syrian level, concerning the studies of hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media, of all types and orientations. The path was established by the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression by creating the (Observatory) for Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence and publishing the first Syrian study on this path.

Practically speaking, the regularity of the monitoring reports may contribute to forming a solid ground to measure the performance of the media -especially after the booming of hundreds of the Syrian media outlets after 2011. And later to design programs that contribute to raising the competency of the Syrian media and limiting the effect of using this destructive discourse for the Syrian society. This would be a step towards achieving civil peace in the country and construct a democratic environment that nourishes the freedom of expression.



Fourth: Previous Studies

The first monitoring report issued by the Observatory under the current project, in addition to SCM's previous experience in media monitoring, form the scientific basis for the formulation and development of the methodology of the second round of monitoring. The Observatory also used for reference other regional and international reports published in the field of monitoring hate speech in media content, such as the following:

1- Reports based on the monitoring of one media:

- **1.1.** Monitoring content of Lebanese TV channels through several reports issued by "Mahahrat" media center on hate speech in Lebanese talk shows (2013).
- **1.2.** "Maspero, a criminal" report issued by the Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE) regarding official television coverage of the October 9 massacre and the clashes on (Mohamed Mahmoud Street) (2011) in Egypt.

- **1.3.** “TV- Professional and Ethical Standards” a study issued by the “Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies” and the “Arab Media Support Network” on media coverage of talk shows to public events (2013)

2. Reports on written media content:

- **2.1.** The regional report on monitoring hate speech in the published press (Algeria, Morocco, Libya and Jordan), issued by “The Media Observatory in North Africa and the Middle East” in (2016).

3. Reports on monitoring more than one media outlet at the same time:

- **3.1.** “Monitoring hate speech in the Tunisian media”, a report issued by the “Media Observatory in North Africa and the Middle East” in 2013.
- **3.2.** “The use of the language of violence in the media and its repercussions on Yemeni society”, a study issued by the “National Foundation Development and Human Rights in Yemen” in 2013.

SCM took a great interest in these studies and reports, and many of the experts who have participated in them were invited to the experts’ workshop that was organized in Berlin (24 to 26 October 2017) during the project’s preparatory phase.



Fifth: The Study Variables

Based on the types of hate speech presented by the “Rabat Plan of Action” from incitement to violence, hatred, hostility or racial discrimination, and the three forms of incitement established by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that violate the freedom of expression; namely: incitement to violence, hostility, hatred, and racial discrimination, in addition to the six standards that it has been formulated and presented by (Article 19) regarding the reinforcement of freedom of expression (Camden Principles) in 2009 to judge the expression of persons or entities, whether it reflects hate speech or incitement to violence; the Study incorporates the following variables:

1. The dependent variable: hate speech and incitement to violence.

It is divided into the following sub-variables

- ▶ a. Advocating hostility or hatred.
- ▶ b. Insulting or stigmatization.
- ▶ c. Unjustified and Unfounded accusations.
- ▶ d. Discrimination (including discrimination against women).
- ▶ e. Inciting to\or justifying violence.

2. Independent variables: The criteria for evaluating hate speech and incitement to violence:

- ▶ a. Expression context.
- ▶ b. The person who uses the expression or controls the means of transmitting it to the public.
- ▶ c. The intention of the person saying the expression (Intentionality).
- ▶ d. The size and general nature of the expression.
- ▶ e. The Possibility of its spread.
- ▶ f. The probability of the consequences of incited violence to occur.



Sixth: The Study Questions

The results of the first study raised several questions, thus necessitating the second round of monitoring. These questions were:

1. How efficient and effective were the advocacy and awareness raising campaigns conducted by the Hate Speech Observatory, including communication and meetings with the Syrian media outlets following the previous monitoring round, and what was their impact on reducing the use of hate speech and incitement to violence by the selected outlets?
2. Are there any changes in the rate of hate speech and incitement to violence used by the Syrian media, according to their media type and geographical distribution, compared to the first monitoring round?
3. Are there any variations in the extent of using hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media outlets, in relation to their media type and geographical distribution?
4. What are the most common terms implying hate speech and/or inciting violence used by the Syrian media, according to their media types and geographical distribution?
5. Does the Syrian media content include discrimination against women, and does it include hate speech, stereotyping, or promote inequality?

Seventh: Parameters of the Study

- **1. Geographic scope:** This study is limited to the Syrian media outlets (written, TV, and radio) that operate within the Syrian Government territories, in the Autonomous Administration territories, and media outside Syria.
- **2. Timetable:** The timeline\timetable of the final phase of this project, including the comparative study and follow up coordination with international, regional and local partners, extends from the start date in February 2020 with the initial preparations until submission of the final report to UNESCO in November 2020.



Eighth: Methodology

To reach the desired results of the project, the study depends on the descriptive and analytical approach that studies the phenomenon as it is in reality and focuses on describing it accurately and expresses it quantitatively and qualitatively. This allows the transition from quantitative reading of the observed materials to qualitative analysis. The analysis of the content takes into consideration the cultural, political and societal contexts. The Observatory also used the case study approach for each media outlet separately, and the comparative approach to measure the differences between the results of the current round of monitoring and the previous one. It identified the media outlets with the most use of hate speech and incitement to violence, according to the type, and to the geographical distribution within which they operate.



Ninth: Study Population and Sample

▶ **Study population:**

Syrian media outlets represent the study population, with their different types, and geographical distribution. According to the most recent survey that mapped the Syrian media; this community consists of 162 media outlets operating up to November 2019: (Mapping the Syrian Media An evaluation for the active emerging outlets and institutions after 2011), which was published by the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression in 2020¹².

▶ **The study sample:**

The study sample: In this study, we adopted the method of the quota sampling, whereas we divide the study population into categories according to the type (written, TV, Radio) and according to its geographical distribution (working within government controlled territories, the Autonomous Administration territories, or outside Syria). This method of sample selecting allows the researcher to determine the quota he/she desires within each of those categories¹³.

Since the criteria for selecting each sample items is strictly controlled¹⁴, so is the process of designing monitoring questionnaire and selecting the media monitors¹⁵. The research then is to be considered highly accurate and controlled, therefore a sample size of 10-20 items is acceptable¹⁶, but to increase confidence in the results of the study, a sample consisting of (24 items) equally distributed on all previously selected categories to represent the population as follows:

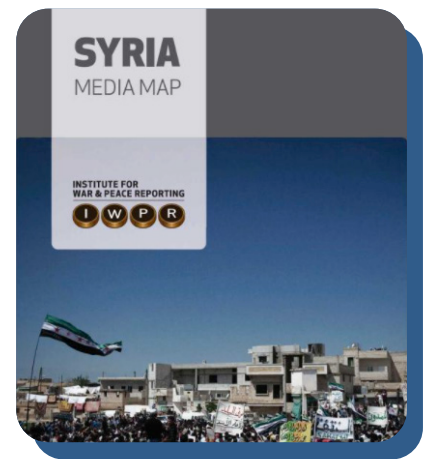
- ▶ **a. Print\Written media:** (3) newspapers, (6) websites and (3) news agencies, equally representing the three geographical distributions.
- ▶ **b. Visual Media (TV):** (6) television stations that are evenly dispersed on the three geographical distributions, with two stations for each category.
- ▶ **c. Radio:** (6) radio stations that are evenly dispersed across the three geographical distributions, with two stations for each category.

▶ **Sample Categories:**

As per dividing the categories of the research sample according to the media type (print\written, Visual (TV) and Radio), and according to the geographical distribution (working within government controlled territories, the Autonomous Administration territories, and outside Syria), we relied on the classifications of the studies and reports that provided a comprehensive survey of the Syrian media after the year 2011, namely:

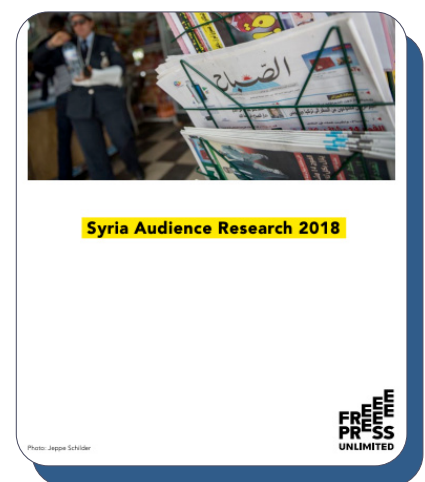
Syria Media Map, Institute for War & Peace reporting, 2013¹⁷

The report provided an all-inclusive map of the Syrian media outlets, following several criteria to categorize them, including their owner/s (state-owned, private) and the field (political, economic, medical, technological, etc.) The report also adopted a classification according to political orientation after the year 2011, where it divided them (pro-government, opposition, and Kurdish).



Syria Audience research, 2016, Free press unlimited, Media cooperation and translation and Global forum for media development¹⁸

The study provided an insight into the opinions of the Syrian public in the opposition-controlled areas and government-controlled areas about the most popular and credible media outlets, and reached the following conclusions; A- In both areas, television is the most popular and reliable source for the public, followed by digital media, published press, and radio. B- The pro-opposition media is the most popular and reliable in the opposition-controlled areas, and the pro-government media is the most popular and reliable in the government-controlled areas.



Syria Media Landscape from 2011 to Early 2016, Collaboration between the Syrian civil coalition (Tamas), Henta media organization and Madani organization¹⁹

The report presented an all-inclusive map to the Syrian media by dividing them to two levels; the first division: geographical (areas controlled by government forces, areas controlled by the opposition, controlled by the jihadists, Kurdish Autonomous Administration areas, and Syrian media located outside the country). The second division: Political orientation (pro-regime, opposition, extremist). The report also adopted a criterion to distinguish independent media outlets that depend on funding. The report defines an independent media outlet as the one who receives funding support from several sources or can generate self-financing through its media products and advertisements.



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(Kabd Al-Zabad) Catching the froth: An inventory of the status of new radio stations and websites in Syria, WEEDOO team, 14 November 2016.

This study specifically measures the power of the Syrian Internet (Published and audial) media platforms. The statistics of this study focused on the technical performance and accessibility aspects of websites and broadcasts, and concluded the following:

- **1.** Only 17 out of 421 websites are competing with tens of thousands of global sites indexed on Google News in terms of primacy of appearing when searching for the most frequently repeated keywords in the media about Syria.
- **2.** There are 67 radio stations operating in Syria, of which 40 originated after the Syrian revolution.
- **3.** Since the beginning of the Syrian revolution, more than 600 media outlets have worked in the media, of which 200 have stopped, and 400 continued until November 2016.²⁰

Syria's New Media landscape (Independent media born out of war) December 2016, Middle East Institute

The report provided a survey of non-governmental media outlets that were born in Syria after the war; they were divided according to their political orientation into (pro-regime, opposition, Kurdish, and independent). The report adopted a definition of the independent outlets by the regime and the opposition as the outlets that seek to adopt minimum professional standards for journalism, to apply those standards to the rebels and the regime equally, and to use neutral terms. As for the independent Kurdish media: Their coverage focuses mainly on the problems of the northeastern part of Syria, under the control of "Autonomous administrative division/ protection units".

The results of these previous studies were developed with the expertise of (the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression) in a consistent manner with the objectives of this study. In which a category of impartial or independent media was excluded from the sample, as previous studies did not present a clear definition that aligns with the objectives of this study in monitoring hate speech on the one hand. On the other hand, by examining media outlets that were classified as "independent" or "impartial" according to the classifications of previous studies on the Syrian media, we found that there is a significant overlap between the opposition, the pro-government, and impartial outlets.²¹

Therefore, the categories of the research sample were divided according to the type of the media: (print\written, visual media (TV) and Radio), and according to the geographical distribution: (working within government-controlled territories, in the Autonomous Administration territories, or outside Syria). In this monitoring round, we decided to classify the analyzed categories according to geographical distribution instead of political affiliation that was adopted in the first monitoring round for two reasons. The first reason based on the Surveying study (Mapping the Syrian Media: An evaluation for the active emerging outlets and institutions after 2011) by The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression in 2020²². This study drew an all-inclusive map to the Syrian Media and enabled the creation of an accurate geographical division based on the distribution of the media outlets inside and outside Syria. The second reason is related to two consecutive meetings that took place with Syrian media outlets: the first meeting on July 24, 2019 in Paris, and the second on October 7, 2020. Whereby SCM adopted the suggestions and recommendations regarding classifying media outlets based on the geographical distribution instead of political affiliation, as SCM is keen on ensuring effective participation and inclusiveness of the Syrian media. Therefore, the geographical distribution of media outlets was adopted as an analysis category according to the following classifications:

Media outlets within government-controlled territories: practically; Syrian media outlets with different types (print\written, Visual media (TV), and Radio) that operate within the government-controlled areas directly through offices or via reporters. Or state-owned mediums within the legal framework that regulate the work of the media in those areas (licensed by the Syrian government), regardless of the nature of their ownership (private, governmental).

Media outlets within the Autonomous Administration territories; practically; Syrian media outlets with different types (print\written, Visual media (TV), and Radio) that operate within the Autonomous Administration territories in northern east of Syria either directly through offices or via reporters, and gives priority to cover the news and the events of northern east of Syria. Or media outlets that are working within the legal framework that regulate the work of the media in these areas (licensed by the Autonomous Administration).

Media Outlets working outside Syria; practically; Syrian media outlets with different types (print\written, Visual media (TV), and Radio) that operate outside Syrian borders; either from neighboring countries or from other countries, that do not have legal licenses to operate in the previously mentioned areas, and share the same antigovernment discourse.

The Syrian opposition controlled territories were excluded from the geographical distribution for the lack of media outlets that are sufficient to complete one of the designed quota within the sample according to the study (Mapping the Syrian Media An evaluation for the active emerging outlets and institutions after 2011). The study demonstrated that only 3% of the media outlets working inside Syria work from Syrian opposition's territories, which means only four outlets. One of these four outlets is closed. Therefore, the condition and the criteria of research sample did not apply on the remaining three²³. The study also showed the concentration of antigovernment media outlets outside Syria.



Tenth: Data Sources

The study was based on two main types of data:

1. Secondary data: It includes previous studies and reports that provided a comprehensive overview and information on the Syrian media after 2011.

2. Primary data: It is the data related to the study, which is collected through the monitoring questionnaire, designed and developed based on the questionnaire of the previous monitoring round and the experience of SCM in media monitoring. The center has issued several studies in this field, which began with a study on the performance of Media in the 2007 parliamentary elections, in addition to benefiting from reports that summarized regional and international experiences in the field of monitoring hate speech in media content.



Eleventh: Monitoring Round

The monitoring in this phase consisted of two rounds, the first one was conducted on 27-28 June 2020, preceded by the training of (16) monitors on monitoring mechanisms and identifying hate speech according to specific criteria, using the dictionary of hate terms, and filling out the questionnaire for each media type. After ensuring the readiness of the monitors and the matching of the tools to the sample criteria, the second round of monitoring was launched on 1 July 2020, according to the following:

1- Monitoring mechanism: monitors were assigned media outlets to monitor the content on specific monitoring days, according to the following rate:



A- Print\Written media: (15) Written articles were monitored for each outlet per day distributed among the different types of journalism (news, report, investigation, interview, essay, caricature, short videos, photo galleries, polls, media coverage).



B- Radio: hours of broadcast were monitored for each radio station distributed over daily morning and evening peak hours, with the aim of monitoring as much as possible of all types of media materials (political, economic, and social).



C- TV: (5) hours of daily broadcast have been allocated to each television station distributed to morning and evening peak times and program cycle of each station, with the aim of monitoring as much as possible of all types of media materials (political, economic, and social).

During the monitoring round, we redistributed the monitors to the media outlets randomly, to eliminate any personal bias towards the outlets, and then the results of each outlet were compared and matched according to the forms of the two monitors who worked on it.

2- Monitoring Questionnaire: the research tool is an online monitoring questionnaire, which was designed and developed according to monitoring requirements, depending on the questionnaire of the previous round and methodological approaches to similar projects in other countries. it was processing digitally based on the nature of the various types of media (written, TV, and Radio), whereas a questionnaire was assigned to monitor each media type as follows:



Print\Written media: the content of the print media was monitored through two monitoring questionnaires for each article. The first one is concerned with monitoring hate speech in the body of the article to determine the type of hate speech that was used and the group that was targeted by the speech. The second questionnaire is concerned with monitoring the visual content accompanying the article or published in the media outlet (pictures, multimedia, caricature) with specifying the type of speech used in the visual content and the target group.



Visual Media (TV) :Television broadcast was monitored through three questionnaires for every hour of broadcast. The first one concerned monitoring the hate speech spoken during the broadcast with determining the type of hate speech represented by the speech and the group that was targeted by the speech. The second one is concerned with monitoring the visual content (visual effects and video) during the broadcast with determining the type of hate speech represented by the visual content and the group that was targeted by the speech. The third questionnaire is concerned with monitoring the body language and gestures of the speakers during the broadcast with determining the type of hate speech represented by the body language, gestures and the target group of the speech.

Radio: Radio broadcasts Radio broadcasts were monitored through three questionnaires for every hour of broadcast. The first form concerned monitoring



hate speech spoken during the broadcast with determining the type of hate speech represented by the words and the group that was targeted by the speech. The second questionnaire is concerned with monitoring the radio content (audio effects and music) during the broadcast, with determining the type of hate speech represented by the audio content and the group that was targeted by the speech. The third one is concerned with monitoring the tone and voice variation during the broadcast with determining the type of hate speech represented by them, and the targeted group.

After completing the monitoring round, the study team reviewed the questionnaires, and only the forms that matched the research criteria were accepted, which are: (756) questionnaires for Radio stations, (630) for TV channels, and (2520) for published media.

Monitoring round difficulties :

The monitoring round faced several difficulties, some of them due to technical reasons, and some others to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. The most noticeable obstacles were:

- a. Changing the nature of monitors' training from in-person to virtual (online) training to avoid exposing the project team and participants under this project to any health risks.
- b. Changing the location of the recording and monitoring station from Turkey to France.
- c. Extending the monitoring round to reach the required number of media materials as previously estimated in the methodology, as the round took 17 days instead of 7 days, due to the decrease of daily publishing frequency in most of the media outlets, in addition to the interruption of the live broadcast of some radio and television stations.

Twelfth: Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, and it should be noted that a specialized data analyst was contracted to guarantee the objectivity of the results. The following statistical methods were used:

- 1- **Repetitions and percentages** as a descriptive method for calculating the percentage of using hate speech by each media outlet out of the total media content provided, according to the following method:

The percentage of using hate speech = the repetition of monitored forms that contained hate speech by that specific media outlet / (divided by) total questionnaires allocated for that outlet * 100

➤ **2- Arithmetic averages** as a descriptive method for calculating the overall percentages of using analysis categories (media type, and geographical distribution), in addition to calculating the general percentage of the Syrian media's use of hate speech.



Thirteenth: Operational definitions

The observation adopted a definition of hate speech as every published/written, audible, visual or digital content provoking a physical or symbolic killing/murder, exclusion or demeaning of others. It includes violations such as insult, slander, stigmatization, discrimination and incitement to murder and violence, which is consistent with the types of hate speech cited in "The Rabat Plan of Action", as incitement to violence, hatred, hostility or racial discrimination. The three forms of incitement that were established by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as an exception to freedom of expression, are incitement to violence, incitement to hostility and hatred, and incitement to racial discrimination. Within the context of the project, the operational definition of hate speech includes the following practices:

- **a. Calling for murder and violence:** this category includes all the paragraphs, sentences, words, pictures, and drawings on which an inciting speech is based, whether explicit or implicit, a speech that justifies, prompts or encourages the recipient to commit violent behavior or a murder.
- **b. Discrimination:** all discriminatory language based on gender, race or beliefs mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international covenants.
- **c. Incitement and encouraging revenge** or hurting others; whether it is an individual or group, and whether it is, symbolic or physical harm.
- **d. Stigmatization:** the release of insulting designations and characteristics that deprive the individual of social acceptance. It includes as well drawing or confirming a negative stereotype about the other, whether the other is an individual or group.
- **e. Discrimination against women:** every speech that adopts one or more forms of discrimination mentioned in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 as an international bill of women's rights. The Convention

defines discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”

This project relies on six criteria to determine whether the speech of individuals or Organizations carries hate speech or incitement to violence. These are: first, the context of the expression; Second: the person who expresses it or controls the means of its transmission to the public; Third, the intention of the one who produces it (whether verbal or written), because “carelessness” and “recklessness” are not sufficient reasons for the occurrence of hate speech and incitement to violence or discrimination; Fourth, the size and general nature of the expression in the sense of the content or the form in which the speech appeared, and whether the used arguments came for example in the context of description or historical narration- or the presentation of scientific facts; Fifth, the possibility of its spread; Sixth, the probability of occurrence of the consequences of inciting to violence; and the last criterion particularly takes into account the difference in the size of the impact of hate speech and incitement to violence.



Fourteenth: Study Results

Via the statistical processing of the received data through the online monitoring questionnaire of the Syrian media outlets under study, the following results were concluded, as they resemble answers to the study's questions:

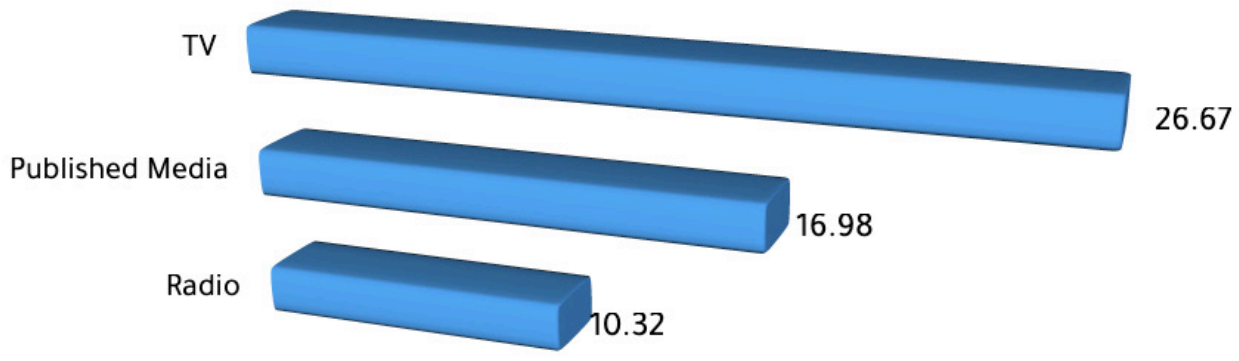
1- General hate speech in the Syrian media outlets:

➤ **a.** The results of the study shown in Table No. (1) Proved that the Syrian media outlets of all types (written, TV, and Radio) use hate speech and incitement to violence, with variances in the average use of those types of discourse.

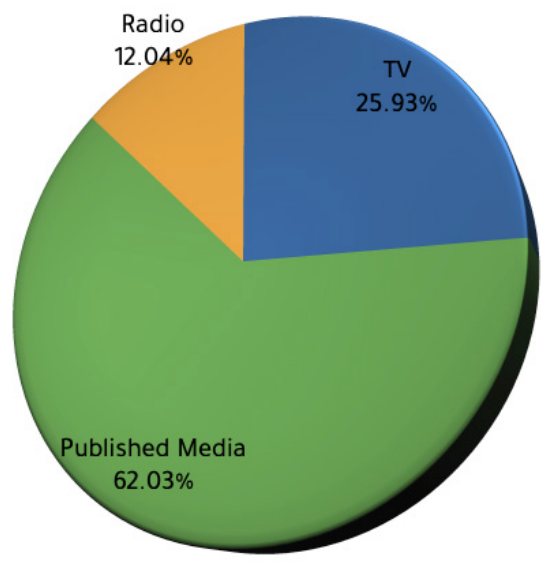
Media Type	Total Monitored	Repetition of hate speech in first section	Repetition of hate speech in second section	Repetition of hate speech in second section	Average use of hate speech	Average use of general hate speech
Print\ published media	2520	367	35	-	16.98%	62.04%
TV	630	100	50	18	26.67%	25.93%
Radio	756	74	1	3	10.32%	12.04%
Total	3906	541	86	21	17.99%	100%

Table No. (1): Total use of the studied Syrian media outlets, for hate speech

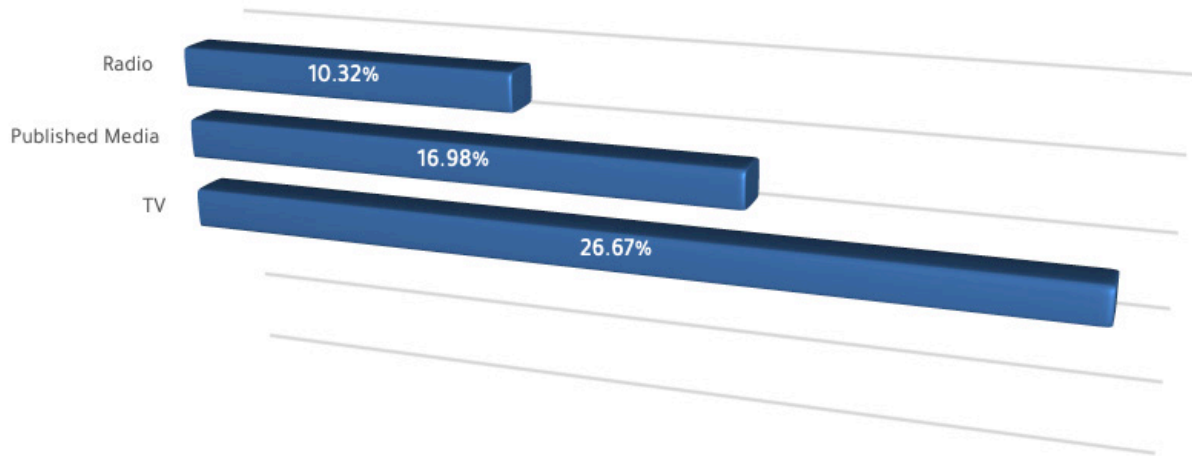
The average use of hate speech and incitement to violence according to media type



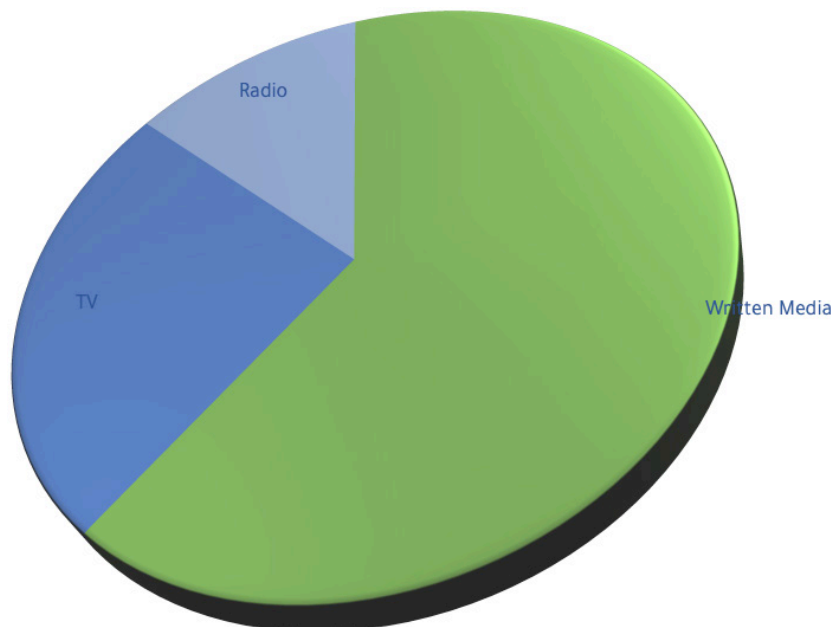
Syrian Media Outlets Contribution Rates, by type, in General Hate Speech



Average use of hate speech and violence incitement, By Media Type



rates of participation of syrian media outlets in hate speech and incitement for violence of written media, by type of media



It is noticed from Table No. (1) that the average use of hate speech and incitement to violence reached (17.99%) as a percentage of the media content, the largest percentage was used by the visual media outlets (TV), which reached (26.67%), while its contribution to the total percentage of public hate speech use within the sample was (25.93%).

Whereas the written (published/print) media ranked second with (16.98%) of its published content, while its contribution to the total percentage of public hate speech use within the sample was (62.04%).

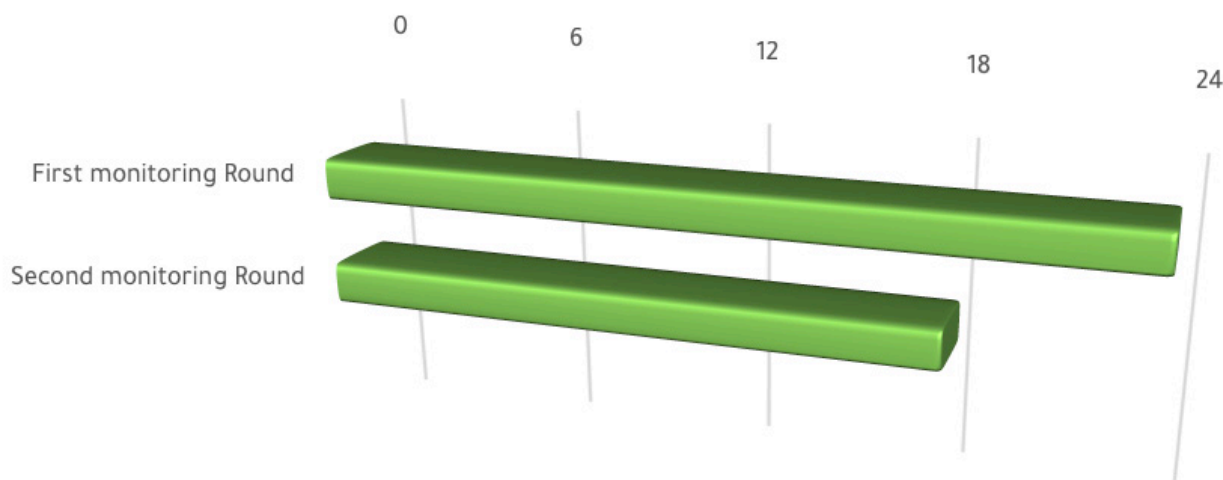
The reason behind the high percentage of contribution of the written media stems from the variety in outlets within the sample (newspapers, news websites, and news agencies), which

constitute half of the sample that was withdrawn in proportion to the size and distribution of each media type within the research community. As the written media constitutes 66% of the research community, which consists of 162 institutions and media outlets operating as of November 2019, according to the survey study: (Mapping the Syrian Media: An evaluation for the active emerging outlets and institutions after 2011)²⁶.

Radios came in third place in terms of the use of hate speech and incitement to violence, averaging (10.32%) as a percentage of its media content, and as a contribution to the total percentage of public hate speech use on average (12.04%).

➤ **b.** The results showed that there was a change in the average percentage amongst the Syrian media outlets of all kinds and geographical distribution, compared to the first monitoring round, which showed that the average rate of hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media was (23,50%)²⁷ while the average percentage in the current study (the second monitoring round) decreased to (17.99%), and the average use of hate speech and incitement to violence in Syrian media decreased, as a percentage of provided content by (23.44%) compared to the previous report²⁸.

change in the average percentage of use of the Syrian media outlets



The largest percentage of change according to the media type was by radios as it decreased by (29.79%) when compared to the previous report. Followed by the TV, at a rate of (23.58%) decrease, and finally the written (published\print) media, at a rate of (18.75%) decrease compared to the previous report.

Through the presented results about rates of general hate speech used in the Syrian media outlets of all types, and the rates of change compared to the first monitoring round; The following conclusions can be found:

➤ **a.** The average use of the sample representing the Syrian media for hate speech and incitement to violence is relatively low, compared to the nature of the political and

military conflict that Syria has been going through for nine years, and compared to the results of the first monitoring round. Nevertheless, its presence still affects the Syrian media content, and it's considered a serious indicator to the possibility of spreading such speech among the public through the media, and this relative decline can be explained by:

- ◀ The period of time when the monitoring round took place is considered relatively calm from a military point of view, as no major battles, confrontations or massacres against civilians occurred during the monitoring period, and there was no change on the territories control map²⁹, and this of course reflected on the level of hate speech used by the Syrian media.
 - ◀ The preoccupation of all types of Syrian media, with extensive coverage of news related to the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19), which took the priority of coverage at the expense of the military and political context in many cases, especially after the spread of the pandemic in Syria in different areas of control and influence.
- ▶ **b.** Despite the relatively low average use of hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media; yet, the order of media types according to the use of hate speech as the results showed: (TV, then published media, then radio) which were consistent with the results of the first monitoring round, gives a serious indication on the extent of hate speech and its ability to reach the public audiences, especially since the results of the study were consistent with the results of previous studies³⁰ on which type of media is the most widespread and reliable among the Syrian public in the areas controlled by the government forces and the opposition, which showed that in both regions, television is the most widespread and reliable medium for the public, followed by online media, then published press, then radio.
- ▶ **c.** Despite the temporary calmness on battle fronts and the decline of the number of military operations, and their relative reflection on the general hate speech in the Syrian media; the Syrian conflict witnessed political events that received a lot of interaction from the media. That interaction carried in some respects inciting narratives according to each party's view of the event. Caesar's law came into effect on June 17, 2020 about two weeks before the monitoring round, which required a wide media interaction that extended during the monitoring round, in order to cover and explain its repercussions on the political, economic and social aspects, as the media operating from government controlled areas dealt with it as "an unjust law targeting civilians and an extension of the siege, and a form of economic terrorism," and as a starting point for attacking opposition groups that contributed to pushing the law, or even attacking the Autonomous Administration that was excluded of its economic effects, while it required adverse coverage from the media operating outside Syria. This indicates that the level of hate speech is affected by the nature of the political context as well, not just the military occurrences.



2. Hate Speech in Syrian Media, Classified by Type of Media

a. Hate Speech in written (Published/Print) Media

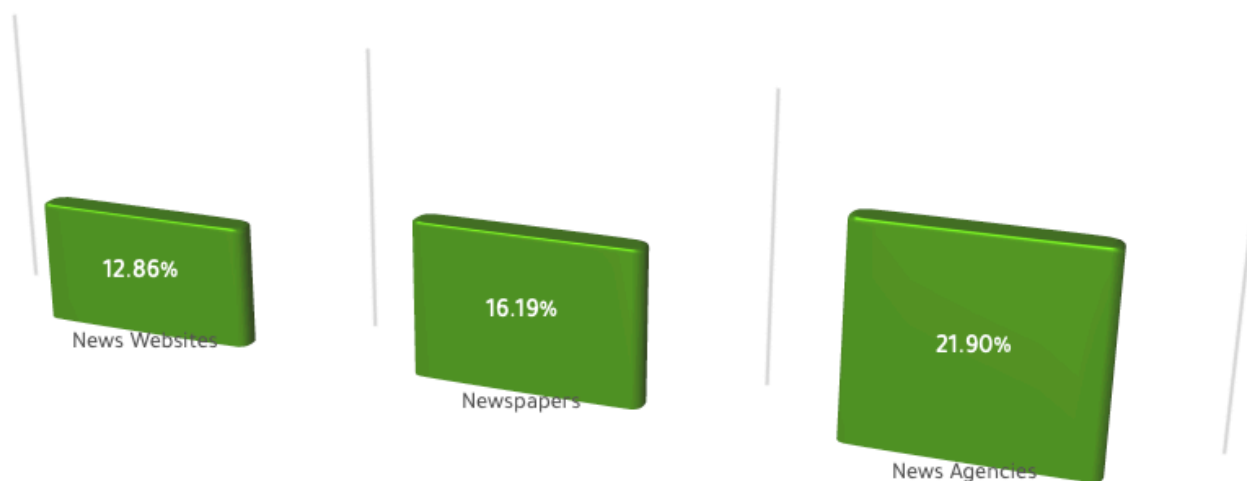
The use of hate speech and incitement to violence in published/print media is (16.98%) on average as a quotient of its total published content. While its total contribution to hate speech use within the sample is (62.04%). These ratios are distributed as follows:

- Ratios for distribution of the use of hate speech by type of media outlet within the sample of published media

Outlet	Total Monitoring	Frequency (Published)	Frequency (Multimedia)	Hate Speech Use Avg.	Hate Speech Contribution to Published Media
Newspapers	630	96	6	16.19%	25.37%
News Websites	1260	142	20	12.86%	40.30%
News Agencies	630	129	9	21.9%	34.33%
Total	2520	367	35	16.98%	100%

Table(2) -Published Media Outlets' Use of Hate Speech and Violence Incitement

Average written media use of hate speech and violence incitement



Rates of Participation in total hate speech and violence incitement of written media

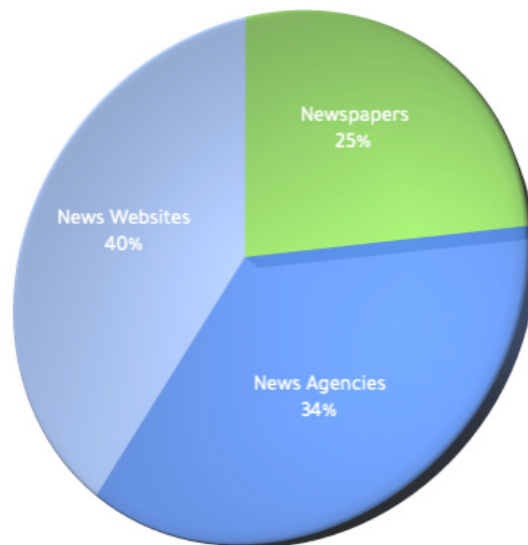


Table (2) shows that the highest proportion of hate speech use within published media belongs to news agencies, with an average of (21.9%) as a ratio to the total content they provide, with a percentage of contribution to the total hate speech and violence incitement of (34.33%). In second place came newspapers, with an average of (16.19%) as a ratio to the total content they provide, and with a contribution of (25.37%). In third place are news websites, with an average of (12.86%) as a ratio to the total content they provide, and a contribution of (40.30%), which is the largest due to the large number of websites within the sample, as they are twice the number of newspapers and agencies. It is notable that news agencies are at the top of results, with the highest ratio of hate speech and incitement to violence within the published media sample, and that could be attributed to many reasons, on top of which is the publication density and its focus on political content, and it being less diverse compared to newspapers and websites that publish diverse content, in addition to the fact that news agencies often depend on certain journalistic types (reports, news) both of which the study has proved have higher hate speech ratio in comparison with other journalistic types. On the other hand, news agencies are often attached to an official governmental body and directly express its points of view, which can raise the probability of high hate speech usage percentages within the content they provide.

On the other hand, despite them existing in large numbers compared to other types of published media; news websites came third in terms of ratio of hate speech and incitement to violence, while they came first in terms of its contribution percentage to the total hate speech and incitement to violence within published media. The high contribution ratio can be attributed to the number of news websites within the published media sample, which is twice the number of newspapers and agencies. This is proportional with their size and distribution within the research's community, where news websites represent 41.4% of the research community that consists of 162 Syrian media outlets operating until November 2019, according to the

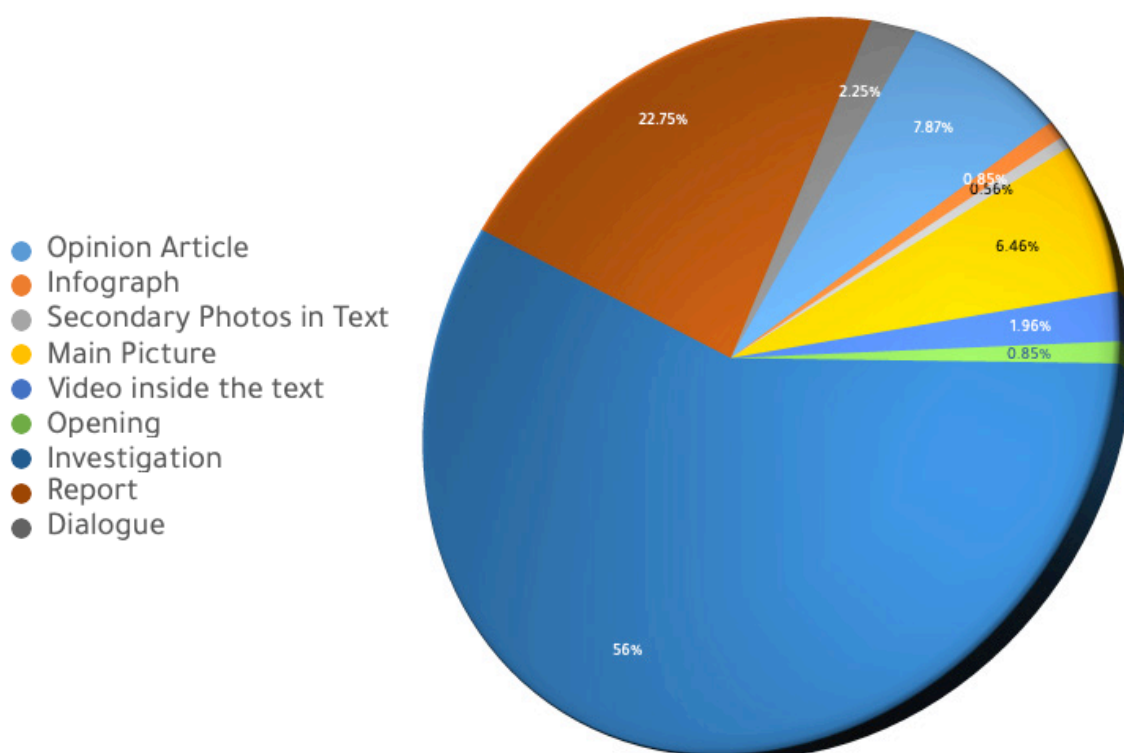
survey study (Mapping the Syrian Media: An evaluation for the active emerging outlets and institutions after 2011)³¹. As for the relatively low ratio in comparison to newspapers and news agencies, it can be ascribed to the diversity of content within websites, and to the fact that most websites in Syria are privately owned, as the aforementioned survey has proved that privately owned websites amount to 91% of total Syrian websites, which can make room for a larger margin of more professional and less administered editorial policies compared to governmental websites. This is further affirmed by later results of the survey.

● **In terms of hate speech distribution within published media, by journalistic type, the study showed the following:**

Distribution of hate speech and violence incitement by journalistic types and their visual content was as follows (by frequency from highest to lowest):

News (60.95%), reports (20.15%), opinion articles (6.97%), the remaining percentage is distributed among other journalistic types as shown below:

Use of Hate Speech and Violence Incitement within Written Media (by Journalistic Type)



📺 **b. Hate speech in Visual Media (TV):**

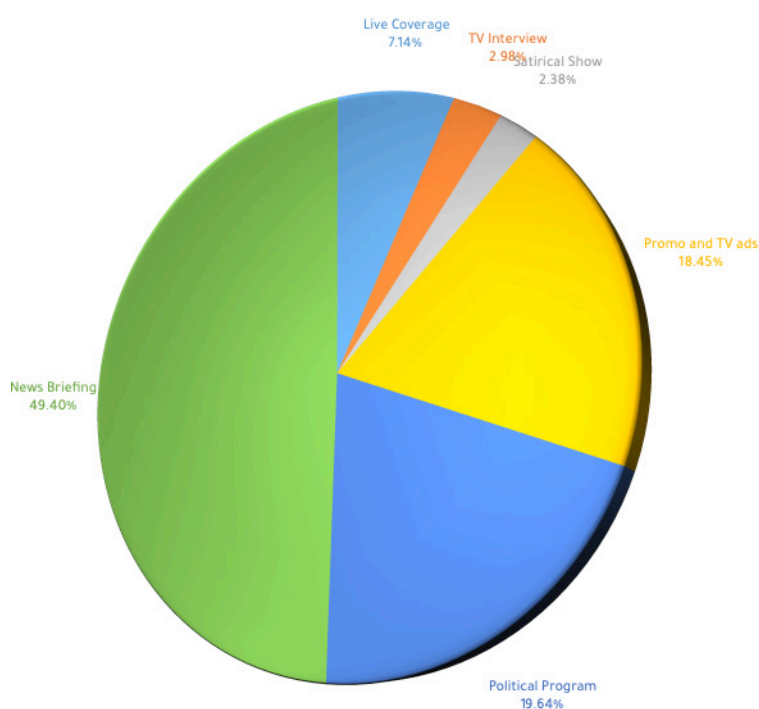
The highest percentage of hate speech use within the study sample, was in TV channels, where the percentage of hate speech and violence incitement used was (26.67%) as a quotient of the media content they provide, while their contribution percentage to the total hate speech use within the sample reached (25.93%).

The higher hate speech use percentage within TV, compared to other media types (i.e., published, radio), can be attributed to the high media coverage within TV and its focus on political content mostly, while most political parties depend on TV stations as an outlet with mass reachability and great effect on the audience, which conforms with previous study results that had proven that “Television is the most widespread and depended upon media outlet for the audience in both the government’s and the opposition’s control territories, followed, in order, by online media, published journalism and radio.”³²

● **Use of hate speech and incitement to violence within TV is distributed, by media types and their visual content, as follows:**

(in order of use frequency): news bulletins (49.40%), political shows (19.64%), TV promos (18.45%), and the remaining percentage is distributed among other types as shown in the figure below:

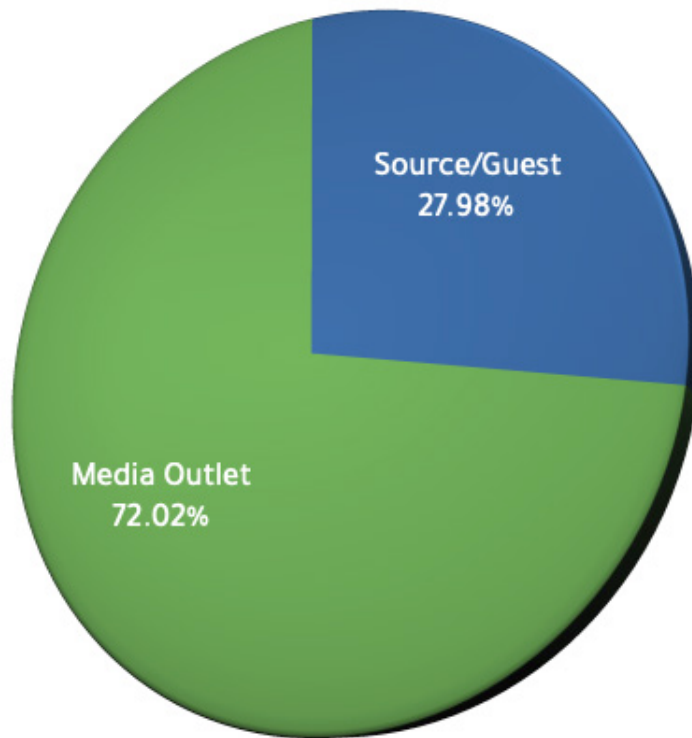
Hate Speech and violence incitement distribution within visual media, by media type



● **Distribution of spoken hate speech sources within TV:**

the percentage of hate speech use by network’s guests who are not employees in the TV network itself is (27.98%) as a percentage of the total spoken hate speech, leaving the other (72.02%) spoken by networks’ representatives (reporters, hosts) as shown below in the figure:

Distribution of Hate Speech Use By Source



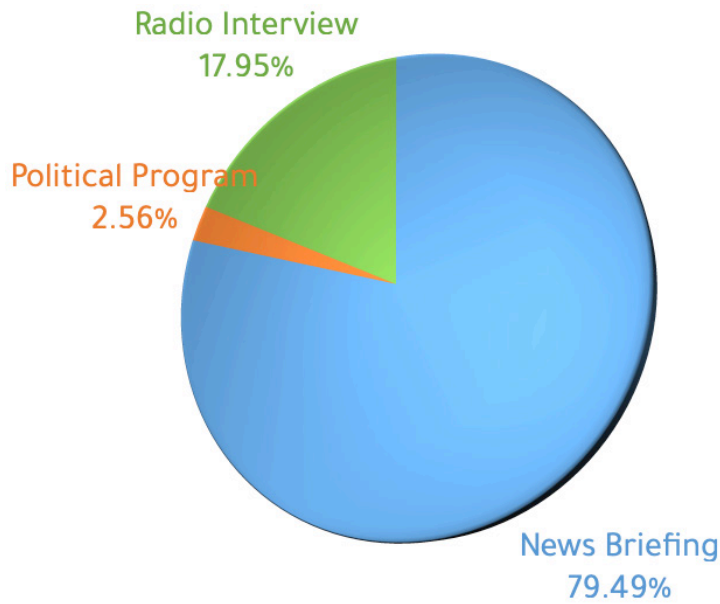
c. Hate speech in Radio

The type of media that uses hate speech and incitement to violence the least is Radio stations, with an average of (10.32%) as a percentage of total media content provided, and a contribution to the total hate speech use ratio of (12.04%) within the sample.

Results show that the percentage of hate speech by radio stations is the least compared to other types of media (published and TV), and that could be attributed to many reasons, on top of which comes the nature of the content broadcasted by radio stations, which is mainly diverse and light, in addition to the fact that most Syrian radio stations are privately owned, as private radio stations represent (75%) of the total operating radio stations in Syria³³. This is directly related to the low use of hate speech, according to later results that proved governmental media to be ahead of private media in terms of hate speech use, in addition to the low dependency of most political parties on radio stations as a message carrier for their speech, unlike written and visual media

- **The use of hate speech and incitement to violence within radio stations is distributed according to media types and their audio content as follows:** most used) News bulletins (79.49%), political programs (2.56%), radio interviews (17.95%) as shown in the figure:

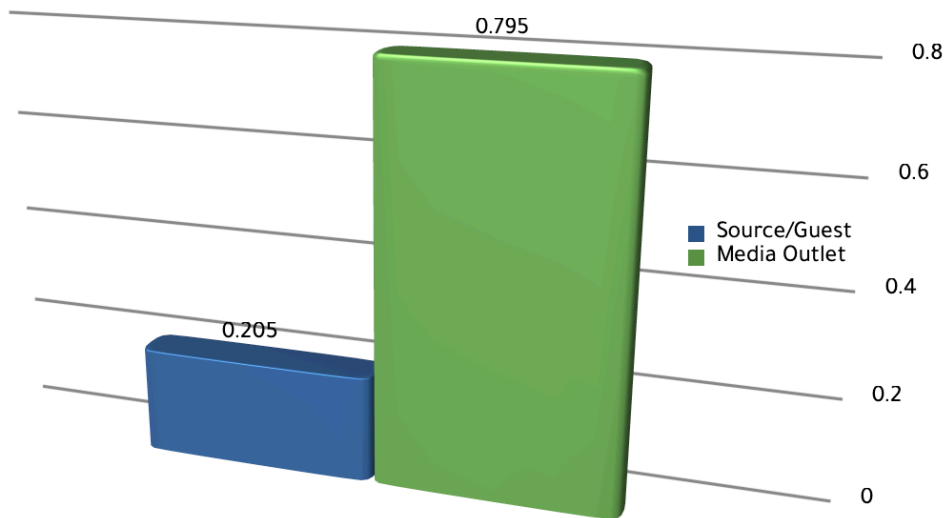
Use of Hate Speech and Violence Incitement in Audible Media by Media Type



- ▶ **In regards to the source of verbal hate speech in radio stations, the study has shown the following results:**

Percentage of hate speech use by guests who don't work in the radio station (20.51%) as a percentage of the total spoken hate speech, while (79.49%) of hate speech came from the stations' representatives (host, correspondent), as shown below:

Distribution of Hate Speech Use in Audible Media by Source

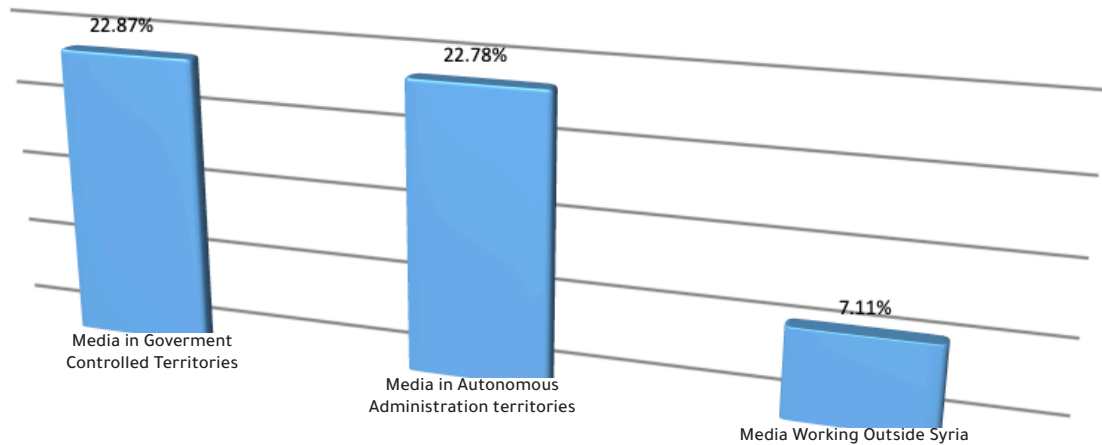


It can be shown, through the results of hate speech according to journalistic types and speech source within each media type, that hate speech and incitement to violence, in the studied Syrian media sample, might be a part of the editorial policy that the media outlets follow, the use of which they take responsibility for, where the use of hate speech and violence incitement is focused within published media in reports and news, which reflect, as media types, the editorial policy of the outlet, while they appear less frequently in opinion articles, and so is the situation with TV and Radio stations, where the use of hate speech and violence incitement was largely carried out by the network's representatives (reporters, hosts) and less so by guests.

3. Hate Speech in Syrian Media, Classified by Geographical distribution

Results of the study shown in Tables 3,4,5 show that Syrian media outlets, with different geographical distribution (operating within government controlled territories, the Autonomous Administration territories, or outside Syria), all use hate speech and incitement to violence, and that there are differences in the average of these geographical distribution's use of that speech, as shown below:

Average use of hate speech in Syrian Media by political affiliation



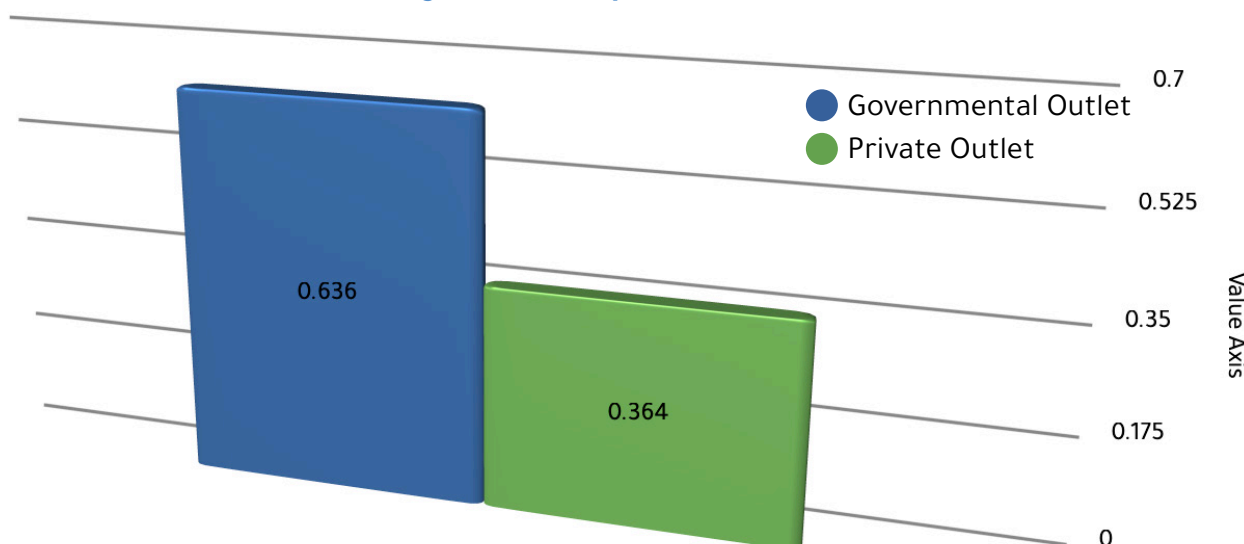
a. Hate speech in media outlets operating within government-controlled territories:

Table (3) shows that the highest average use of hate speech and violence incitement, by geographical distribution, belongs to media outlets operating within government-controlled territories, as it reached (22.87%) as a percentage of the total media content these outlets provide. Table (3) also shows that TV participated the most in hate speech and violence incitement at media outlets operating within government-controlled territories, with the contribution percentage reaching as high as (23.64%) followed by newspapers, then websites then news agencies. On the other hand, when it comes to the distribution of hate speech within media outlets operating within government-controlled territories according to the type of outlet property (private, public), governmental media outlets participate the most (63.64%) in hate speech and incitement to violence, while privately owned media participation is at (36.36%). The other participation and use ratios within regime-supporting media outlets are distributed according to the following in terms of media type:

	Newspapers	Websites	Radio	News agencies	TV	Total Ratio
Average use of hate speech	27.62%	13.33%	16.27%	26.19%	30.95%	22.87%
Percentage of total contribution to hate speech at media outlets operating within government-controlled territories	21.09%	20.36%	14.91%	20%	23.64%	100%

Table(3) -Media outlets operating within government-controlled territories

The distribution of hate speech use among media outlets operating within government-controlled territories according to ownership



It is clear from the results of media outlets operating within government-controlled territories that TV stations have the highest rates of hate speech and incitement to violence, then comes newspapers and news agencies, and less so in radio stations and websites. This result conforms with previous results of use of hate speech by media types, and it reflects how government rely heavily on TV as an effective mean to carry out the government propaganda, as it can achieve high and vast impact on the audience, especially because of the state capabilities that support it and the everlasting need for a governmental visual media outlets. And despite the state of governmental monopoly on TV broadcast, there has been a clear development of privately owned TV networks that are aligned with the government political views, with the support of businessmen or states that are involved in the Syrian conflict³⁴. The same could be said for newspapers and news agencies which have a high rate of hate speech use that reflects the dependency of political parties upon it as official and semi-official outlets for speech, while radio stations and news websites are less used. This could maybe be explained by the fact that the governmental media situation relies mostly on its official platforms, which are not included within the sample, more than it uses news websites.

On the other hand, it can be seen from the results of media outlets operating within government-controlled territories, that the percentage of governmental media contribution to the general hate speech is notably ahead of private media outlets. This can be explained first by the unification of official media outlets' speech, which raises the amount of hate speech coming out of them, and secondly, by the continuous attempts of privately-owned media outlets to adopt more professional editorial policies whilst maintaining their political stand, especially after the regression of Syrian media credibility for the Syrian audience after 2011.³⁵

b. Hate speech within media outlets operating from Autonomous Administration territories:

In second place came media outlets operating in Autonomous Administration territories media outlets. Table (4) shows that the average media use of hate speech in Autonomous Administration territories is (22.78%) of the total media content they provide. As is the case for media outlets operating from within government-controlled territories, TV contributes the most to the use of hate speech and incitement to violence within media operating from Autonomous Administration territories, where the contribution percentage reached as high as (34.32%), while the remaining use and contribution ratios are distributed within media outlets media outlets operating from Autonomous Administration territories, by media type, as follows:

	Newspapers	Websites	Radio	News agencies	TV	Total Ratio
Average use of hate speech	44.29%	7.94%	33.81%	13.57%	14.29%	22.78%
Percentage of total contribution to hate speech of media outlets operating from Autonomous Administration territories	34.32%	7.38%	26.2%	21.03%	11.07%	100%

Table(3) -media outlets operating from Autonomous Administration territories

The results of the media outlets operating in the Autonomous Administration territories confirm that the highest percentage of use of hate speech and violence incitement is concentrated in television in the first place, then by news agencies and newspapers, and a lesser percentage comes from websites and radio stations. This result is consistent with previous results of the rates of use Public hate speech according to media patterns, whereas it reflects the extent of the political parties' dependence on television as a media tool with influence and extensive reach for the public, compared to news agencies that semi-formally report the news of regions with intense rate of content, in addition to newspapers with highly concentrated political content.

On the other hand, the smaller percentage of hate speech was in radio stations, in a consistent manner with the results of the rest of the geographical areas in which the radio represented the media type that used the least use of hate speech, and this may be attributed - as explained earlier - to the nature of the light content the radio stations broadcast, which contributed directly to the reduction of hate speech

c. Hate speech within media outlets operating from outside Syria

Media outlets operating from outside Syria came third, with the least percentage of hate speech use and incitement to violence. As table (5) shows, these outlets' average use of hate speech is (7.11%) as a percentage of total media content they provide. Table (5) also shows that websites contribute with the highest percentage of hate speech and violence incitement within those media outlets, reaching (48.04%), while the other ratios are distributed among media outlets operating from outside Syria as follows:

	Newspapers	Websites	Radio	News agencies	TV	Total Ratio
Average use of hate speech	4.76%	6.75%	5.71%	11.67%	6.67%	7.11%
Percentage of total contribution to hate speech of media outlets operating from outside Syria	9.8%	16.67%	11.76%	48.04%	13.73%	100%

Table(3) -media outlets operating from outside Syria

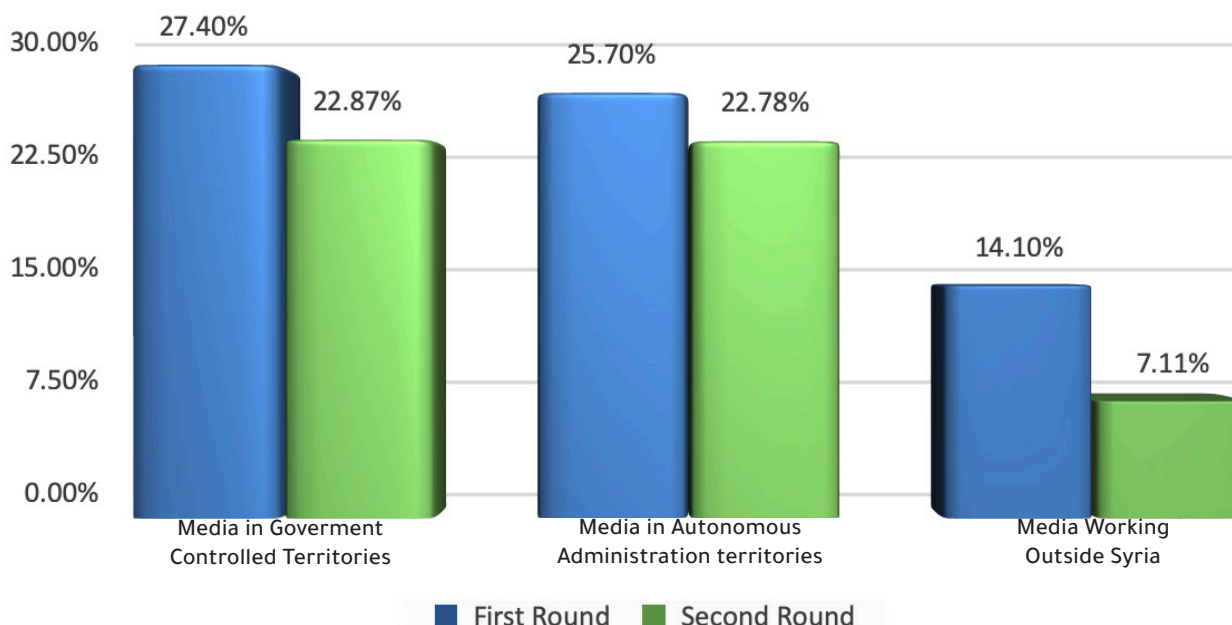
The results of media outlets operating from outside Syria show that the highest concentration of hate speech and violence incitement can be found in news websites, that have a use ratio of (11.67%), and their contribution to the total hate speech of those outlets is (48.04%), while the least percentage went to TV stations, on the contrary to the previous two geographical distributions, this can be explained in the light of two factors, the first is the absence of a central referential authority for public speech or a guiding entity for the editorial policy for media outlets operating from outside Syria, as all TV stations operate from outside Syrian territories, which frees it from all restrictions that a central authority might pose on it. The second factor relates to the closure of one TV station that operated outside of Syria and the end of its broadcast. This station had a particularly high contribution percentage to the hate speech in media outlets outside of Syria, and the visual type specifically, according to the first-round results. This called for the update of the sample and replacing the station with another one that meets the research's conditions within the current round of observation.

Generally, results show that the media's centralized decision making, and the amount of media adopted speech unification, are both factors of great importance in determining the percentage of hate speech use within media outlets of a certain geographical distribution. The order of geographical distributions by the average use of hate speech and violence incitement can be explained with the existence of central authorities that affect how media outlets operate within Syrian territories, which enforces a similar media speech for media outlets belonging to certain geographical distribution, consequently increasing the probability of high amount of hate speech use; as the existence of such central authorities means a high level of legal and security surveillance over media outlets that hinders them when trying to stray from the general path set to them by the ruling authority and narrows down their margin of freedom. This explanation is supported by the results that showed that "107 out of 162 media enterprises and outlets operating until November 2019 operate from within Syrian territories, which makes for (66%) of the total Syrian media outlets. These outlets are distributed within control territories as follows: 60 outlets operate within Syrian government control territories (56.1% of total media outlets in Syria), while 43 media outlets operate from the autonomous administration areas representing 40.2% of the total Syrian media outlets operating from within Syria, and 4 media outlets operate from military opposition territories, amounting to 3.7% of the total Syrian media outlets operating within Syria."³⁶

d. Change in hate speech use ratio, by geographical distribution

The study has found a change in the average use of hate speech regardless of geographical distribution, compared to the results of the first study (the first monitoring round), the average use of hate speech and violence incitement by Media outlets operating from outside Syria has decreased by 49.57% compared to the previous study, followed by government-controlled territories' media with a decrease of 16.53%, then the media working in autonomous administration areas with a decrease of 11.36%.

Change in Hate Speech Use Ratios by Political Affiliation



The decline in average use of hate speech by the studied media outlets can be attributed to general reasons explained earlier, related to the nature of the monitoring period and what it witnessed in terms of military operations' decline and a relative stability on different fronts, together with Syrian media outlets from all geographical distributions being busy covering COVID-19 (the coronavirus pandemic) news with a density that made it dominate the headlines instead of military and political events on many occasions. There are also special reasons for each geographical distribution, which can be summarized as follows:

- ▶ **Media in government-controlled territories:** in addition to the common and mutual reasons among all Syrian media outlets in all aforementioned geographical distributions, the relative decrease of hate speech and violence incitement in the media outlets operating from government-controlled territories might be due to the nature of monitoring period, and coinciding with the preparations for the legislative elections within government controlled territories. The elections took place on July 19, 2020³⁷, two days after the second round of observation, calling for an early dense interaction by the media outlets working in those areas, thus dominating most of their content, regardless of the media type, (i.e. election law explanation, coverage of the preparations by the election centers, candidates' electoral agendas, interviews with candidates and voters).
- ▶ **Media outlets working in autonomous administration areas:** In addition to the general situation and common reasons, the relative decrease of hate speech and violence incitement in media outlets working in autonomous administration areas can be attributed to the nature of political and military events that happened before the round of observation, and had direct impact on the speech of these outlets. A tangible decrease in hate speech towards Syrian government forces is noted during this current round of observation within media outlets working in autonomous administration areas, in comparison to the results of the previous round. This can be attributed to the mutual agreement between the autonomous administration of Syrian North & East and the Syrian government forces, which was declared on October 13th 2019³⁸, and decided that Syrian government forces return to parts of the autonomous administration territories³⁹. It was also noted during the current round of monitoring that hate speech was absent in some media outlets working in autonomous administration areas towards political entities such as "The Kurdish National Council" on the contrary of the previous round that observed hate speech aimed at the council⁴⁰. This might be explained by the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Kurdish National Council and other autonomous administration parties which ended the disagreement situation among them and took place on June 17th 2020⁴¹.
- ▶ **Media outlets working outside of Syria:** In addition to common and mutual reasons among all geographical distributions, the decrease of the average use of hate speech and violence incitement within media outlets working outside of Syria in comparison with the previous monitoring round can be attributed to many factors. One of these factors is linked

to the closure of a TV station that was part of the previous round of monitoring which demonstrated high levels of hate speech and violence incitement within media outlets working outside of Syria. This called for an update of the sample and the replacement of the TV station with another that conforms with the research's criteria during this round of monitoring. On the other hand, the low level of hate speech in media outlets working outside of Syria can be partly attributed to the efficiency and effectiveness of advocacy and partnerships supported by SCM's Observatory for Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence, after publishing the report of the first monitoring round, as part of the overall project. At the time, SCM organized a meeting with representatives of media outlets to inform them of their individual results, the overall rate of hate speech, and the vocabulary used in their media speech/content. While the awareness raising campaign and advocacy-including communicating and discussing the results with monitored media, attempted to reach all media outlets, it was not on the same level and reach with all media outlets working in autonomous administration areas and media outlets operating from government-controlled territories, both governmental and privately-owned. This was due to reasons that relate to the outlets themselves. Very few media outlets working in autonomous administration areas and media outlets operating from government-controlled territories were reached. The Observatory is looking into more effective ways and developing tools and mechanisms to enable communication and cooperation with all Syrian media outlets in all geographical areas.



4. Most Frequently Used Hate Speech Terms in Syrian Media Outlets

By gathering questionnaires' data containing hate speech and incitement to violence, the most frequently used vocabulary and phrases in different Syrian media (regardless of type: published, TV, radio) were collected through the monitoring round, and classified according to geographical distribution, as in the following tables. The context of each word was taken into account, as there was an allocated cell in the form for the media monitors to state the word together with the reason of that choice, so the words listed in the tables express the hate speech within the context they were used in.

Most frequent words	Type of speech	Target group
Terrorist organizations / Terrorists / Mercenaries of turkey / Turkish Aggression Groups / Turkish Occupation / Terrorist Gangs / ISISers "Dae'sh" / Agents / Erdogan Mercenaries / Takfirist Terrorist Gangs Armed / Takfirist Factions / Terrorist Factions / Method Brotherhoods / Armed Groups / Erdogan Terrorists. Anti-terrorism / Defeating Terrorism / Eliminating Terrorism / War on Terrorism / (referring to the military operations of the Syrian government forces against the military opposition groups)	Stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence,	Military group (Syrian opposition factions)
Terrorists / terrorists and their motivators / agents / mercenaries / implementers of hostile countries' agendas.	Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence, accusations without evidence	Political group (Syrian political opposition)

US Occupation Groups / PYD Militia / Militias SDF / agents / agents of the US occupation / separatist militias.	Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence.	Military group (Syrian Democratic Forces, SDF)
Agendas of hostile states / politicized and deformed reports / mercenaries / agents / economic terrorism (referring to the Caesar Act and the groups that pushed it)	Incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence, accusations without evidence.	Civilian groups (civilian opposition groups and entities)

Table (6): Most frequent hate speech and incitement to violence in the media of government-controlled territories

Most frequent words	Type of speech	Target group
Mercenaries of the Turkish occupation/mercenaries/ Turkish aggression groups/ ISIS/ Terrorists/ Turkish occupation/ terrorist factions/ terrorist organizations/ Ottoman Entry Groups/ Terrorist Factions/ Colonialism / Terrorist Actions.	Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence.	Military group (Syrian opposition factions)
Hostage to foreign agendas, terrorists, corrupter brotherhood, mercenaries	Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence.	Political group (Syrian political opposition)
Settlers/ occupation/ occupied areas: (in reference to the displaced persons in Eastern Ghouta and other Syrian areas, who were forcibly displaced to Afrin in the northern countryside of Aleppo)	Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence.	Civilian group (residents of the area)
Syrian Kurdistan / Rojava: (referring to the northeastern regions of Syria), where the Kurdish component resides with many ethnic components, and it was used in the context of monopolizing those areas and attributing them to one ethnic component without others	Discrimination	Ethnic groups (Syrian ethnic components)

Table (7): Most frequent hate speech and incitement to violence in the media outlets working in autonomous administration areas

Most frequent words	Type of speech	Target group
<p>Shabbiha/ Sectarian Militia / Assad Militia / The Regime Militia / The Assad Army/ The Nazi Regime / The Army of Crime /Mercenaries/ Shiite militias: (in reference to the foreign military groups supported by Iran, which is a realistic description in itself, by their slogans, banners and the declared goal of their entry, but the word “Shiite” at the same time is considered a general description that may irritate the Syrian sects with Shiite roots, and have no relationship with those groups, that may cause sectarian mobilization against them) Palestinian militia: (referring to Palestinian factions that fight for the Syrian government forces, to give them a general description that refers to all Palestinians and makes them sensitive)</p>	<p>Stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence,</p>	<p>Military group (Syrian forces and their allies)</p>
<p>Al-Assad Institutions / Al-Assad Ambassador / Parliamentary Choir / Ruling League / The ruling gang / Pawns / Emirate’s advocacy and burnishing</p>	<p>Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge.</p>	<p>Political group (Syrian government)</p>
<p>Kurdish self-administration: (referring to the autonomous Administration that consists of several Syrian components, which officially calls itself: The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria. It was used in the context of distinguishing it and limiting it to a single ethnic component)/Kurdish Units / SDF militias / Secessionist parties / PKK militias/ PYD militias / Ambitious Secessionists / mercenaries / terrorists.</p>	<p>Stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence,</p>	<p>Military group (Syrian Democratic Forces, SDF)</p>

<p>In Al-Assad Bosom/ regime-areas: (in reference to stigmatization of geographic areas controlled by government forces)/ 'Shabbiha': refers to civilian groups and organizations who work with the government. 'Shabbiha' families: (referring to the families whose sons fight for government forces)</p>	<p>Stigmatization, incitement to hostility and grudge, incitement to and justification of violence,</p>	<p>Civilian group (within the areas of Syrian government control)</p>
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Table(8): Most frequent hate speech and incitement to violence in the media outlets working outside Syria

By exploring the most frequently used hate speech and terms inciting violence words by Syrian media outlets within the study scope, and according to geographical distribution, SCM found out the following:

- a. Most frequently used hate terms in Syrian media outlets under study, and the groups they targeted, reflected the viewpoint of each party in the conflict and their own narrative about the events taking place in Syria, and their view of the total picture and local constitutes that add up to it.
- b. Most frequently used hate speech terms in Syrian media outlets, and the types of hate speech used in them, reflect the relative and dissimilar absence of objectiveness in the media and journalistic take on the Syrian events. Objectiveness doesn't necessarily mean complete relinquishment of any political stance, as much as it means following professional rules and journalistic work ethics.
- c. No great change was noticed in hate speech vocabulary used by media outlets in each geographical distribution, but some change in targeted groups of some media outlets belonging to certain geographical distributions was noted, compared by the previous round. This is due to political conditions and reasons that were explained earlier, which emphasizes the assumption of hate speech being affected by the nature of the political conditions, not just the military ones, whether that being in the shape of increase or decrease.
- d. By exploring the groups targeted by hate speech and violence incitement within studied media outlets, it can be noted that hate speech is not excluded in many occasions on political and militant groups, but rather extends to civilian groups affiliated, unwillingly, to the conflict parties, which indicates a transition of this speech's consequences to new, more dangerous levels.
- e. The second round of monitoring did not include any use of vocabulary that discriminates any women or has any implications of exclusion or restriction based on gender with an impact or an aim to weaken or disallow the recognition of women and

their access to and practice of their full rights in any Syrian media outlet included in the study, but it should be noted that its absence in this current round doesn't mean it doesn't exist at all.

◀ f. Most frequently used hate words in Syrian media outlets under study, and the groups they targeted, reflect different media outlets' use of various types of hate speech in variable rates. This includes stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to hatred and animosity, justification of and incitement to violence, and random unjustified or unaccounted for accusations, which points to the multiplicity of the aims of this speech and the variety of its uses despite the low percentage of its use.

◀ g. In addition to the nature of the Syrian conflict and the division of media outlets' speech among its parties, it can be seen from the nature of most frequently used hate speech vocabulary that hate speech in Syrian media outlets is affected by two factors: The first is ideological (national, religious), and is clearly evident in some hate vocabulary and the groups targeted by it. The second factor is linked to regional and international interventions, which seems deeply effective in the formulation of hate speech that is affected by the stances of states supporting and opposing each party. Some hate speech targeting international or regional forces active in the Syrian file is first directed towards the local parties they support, and vice versa, which reflects how deeply the international and regional intervention in Syria impacts the local scene, and therefore the nature of hate speech and incitement to violence used by some Syrian media outlets.

In summary, in light of the second round of monitoring hate speech and incitement to violence and the results within the studied sample, it has been found that hate speech by Syrian media outlets takes one of two main shapes: The first is represented by speech that targets political and militant groups of each party in the conflict. Despite its high density and dominance over the most part of hate speech in the sample, its effect can be considered temporal and short-term, and its existence and amount rely on the changing political and military circumstances. The second shape is represented by speech that targets civilian groups by connecting them to military groups, which, despite its low percentage in comparison to the first, exists and is more dangerous and has long-term effects surpassing political and military circumstances to more dangerous levels, where this speech might consolidate animosity and hatred in the minds of Syrian recipients if the military conflict continues for several more years, which can contribute to the inflammation of ethnic or religious conflict after the end of political and military conflicts.



Fifteenth: Recommendations

Practicing hate speech and incitement to violence in the case of a complicated and multifaceted conflict, such as the Syrian context, is considered a complex and thorny matter that requires a collaboration amongst all stakeholders to reach a common agreement based on mutual accumulative efforts to avoid the risks resulting from the spread of such phenomenon and its potential impact on the long run. Based on the findings of the study, the Hate Speech Observatory/SCM recommend the following:

1. On the level of Syrian media:

The aim of this report, by the Hate Speech Observatory of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, is to shed light on the use of hate speech and incitement to violence by Syrian media outlets, and reveal the dangers that follow the spread of such speech because of its long-term implications. It also aims at pointing out that countering this type of speech and content consequently contributes to the development of the Syrian media. Therefore, SCM calls on Syrian media to reflect on the results of this study and positively engage with the Observatory to establish a path of sustainable partnership, with the aim of encountering hate speech and fostering a professional and ethical practice.

2. On the level of supporting parties:

- a. The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) recommends that all parties supporting Syrian media outlets depend on the results of this report as a basis for developing and designing their programmes to reduce hate speech and incitement to violence within Syrian media, and to intensify their efforts of raising awareness towards the dangers of this type of speech.
- b. The organization of training workshops, especially for journalists who work in Syrian media outlets as editors or editors-in-chief, to raise their awareness towards the dangers, impact, and ways to avoid this type of speech, and to encourage them towards the formulation of unified journalistic charters, that help reduce the level of hate speech in Syrian media as a whole.

3. On the research level:

- a. This study contributes to the establishment of a new research field in Syrian media studies, one that could be built upon to support studies and academic research in this field. This can be enhanced in many aspects, including the study of hate speech and incitement to violence in social media, and the study of hate speech and its impact on public opinion leaders. Another important area for further study is the monitoring of

hate speech and discrimination against women in media content, whether by media outlets or in social media. While the current study did not detect any such speech within the current round of observation, this does not mean that it does not exist. And finally, another important aspect in relevance to this study is the interaction of media outlets with audience's comments, especially when it includes hate speech and direct incitement to violence. This necessitates laying out clear mechanisms to administer and treat these comments.

- b. Exporting the glossary of the most frequently used hate vocabulary in Syrian media, which the study has compiled, and develop it into a thesaurus of some sort, providing professional alternative terms for media to use. This should be done in coordination with Syrian media outlets, together with societies and institutions representing Syrian journalists, which could also help formulate editorial policies to effectively counter hate speech.



Sixteenth: Study Appendices

1. Appendix (1): Hate Speech (Concepts and Legislations)

It was not very easy to reach a clear concept of hate speech, in order to determine a procedural definition of this speech that is aligned to the goals of the SCM UNESCO project supporting the Observatory of Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence, seeing as, as stated in the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, “there is no international legal definition of hate speech, and the characterization of what is ‘hateful is controversial and disputed”. The UN SPA nevertheless provides the following definition “the term hate speech is understood as any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor.

In this context, UNESCO defends the position that “the free flow of information should always be the norm. Counter-speech is generally preferable to suppression of speech. And any response that limits speech needs to be very carefully weighed to ensure that this remains wholly exceptional, and that legitimate robust debate is not curtailed.” Also, the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression defends the right of people and media enterprises to

express, which was shown in numerous previous publications that documented violations on this freedom.

The potential contradiction between freedom of expression and incitement to violence or hate remained a concern that disturbed the international legislature until Article (19) organization, concerned with reinforcing freedom of expression, introduced the “Camden principles” in the year 2009 as an advanced explanation that avoids the possible contradiction between freedom of speech, and hate speech and incitement to violence.

ARTICLE 19’s “Camden principles” explain the terms ‘hatred’ and ‘hostility’ as referring to “intense and irrational emotions of opprobrium, enmity and detestation towards the target group”. As for the term ‘advocacy’ to violence or hatred, according to “Camden principles”, is to be understood as “requiring an intention to promote hatred publicly towards the target group”. And the term ‘incitement’ indicates “statements about national, racial or religious groups which create an imminent risk of discrimination, hostility or violence against persons belonging to those groups”. The United Nations Human Rights Council determines that some hate speech require criminal prosecution, and others require following up through civil cases, while some hate speech remains worrying.

In the Syrian context, Article (12) of the Syrian media law published by the legislative decree no. 108 of the year 2011 bans all media outlets from publishing any content that can act to affect “national unity and national security or any offence to heavenly religions and religious beliefs or provoking congregational and sectarian conflicts, or anything that could incite crimes and acts of violence and terrorism or incitement of hatred and racism”. Syrian law punishes, according to the penal code, anyone who commits an act of defamation or calumny by means of a media outlet, with a fine that ranges between 200,000 and 1 million Syrian pounds. Additionally, article No.(311) of the Code of Civil Procedure, and legislative decree No. (17) of the year 2012, (including 36 articles) relate to the application of communication law on the cyber network and fighting informational crime. It aims to organize communication on the network, fighting electronic crimes, and declaring the responsibilities of service providers on informational networks, including internet and cellular phone services, and describes crimes related to the use of information networks. It also sets punitive sanctions on those who commit information crimes, as a decision was made in 2018 to establish special courts for this type of crimes, and that they be at all levels of trials starting from compromise and initial courts all the way to courts of review, including a court for information crimes. As much as these legislations seem designed to administer the use of hate speech and incitement to violence within media outlets, they might also be politically employed to restrict freedom of expression and oppress opinions, especially opposing ones, and that is mainly because of the use of general undetermined terms such as (national unity, national security, country’s security, etc.).

On the other hand, there is no legal ban on incitement to hatred in most state laws in the

world. This point was mentioned by working groups of experts standing up to incitement to hate speech which the United Nations Commission on Human Rights organized all over the world in 2011. The “Rabat Plan of Action” indicated that the dominant practices used in national legislations often; either lack trials against real incitement advocates, or use anti-hate legislations to create tighter restrictions against minorities under the cover of national incitement laws. The “Rabat Plan of Action” also indicated the inefficiency of national legislations in most countries in handling the different forms of hate speech, making the term apply only to religious or racial discrimination, or that these laws are often used selectively in the benefit of the state. The same was mentioned in the report “Countering Online Hate Speech” published by UNESCO in 2015, on how “hate speech continues largely to be used in everyday discourse as a generic term, mixing concrete threats to individuals’ and groups’ security with cases in which people may be simply venting their anger against authority.”

Recently, a number of Arab states started suggesting and making legislations that are supposed to help restrict hate speech; such as the presidential decree of United Arab Emirates number (2) in the year 2015 relating to discrimination and hatred, which “incriminates actions related to disdain of religions and their sacred things, counters all types of discrimination, and rejects hate speech through all tools and ways of expression”. Additionally, in Egypt, Al-Azhar muftis proposed a draft law in July 2017 to counter hatred and violence in the name of religion, and in Algeria, the Ministry of Justice proposed a bill to prevent discrimination and hate speech.

Media observation reports conducted in many Arab countries show that hate speech in the region’s media has been increasing since the beginning of the political movement in 2011 and the violent response from some ruling regimes, which contributed to the creation of bloody conflicts that were further complicated by the sectarian and tribal nature of Arabic societies, in addition to regional and international interventions. For example, Tunisian published media observation reports showed, through the “Arab Group of Media Observation” in the year 2013, that the hate speech spread ratio within Arabic-speaking newspapers reached (90.3%) and (13%) of observed hate speech included direct or implied calls to violence. In Yemen, incitement (86.3%) took the lead in the editorial space observed by “National Institution of Development and Human Rights” within the year 2013. In the same year, the study “TV Outlets and Ethical Criteria”, conducted by the “Arab Network of Media Support” on a sample of Egyptian TV networks showed that all sample participants made grave professional mistakes that amount to the level of hate speech and incitement to violence advocacy.

2. Appendix (2): Study Sample Selection Criteria

The project specializes in the study of a sample consisting of 24 media outlets that represent different forms of Syrian media types. The sample was selected according to the following criteria:

a. Syrian identity: the media outlet must be Syrian, as an administration and targeted audience and content related to the Syrian issues, but the headquarters does not necessarily have to be in Syria.

b. Representation: the sample is selected on the basis of its media representation of dissimilar orientations that are present within the Syrian community during the time of the conflict.

c. contrast: it means the difference between sample participants in terms of:

- Type of media outlet: the sample includes specific media outlets in terms of outlet type (newspapers, radio stations, TV networks, news websites, news agencies).
- Media content: the sample includes all different types of journalism provided by the selected media outlets (report, news, opinion article, investigation, caricature, a column, talk shows, on the field coverage).
- Language: Arabic and Kurdish.

d. Ratings and reach counts: ratings is one of the main criteria that were used to guide the selection of the research sample of all media outlets, especially in times of unprecedented media race that the Syrian media space is witnessing, and a media explosion of outlets that were hard to keep up with. A group of indicators to confirm these outlets would reach a sufficient amount of Syrian audience and that it watches and interacts with, such as:

- Statistical indicators: (visits count, ratings, interaction average, statistical websites classification).
- Studies and research and published media reports.
- Media experts' candidacies.

e. The monitored sample excludes these types of media outlets:

- Representatives of political parties or religious groups, that officially and publicly declare their belonging to a certain party or a religious group or a certain military part through their official identifiers.
- Specialized in one topic (such as art, medicine and technology)
- Those that no recorded copy of their content could be accessed, because of how hard it would become to investigate and review the observations.
- In case the enterprise had more than one outlet (website, radio, TV), only one is chosen as a representative of the foundation's policy and its editorial guideline.

3. Appendix (3): Monitoring Questionnaire

The research tool is represented in an online questionnaire, which was developed and designed according to the research requirements and depending on the questionnaire from the last round of monitoring and methodic resemblances of similar projects in other countries, and processing them with programs based on the nature of media outlets of all types (published/written, TV and radio). Monitoring questionnaire was assigned to each media type as follows:

1. Published Media: The journalistic content of published media outlets was monitored using two monitoring questionnaires for each article, the first specializes in monitoring hate words that were used in the text with specifying the type of hate speech used and the targeted group by that speech, and the second relates to monitoring the visual content that came along with the press articles or what is published in the media outlet (pictures, multimedia, caricature) with a specification of the type of speech used within the visual content and the targeted group.

Questionnaire Link: <https://cutt.us/zuiHg>

Visual Media (TV): TV broadcast was monitoring using three questionnaires for each hour of broadcast, the first of which is about the hate words spoken during the broadcast while specifying the type of hate speech that the word represents together with the speech's targeted group; the second relates to visual content (visual effects and video) during the broadcast whilst specifying the type of hate speech that the visual content represents and what group it targets; and the third is about monitoring the body language and speakers' nods during the broadcast while specifying the type of speech that the body language manifests and the groups targeted by the speech.

Questionnaire Link: <https://cutt.us/lpdWb>

Radio: Radio broadcast was monitored using three questionnaires for each hour of broadcast, the first is about hate words spoken during the broadcast while specifying the type of hate speech that the word or phrase it represents, and the groups that are targeted by the speech; the second is about audible content (music and audio effects) during the broadcast whilst specifying the type of hate speech they represent and the targeted group of the speech; and the third concerns monitoring the tone and audio variance of the speaker during broadcast, while specifying the type of speech that these represent and who is targeted by that speech.

Questionnaire link: <https://cutt.us/np8RH>



References

- 1- United Nations [Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech](#)
- 2- To learn more about the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Incitement to Racial and Religious Hatred and Promoting Tolerance), issued in 2006, see the following [link](https://cutt.us/NsHKU): <https://cutt.us/NsHKU>
- 3- It is a multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 2200 of December 16, 1966, and Came into effect on March 23, 1976. For the articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, see the following [link](#)
- 4- It is a treaty sponsored by the United Nations and regarded as the third edition of the human rights, and it aims to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. It was adopted by General Assembly Resolution 2106 of December 21, 1965, which came into effect on January 4, 1969. For more information on the articles of the convention, see the following [link](#)
- 5- UNESCO, Legal standards on freedom of expression: [toolkit for the judiciary in Africa](#)
- 6- The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, as part of its defense of freedom of expression for people and institutions, issued several publications, such as the case of "Advertising and Press Freedoms - Syria 2008-2009 the silence of the pens and the noise of censorship". the case of "Media and Freedom of Expression in Syria 2006" the case of "Advertising and Freedom of Expression, Syria 2007 - A Year of Iron Censorship and Media Against Citizenship, and The State of Media and Press Freedoms in Syria 2010-2011."
- 7- [responding to the recent appeal by the UN Special Envoy for Syria](#)
- 8- UNESCO, Legal standards on freedom of expression: [toolkit for the judiciary in Africa](#)
- 9- For more on the Camden Principles, see Appendix No. 1.
- 10- The Rabat Plan of Action was adopted at a meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Office in Rabat, Morocco, in October 2012. The Rabat meeting aimed to complete discussions and recommendations that have taken place since 2011 in four regional workshops to undertake an assessment, at the national and regional levels, of legislative patterns, judicial practices, and public policies that related to the issue of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred. For more about the plan, see the following [link](#)
- 11- To view the study: Hate speech and incitement to violence in the Syrian media (first monitoring round), see the following [link](#)
- 12- Syrian Media: a map of the effective outlets and an assessment of the institutional reality for emerging ones after 2011, The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, on 5 May 2020, is available at the following [link](#)
- 13- Ahmed Ben Morsli (2005), Curricula for Scientific Research in the Sciences of Media and Communication, Algeria: Office of University Publications, p170.
- 14- See appendix No. (2), criteria for selecting the study sample.
- 15- See appendix no. (3), monitoring form.
- 16- The last reference, p 165.
- 17- [Syria Media Map](#), Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2013
- 18- [Syria Audience Research 2016](#), Free Press Unlimited, 2016
- 19- Lorenzo Trombetta, [Syria-Media Landscape, Media Landscapes](#), 2018
- 20- Antoun Issa, [Syria's New Media Landscape. Independent Media Born out of War](#), Middle East Institute, December 2016.
- 21- For example, but not limited to, "Enab Baladi" newspaper is classified in the category of neutral means, even though the newspaper's slogan is "From the vine of the revolution."
- 22- For more information on the criteria for judging the expression of persons or organizations whether it carries hate speech or incitement to violence, refer to the section on procedural definitions within this study, P 16.
- 23- See appendix No. (2), criteria for selecting the study sample.
- 24- The research tool consisted of a monitoring form designed according to its requirements, and based on the methodological approach adopted by:
 - *The report "Monitoring hate speech in the Tunisian written press" issued by the Media Center in Africa and the Middle East (2013). It mainly used the quantitative approach and added a qualitative aspect to explain the quantity, through a monitoring form that includes all the variables that the monitors record. And includes a dedicated space to record observations that can't be measured and monitored with quantitative tools, so that qualitative monitoring completes the statistics and data resulting from measuring the occurrences mentioned in the texts if they include vocabulary classified as hate speech and incitement to violence.
 - *The report "Criminal Maspero" issued by the Association for

Freedom of Thought and Expression in Egypt, for monitoring 270 minutes of live broadcasting and news coverage on official television in 2011. The reason for focusing on that report is its analysis of the content of the monitored material in terms of incitement to violence and sectarianism, which makes it intersect in some points with the “Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression” project, which monitors hate speech and incitement to violence. The methodology of the two projects is similar in the combined analysis of some quantitative and qualitative indicators of the media material. While the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression project excludes the written transcription of news material, to increase the volume of the material monitored more than what it covered “criminal Maspero”, which requires a huge team that employs all its capabilities for unloading, which represents a burden in effort, cost and time.

*Monitoring the performance of the Syrian media in covering the presidential referendum: The previous experiences of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression between (2007–2016) in media monitoring provided a good scientific basis for the formulation of the methodology of this project. In 2007, the Center provided a monitoring process of the performance of the Syrian media in covering the presidential referendum, and in the same year, the center issued a report on the performance of the Syrian media during the legislative elections period.

25- For more about the agreement, see the following [link](#)

26- Syrian Media: A map of effective means and an assessment of the institutional reality emerging from it after 2011, Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, May 5, 2020, available [here](#)

27- The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression launched the results of the first monitoring round on 01 March 2020, for information see [here](#)

28- How to calculate the rate of change in hate speech: Average rate of hate speech use in the first round - Average rate of hate speech use in the second round / Average rate of hate speech use in the first round.

29- The map of military influence for August 2015 showed the stability of control ratios between the parties to the Syrian conflict since last February. The opposition factions maintained their control ratio of 10.98%, the government also maintained 63.38% of the country, and 25.64% of the country remained under the control of the Syrian Democratic Forces, and for the first time since 2000 there has been no change in the military contact lines in Syria for a continuous period of 6 months. The stability of the demarcation lines for 6 months since the beginning of the Syrian conflict is due to a series of external and internal factors, for more see: Ibrahim Hamidi, the borders of the three spheres of influence deepen in Syria within 6 months: due to regional international understandings, the economic crisis in Damascus, and Corona virus, Al-Sharq al-Awsat newspaper, September 6, 2010, available at the following [link](#)

30- See the results of a study: media cooperation and translation and global forum for media development, free press unlimited, Syria audience research, 2016, available [here](#)

31- Syrian Media: Mapping of Effective Outlets and Institutional Reality Evaluation of Those That Emerged after 2011), Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, May 5th 2020, available [here](#)

32- See the results of the study: Syria Audience Research, 2016, Free Press Unlimited, Media cooperation and translation and Global forum for media development, available [here](#)

33- Syrian Media: Mapping of Effective Outlets and Institutional Reality Evaluation of Those That Emerged after 2011), Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, May 5th 2020, available [here](#)

34- Syrian Media: Mapping of Effective Outlets and Institutional Reality Evaluation of Those That Emerged after 2011). Previously mentioned reference.

35- Previous Reference.

36- Syrian Media: Mapping of Effective Outlets and Institutional Reality Evaluation of Those That Emerged after 2011). Previously mentioned.

37- After the extension... voters continue to cast their ballots in Damascus centers), SANA, July 19th, 2020, available [here](#).

38- A statement for public opinion): “An agreement was reached with the Syrian government for the Syrian Army to enter and spread along the Syrian/Turkish borders to assist Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to repel this assault, this agreement allows for an opportunity to liberate the rest of Syrian lands and cities occupied by Turkish Army like Afrin and the rest of Syrian cities and towns”. For more on this memorandum of agreement between the two parties and the official statement of the declaration of the agreement published by the autonomous North-Eastern Syria Administration under the title: A statement for public opinion, see following links: <https://cutt.us/tdbMI> , <https://cutt.us/5PYF7> .

39- “ the agreement states the deployment of Syrian border patrol “Hajjanah” along the borders starting from Manbij and Arima on eastern Aleppo suburbs west of Euphrates, passing through Ain Al-Arab/Koubani, and the cities of towns of Al-Jazeera; most prominent of which are Derbaseiyah and Amouda, up to Derick and the border pass at Simalka-Bishkhabour of Iraq Kurdistan” for more, see Kamal Sheikho, – A military agreement between “SDF” and Syrian Army.. with a Russian sponsorship), Asharq Al-Awsat Newspaper Website, December 5th 2019, available [here](#)

40- The results of the study: Hate Speech and Incitement of Violence in Syrian Media (First Observation Round)) are available [here](#)

41- “National Kurdish unity parties and the National Kurdish Council agreed upon a mutual political view that is confiding, and upon initial understandings on the end of the first stage of negotiations of Kurdish line unity, as the leader of SDF, Mazloum Abdy, has welcomed the initial agreement between the two parties, and had launched the initiative of unifying the Kurdish line late October last year, calling for the democratic unity party and the National Kurdish Council to enter dialogues to achieve this goal”, for more about the agreement, see Declaration of initial understanding between the Kurdish Council and National Unity Parties”, Arta FM Radio Station Website, June 17th 2020, available [here](#)

42- [Link](#)

43- On its mission to defend people’s and institutions’ freedom of expression, the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression has published a set of publications that include: The case of “Advertisement and journalistic freedoms, Syria 2008-2009, the silence of pens and the noise of supervision, the case of “Media and freedom of expression in Syria 2006”, the case of “Advertisement and freedom of expression: Syria 2007-a year of strict (literally: iron) supervision, and “Media Against Citizenship: the Situation of Media and Journalistic Freedoms in Syria in the years 2010-2011



المركز السوري للإعلام وحرية التعبير

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