



ESG Insights for Corporate India

ESG Transparency

of NSE 600 companies

A report on Environment, Social and
Governance disclosures by
NSE 600 companies

April 2022

Contents

About Us	3
Introduction.....	4
Overview of Transparency Scores	5
ESG transparency between manufacturing and service sector	5
Transparency across Market Capitalisation	6
Transparency across Industries – Key Issues.....	7
Textiles & Wearing Apparels Industry	7
Oil & Refinery Industry	9
Chemical Industry.....	11
Pharmaceuticals.....	13
Metal Industry.....	15
Automobile Industry.....	17
Power Industry	19
Real Estate Industry.....	21
Civil Engineering Industry	23
Information Technology (IT) Industry	25
Financial service activities (Banking) Industry	27
Financial service activities (NBFCs) Industry	29
Conclusion	31
Annexure	32

About Us

ESG Risk Assessments and Insights (ESGRisk.ai), is a wholly owned subsidiary of Acuité Ratings & Research Limited and is India's first ESG rating company with an India specific assessment framework.

ESGRisk.ai's rating, second party opinions and gap assessment is an objective, independent and unbiased opinion on a company's ability to mitigate future/emerging risks associated with Environment, Social, and Governance issues that have material financial impact based on publicly available data.

To actively contribute to and be aligned with the worldwide ESG movement and policy dialogue, we are signatories of various global frameworks. Being a member of the GRI community, ESGRisk.ai actively contributes to advancing sustainability reporting. Acuité Ratings & Research Ltd together with ESGRisk.ai are also signatories to the UN Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI). Moreover, Acuité is the first credit rating agency from India to become a signatory of PRI's ESG in Credit Risk and Ratings Statement to enhance the systematic and transparent consideration of financial material ESG factors in the assessment of creditworthiness.

Authors

Sankar Chakraborti
Chairman – ESGRisk.ai &
Group CEO – Acuité

Prosenjit Ghosh
Chief Operating Officer –
ESGRisk.ai

Devshree Sarfare
Assistant Manager

Meet Davda
Analyst

[For General Inquiries](#)
Reach out to us at
info@ESGRisk.ai or

visit - <https://esgrisk.ai/>

Introduction

With the growing importance of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues, the stakeholders and business priorities demand ESG disclosures. Not only are customers, investors, and other stakeholders interested in understanding ESG risks and benefits, but organizations are also looking into their strengths and shortcomings to take effective action. Companies are narrating their ESG stories with the help of reporting standards and sustainability frameworks, making disclosures an important tool.

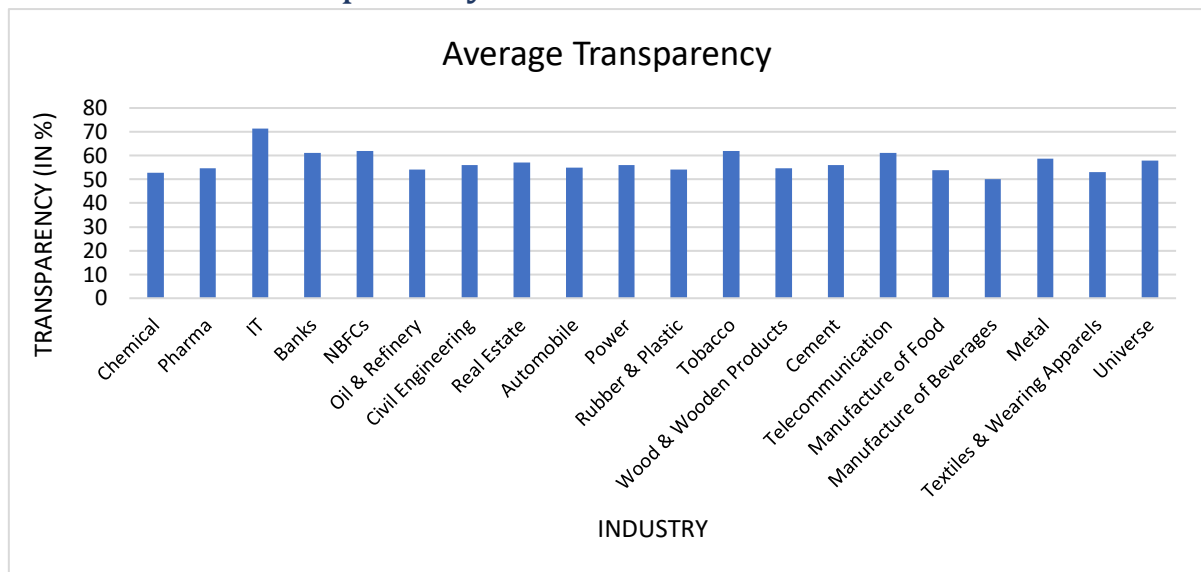
Transparency becoming more and more important in the ESG journey, many companies have started to disclose their ESG practices in business operations via sustainability reports, ESG reports, BRR disclosures, adoption of SDG targets, etc. Being transparent about the various risks & opportunities that the industry faces in terms of ESG parameters will not only be helpful to the companies of that industry but help investors, government, regulatory bodies, customers, employees, and the community. Transparency is becoming increasingly important for ESG activism.

ESGRisk.ai has developed ESG Ratings and Assessment to help investors understand a company's ESG performance and link it to the investor's portfolio risk. Based on the company's disclosure of indicators, ESGRisk.ai computes and publishes the transparency scores for overall disclosures made by an organization on their ESG aspects.

The following paper will give you an insight into the level of transparency reporting on material ESG issues by various industries including companies from NSE 600. This report will help the readers in understanding the comparison between transparency reporting by manufacturing vs. service sector, comparison between transparency reporting by Nifty 50, NSE 100, NSE 200, and NSE 200 & above companies, and industry analysis on transparency of individual key issues from all three E, S, & G category, assessed by ESGRisk.ai based on the disclosures provided by the companies of the industry on the material risks.

According to ESGRisk.ai, transparency differs across the environment, social and governance pillars. The highest level of transparency is observed in the governance category. Moreover, there is a significant disclosure in the material issue of committee functioning where 89% of the industries have a 100% level of transparency reporting.

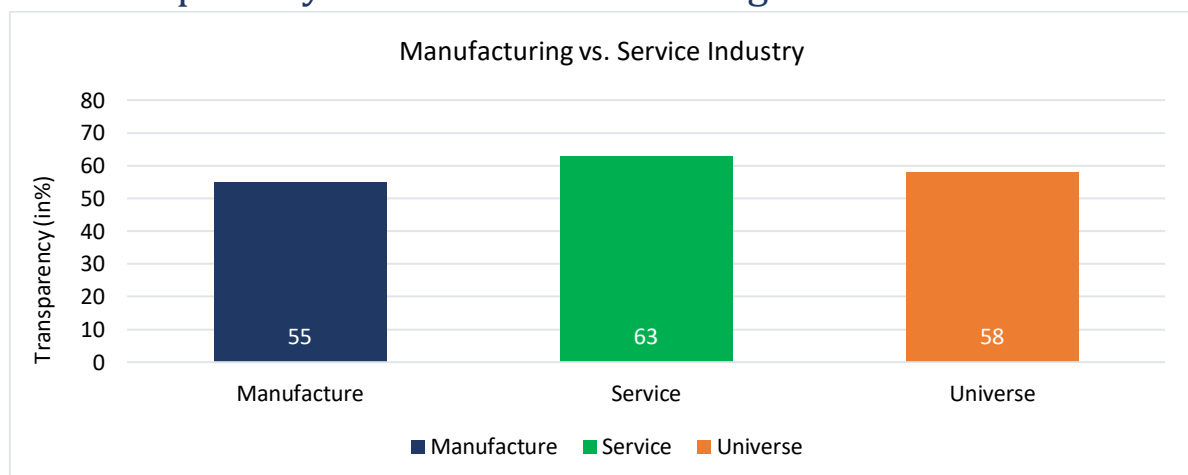
Overview of Transparency Scores



Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

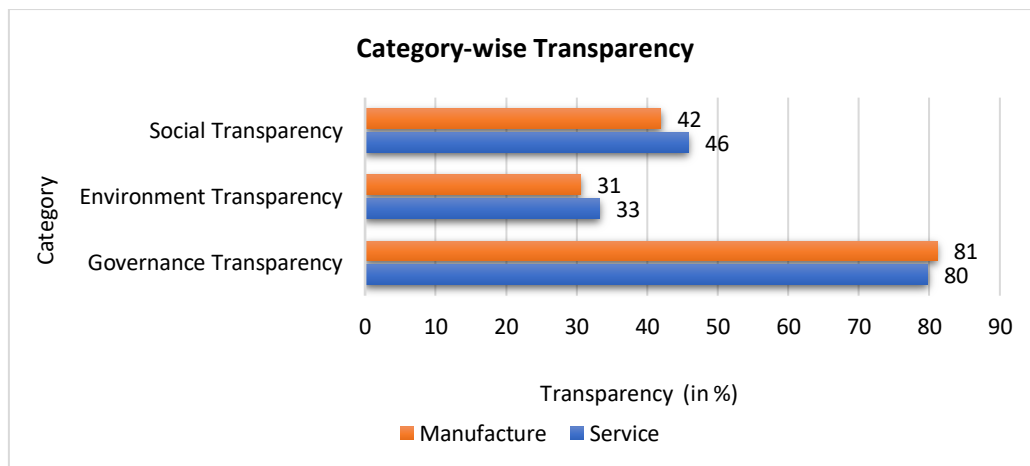
The above graph depicts industry-wise average transparency across NSE 600 companies for FY2020-21. The average transparency of NSE 600 companies is just 58%. It is evident that the information technology industry is a leader and has the maximum transparency compared to other industries. Industries like metal, NBFCs, telecommunication, tobacco, banks, and information technology have overall transparency above the universal average. There is a scope for improvement for other industries to be more transparent by progressively disclosing more of their material ESG data.

ESG transparency between manufacturing and service sector



Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

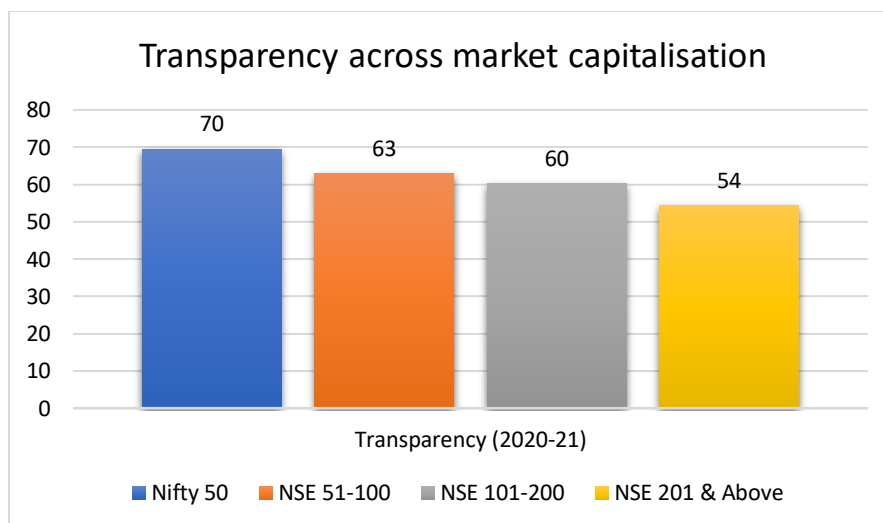
The manufacturing industry has lower ESG disclosures compared to the service industry. Whereas the service sector has outperformed on ESG parameters and have reported a higher number of disclosures than the overall universe. Companies like ITC Limited followed by Blue Star Limited and Hero MotoCorp Limited, are leaders in the manufacturing industry, whereas, in the service industry, companies like Infosys Limited followed by Wipro Limited, HDFC Bank Limited, and Axis Bank Limited have performed better in providing a high level of transparency on their ESG parameter.



Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency differs across the environment, social and governance pillars. The highest level of transparency is observed in the governance category followed by social. The service industry has a higher level of transparency in reporting on social and environmental parameters. Overall, the companies have provided better disclosure in the governance category than in the social and environmental category, indicating room for improvement for the disclosures in the latter categories.

Transparency across Market Capitalisation



Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Top Performing Companies

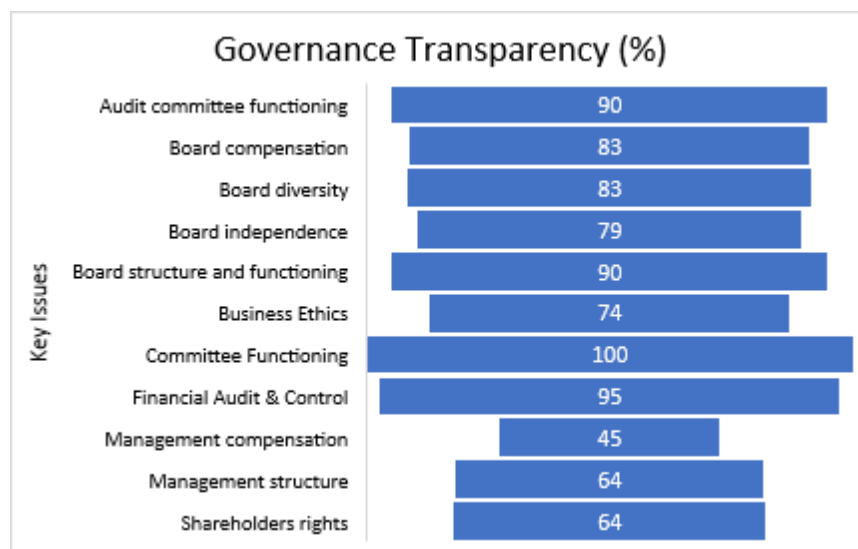
Infosys Limited
Wipro Limited
HDFC Bank Limited
Axis Bank Limited
ITC Limited

Nifty 50 companies have the maximum level of transparency in disclosing their ESG strategies, performance, targets, and results followed by the NSE 100 (next 50) companies. As we move from left to right in the above chart, the level of transparency on disclosures made by the companies keeps on plummeting. The top 50 companies i.e., the Nifty 50 companies have better disclosures compared to the overall NSE 600.

Transparency across Industries – Key Issues

Textiles & Wearing Apparels Industry

Governance

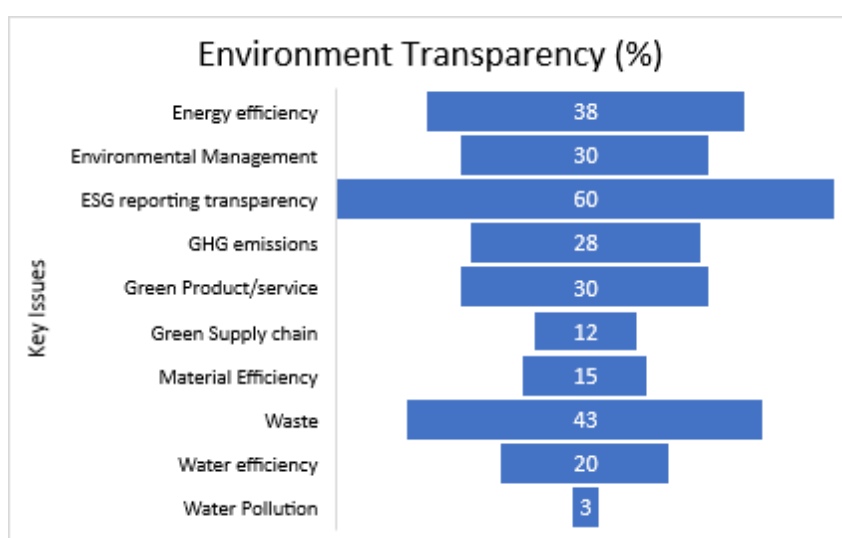


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Raymond Limited
Page Industries Limited
Rupa & Company Limited

All the companies forming a part of the textiles & wearing apparels industry have 100% transparency on their committee functioning, followed by financial audit & control, audit committee functioning, and board structure & functioning where the industry average transparency is 95%, 90%, and 90%, respectively. For financial audit & control, 80% of the companies have scored a 100% in transparency out of the total textiles & wearing apparels companies forming a part of the NSE 600 list.

Environment



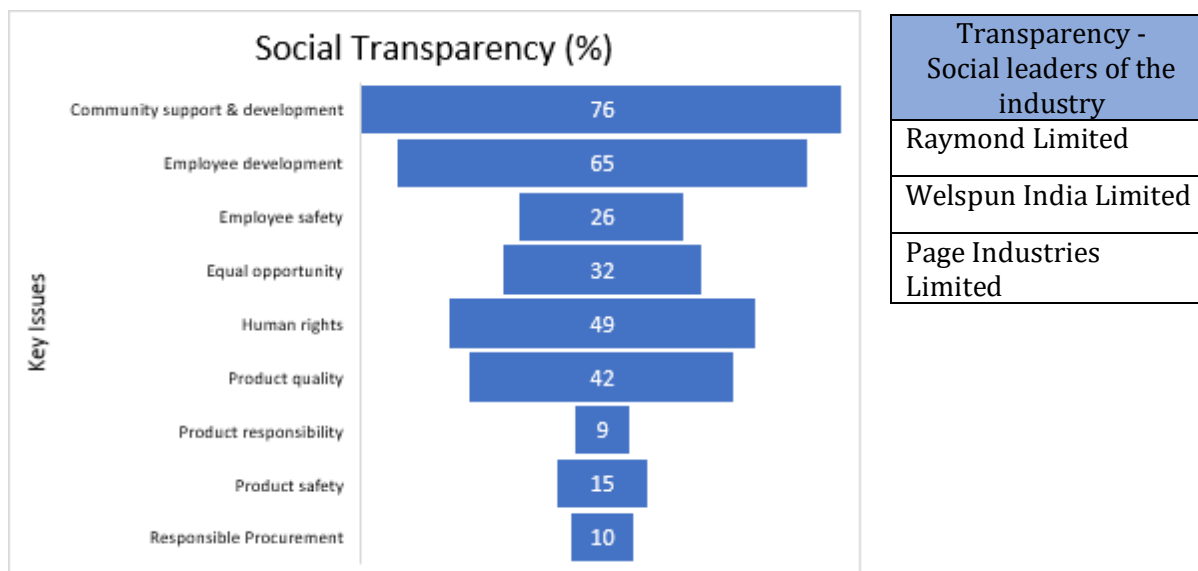
Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited
Welspun India Limited
Procter & Gamble Hygiene and Health Care Limited

The textile industry is inherently exposed to environmental risk as it is the second-largest polluter in the world. The material issues of the textile & wearing apparel industry are energy &

water efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, and sustainable supply chain. The industry has a high level of transparency in the material issues of waste management, energy efficiency, and environmental management. However, the industry has performed poorly in providing disclosures on the overall environment category.

Social

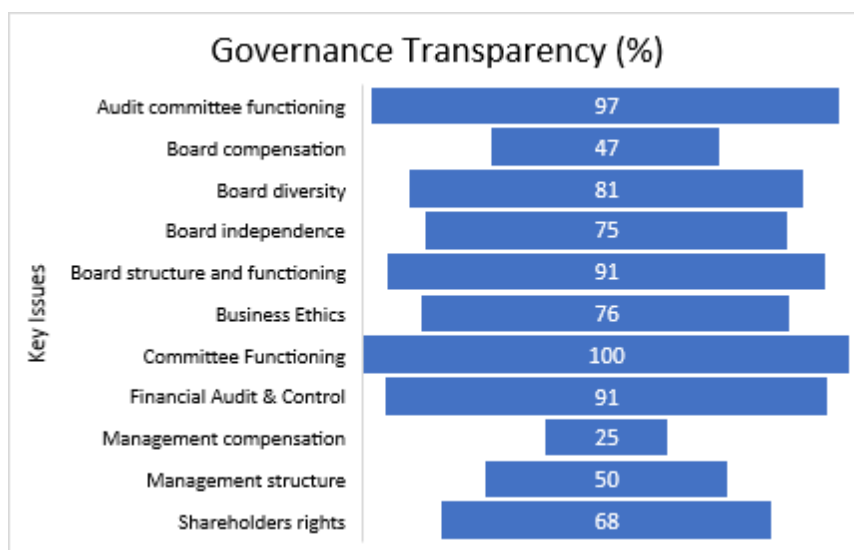


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

For the textile & wearing apparels manufacturing industry, the material issues are employee safety, community development, and product quality & responsibility. The industry has performed well in providing transparency on community support & development and employee support and development, where 7% of the companies have scored 100% on transparency reporting out of the total textile & wearing apparel companies forming a part of the NSE 600 list.

Oil & Refinery Industry

Governance

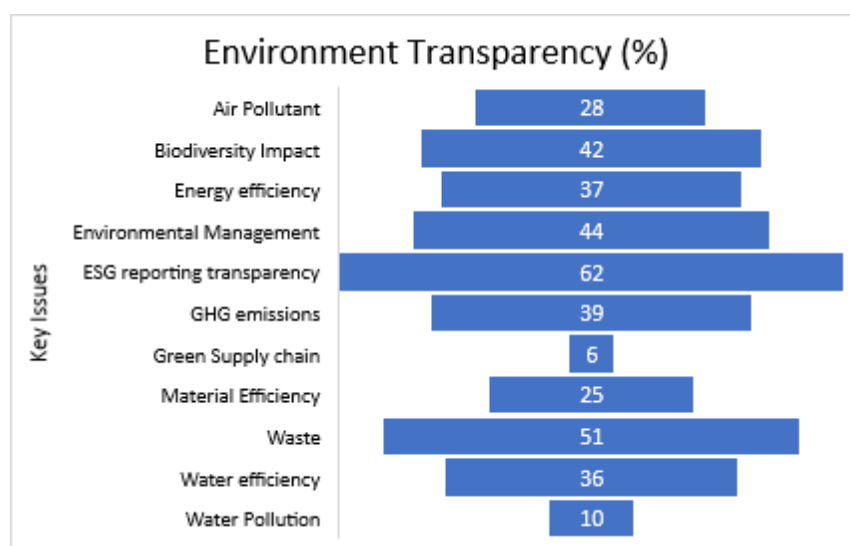


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Rain Industries Limited
Castrol India Limited
Reliance Industries Limited

The companies forming a part of the oil & refinery industry have better transparency in the material issues of committee functioning, audit committee functioning, and financial audit & control. The level of transparency reporting on committee functioning by oil & refinery industry companies is 100%. For audit committee functioning, 79% of the total oil & refinery companies have scored a 100% in reporting their transparency.

Environment



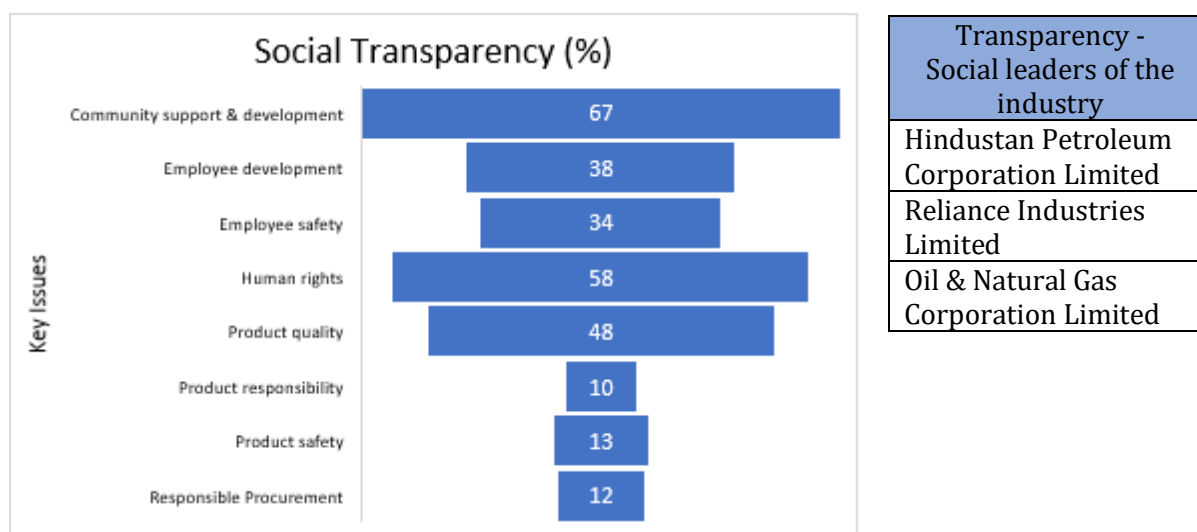
Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited
Reliance Industries Limited
Phillips Carbon Black Limited

The oil & refinery industry has a significant environmental impact. The upstream operations of this industry negatively impact biodiversity and the downstream operation requires a high amount of energy. The management of toxic waste and reduction of carbon footprints are crucial for this industry. Even though the oil & refinery industry has better disclosures in the material key issues of waste management, environmental management, and biodiversity impact, it has

poor disclosures on the overall environment category. 7% of the oil & refinery companies have scored a 100% in reporting their performance on the key issue of biodiversity impact.

Social

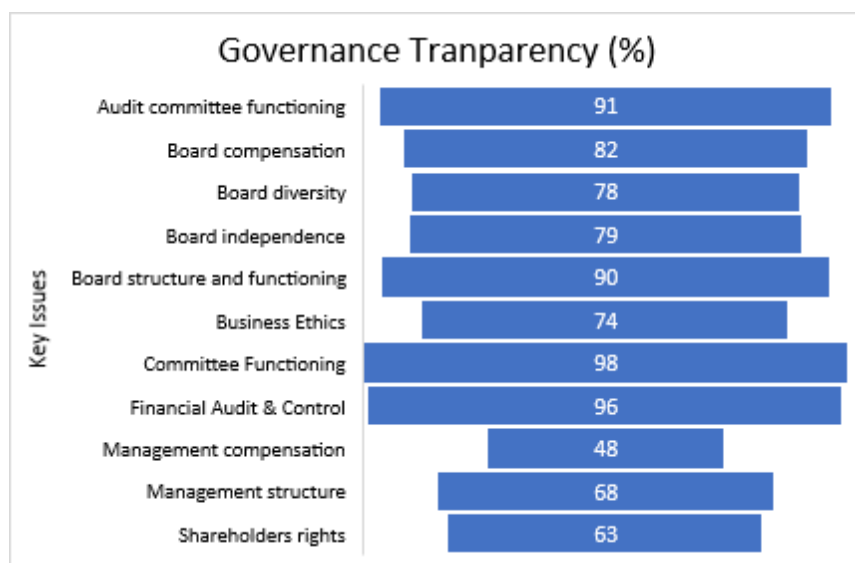


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Employee safety, human rights, and community service are key social issues critical to this industry. Even though the oil & refinery industry has a good number of disclosures in community support & development and human rights, the companies of this industry lack in scoring 100% on these material issues. For human rights, 7% of the oil & refinery companies have scored a 100% in reporting their Human rights framework.

Chemical Industry

Governance

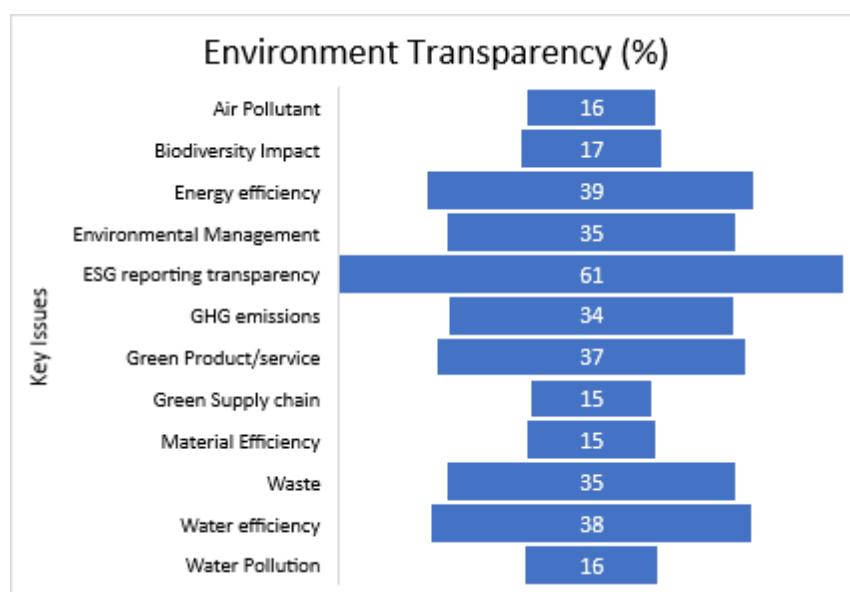


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
GHCL Limited
Dhanuka Agritech Limited
Deepak Nitrite Limited

The companies in the chemical industry have made better disclosures related to committee functioning followed by financial audit & control and audit committee functioning. The level of transparency reporting on committee functioning by the chemical industry is 98%. For committee functioning, 96% of the chemical companies have provided 100% disclosures. For financial audit & control, 88% of the chemical companies have scored 100% in their transparency reporting.

Environment



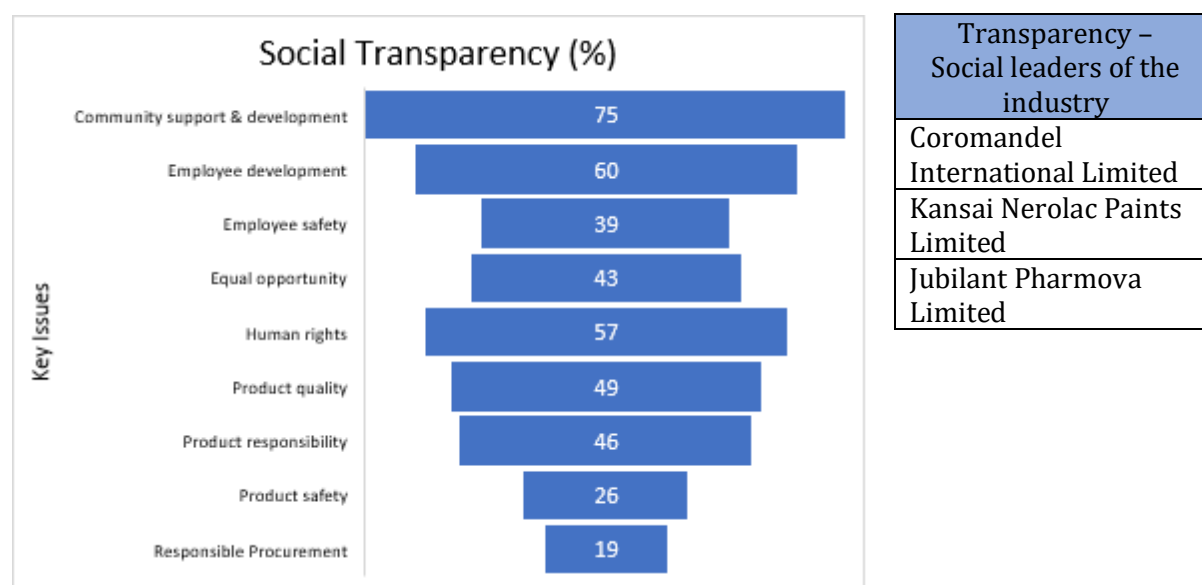
Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Tata Chemicals Limited
Galaxy Surfactants Limited
Kansai Nerolac Paints Limited

Factors like air pollutants & greenhouse gas emissions, water efficiency, and water pollution are critical issues for the industry. In the chemical industry, material key issues like energy efficiency,

water efficiency, and green products/service have a high level of transparency and disclosures. Even though energy efficiency has the highest level of transparency among other key issues, 5% of the companies in this industry have scored 90% and above. On the other hand, 33% of the companies have scored 100% on transparency when disclosing the material issue of green products/services, and 16% of the companies have scored 100% on water efficiency transparency.

Social

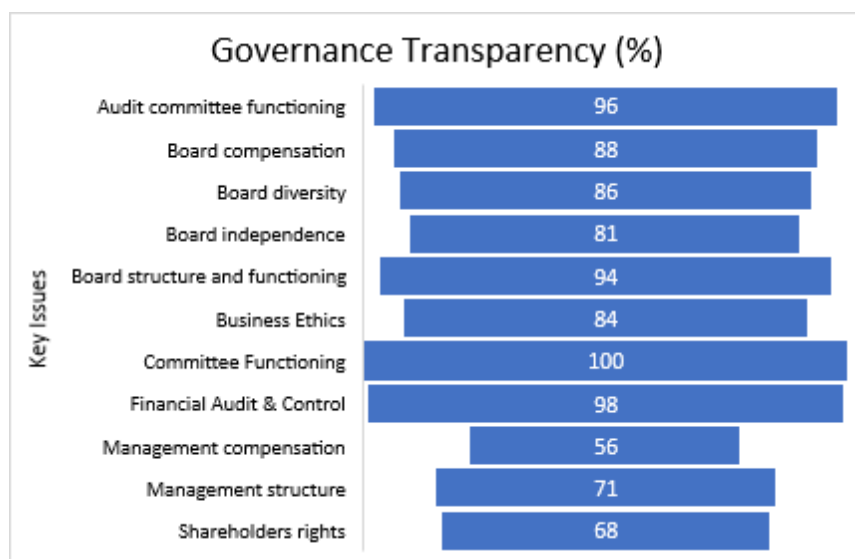


Source - ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Workplace health & safety standards, community support & development and product safety are critical social issues for the chemical industry. The chemical industry companies have better disclosures on community service, employee development, and human rights when compared to other material issues. The companies in the chemical industry have been more transparent in disclosing strategy, initiatives, and results achieved on these key issues. In the key issue of community support & development 12% of the companies have scored 100% on their transparency reporting.

Pharmaceuticals

Governance

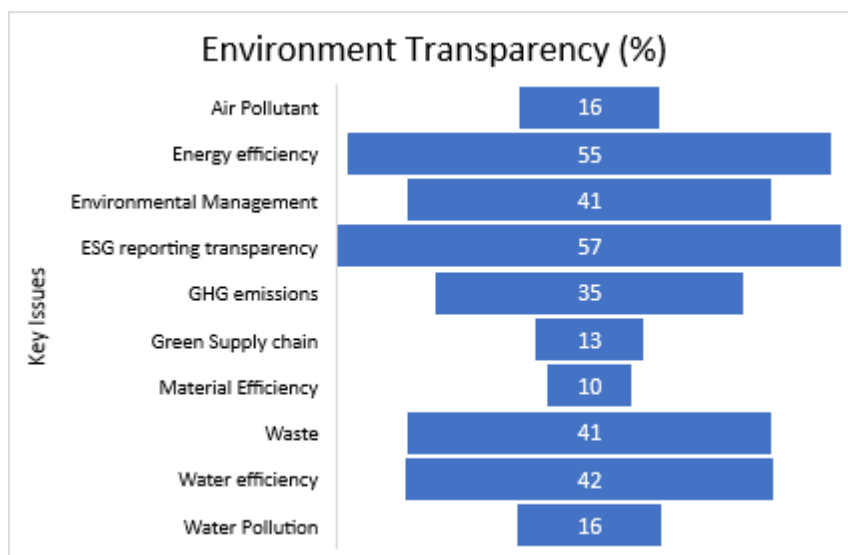


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Strides Pharma Science Limited
Aurobindo Pharma Limited
Ajanta Pharma Limited

Corporate governance is company-specific and is influenced by a company's culture and ownership structure. All the companies forming a part of the pharma industry have made 100% disclosures on their committee functioning.

Environment

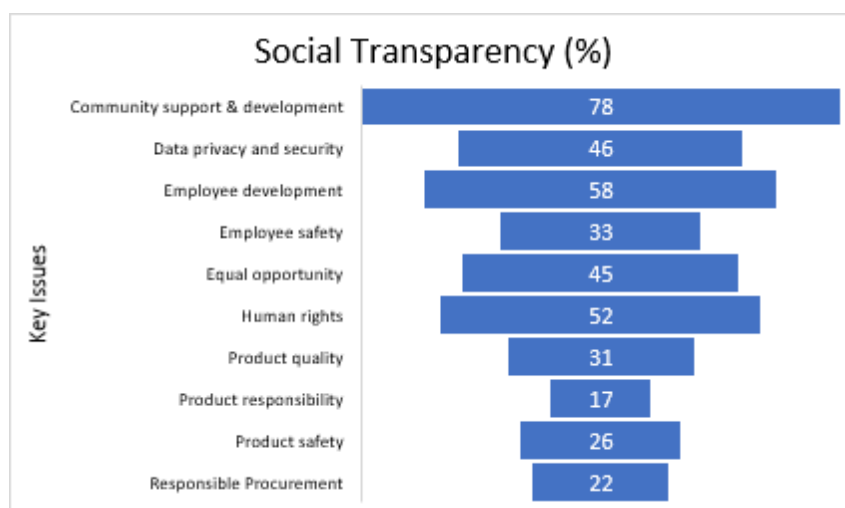


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Cipla Limited
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Limited
Natco Pharma Limited

The material issues in the pharma industry are greenhouse gas emissions, waste, energy and water efficiency. In the environmental category, pharma companies transparent on their material issues. Industry average transparency on energy efficiency is 55%, wherein only 12% of the companies have scored 100% on their level of transparency reporting.

Social



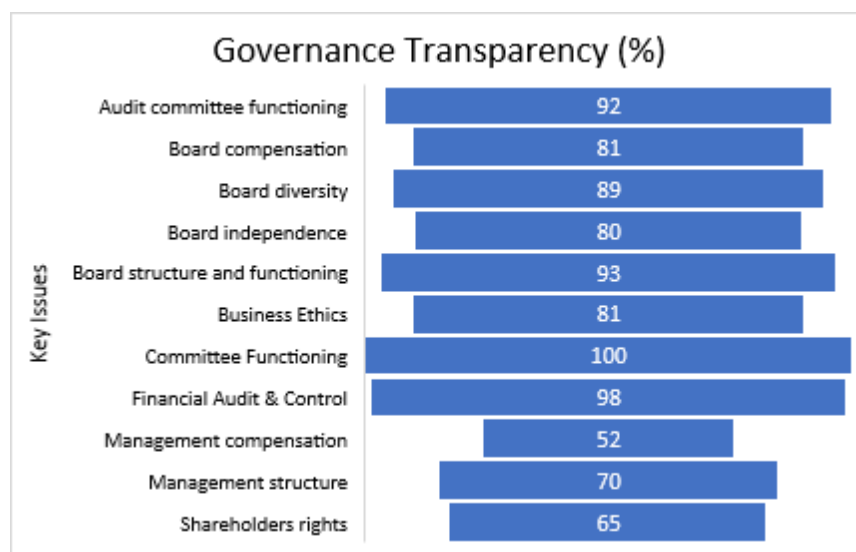
Transparency - Social leaders of the industry
GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Limited
Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Limited
Piramal Enterprises Limited

Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Employee health & safety management, product safety & quality are material issues in this industry. Community services, employee development, and human rights are the three material key issues where the pharma industry has made maximum disclosures compared to other key issues. In community support & development 17% of the companies have scored 100% on their level of transparency reporting.

Metal Industry

Governance

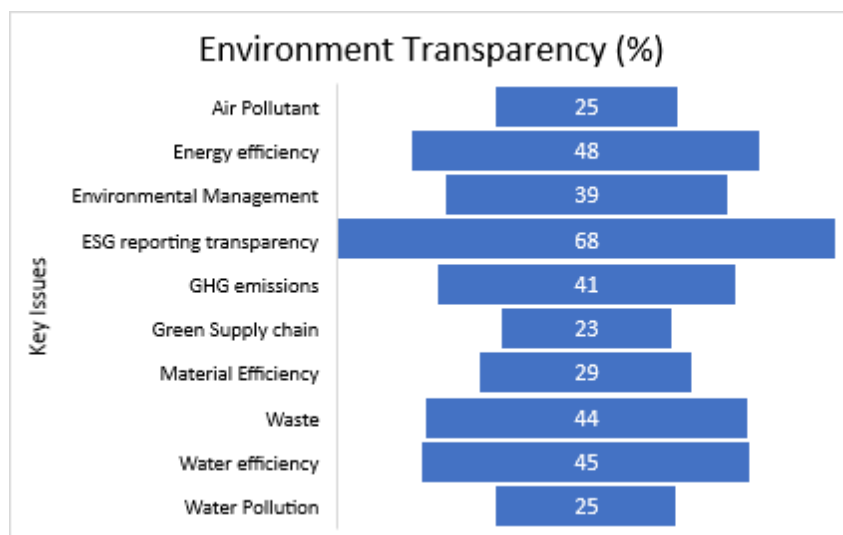


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Welspun Corp Limited
Tata Steel Long Products Limited
Tata Steel Limited

The industry has a high level of transparency in the material issues of committee functioning, financial audit & control, and board structure & functioning. In committee functioning, all the companies have scored 100% in transparency out of the total metal companies forming a part of the NSE 600 list. Moreover, in financial audit & control, 96% of the metal companies have scored a 100% in transparency reporting.

Environment



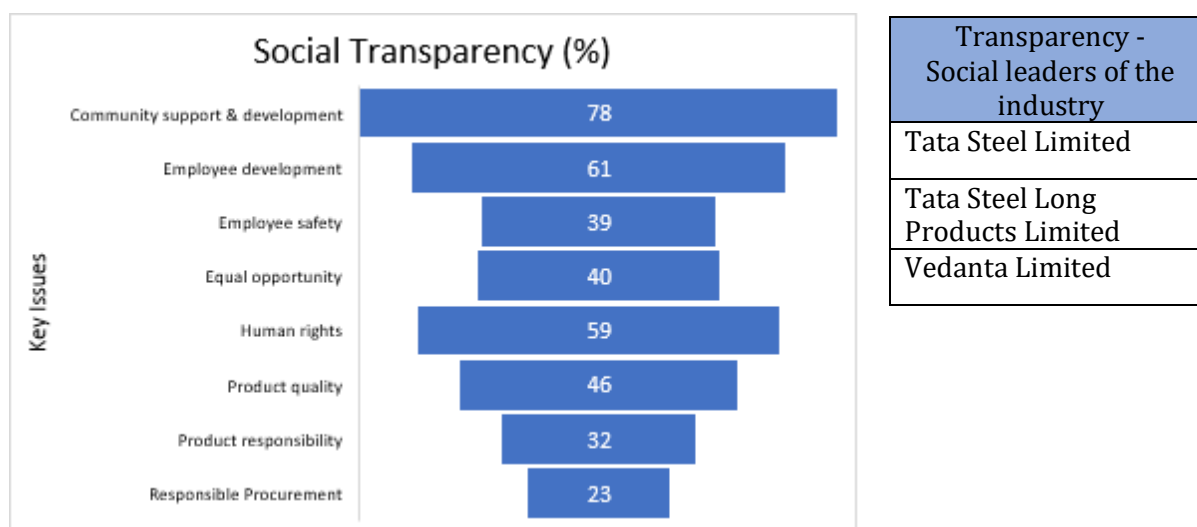
Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Hindustan Zinc Limited
JSW Steel Limited
Hindalco Industries Limited

Manufacturing metals has a substantial environmental impact. The production of basic metals is extremely power-intensive. The material issues in the metal industry are the danger of releasing large amounts of greenhouse gases into the air, improper waste disposal, efficient water utilization, and managing water pollution. The metal industry has a high level of transparency in the material issues of energy & water efficiency and waste management. For water efficiency,

16% of the companies have scored 100% in transparency reporting. However, the industry has performed poorly in providing disclosures on overall environmental parameters.

Social

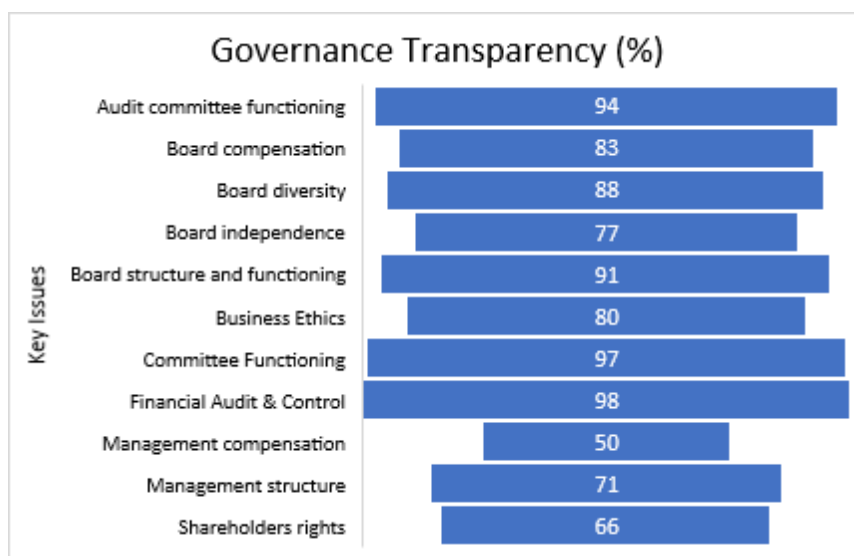


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

The material issues in the metal industry are occupational health and safety management, product quality, and supply chain management. In the metal industry, a critical area of community support & development, employee development, and human rights have better transparency reporting compared to other material issues. In community support & development, 28% of the companies have scored 100% in the level of transparency reporting, whereas only 4% of the companies have scored 100% on providing disclosures related to the material issue of employee development.

Automobile Industry

Governance

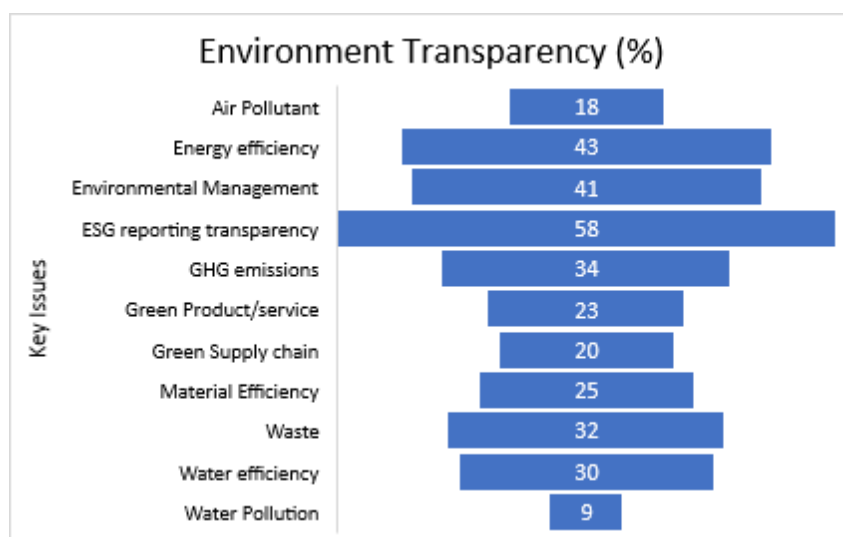


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Hero MotoCorp Limited
Mahindra & Mahindra Limited
Minda Industries Limited

The companies in the automobile industry have made better disclosures on material issues like financial audit & control, followed by committee functioning and audit committee functioning. For financial audit & control, 93% of the companies have scored 100% on the level of transparency reporting. In the governance category, 96% of the companies have scored 100% on disclosure reporting on the committee functioning disclosures.

Environment

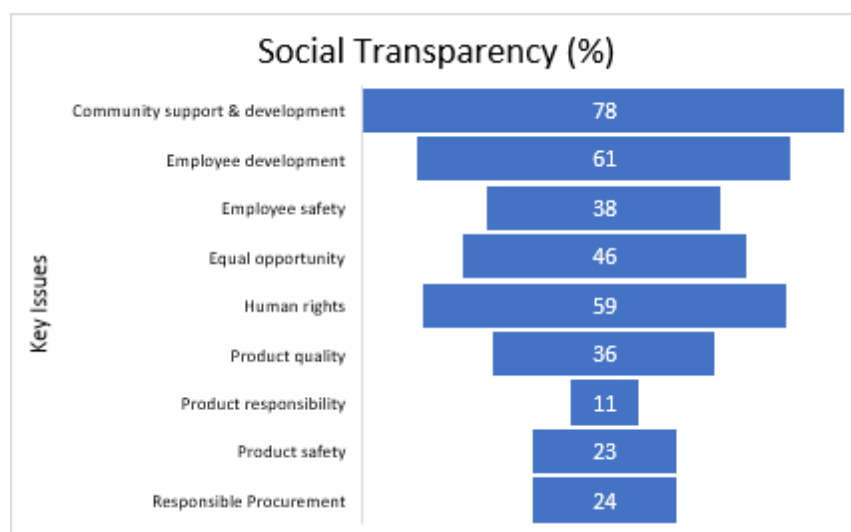


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Mahindra & Mahindra Limited
Hero MotoCorp Limited
Eicher Motors Limited

The environmental material issues of the automobile industry are greenhouse gas emissions, green products/services, and waste management. In the environmental category, the automobile industry has been highly transparent on energy efficiency, environmental management, and carbon emissions compared to other key issues. However, the industry has performed poorly in transparency reporting on its material risks concerning the overall environment category.

Social



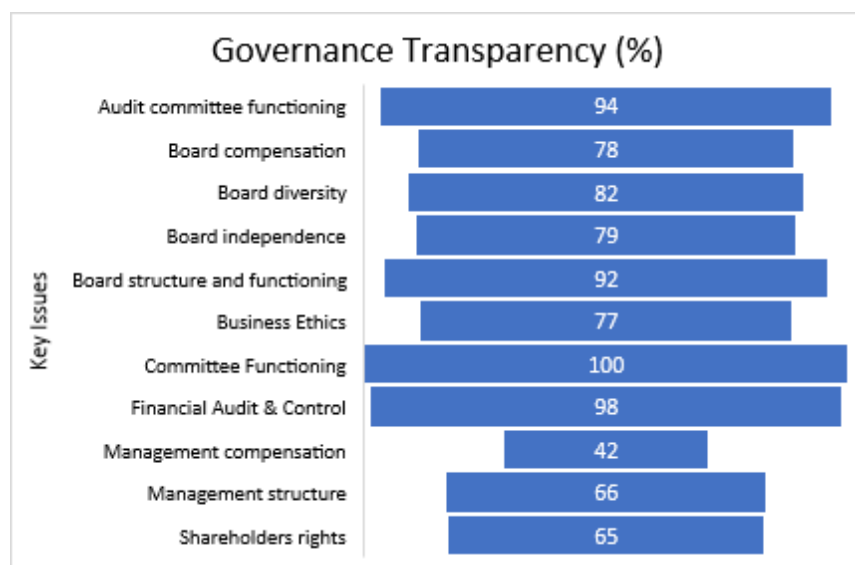
Transparency - Social leaders of the industry
Maruti Suzuki India Limited
Hero MotoCorp Limited
Mahindra & Mahindra Limited

Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Employee safety, product quality & safety, and community development are material issues of the automobile industry. The key areas where the automobile industry has performed well in transparency reporting are community support & development, employee development, and human rights. In the social category, 11% of the companies from the industry have scored 100% on the level of transparency reporting on community support & development and 15% of the companies have scored 100% on human rights transparency.

Power Industry

Governance

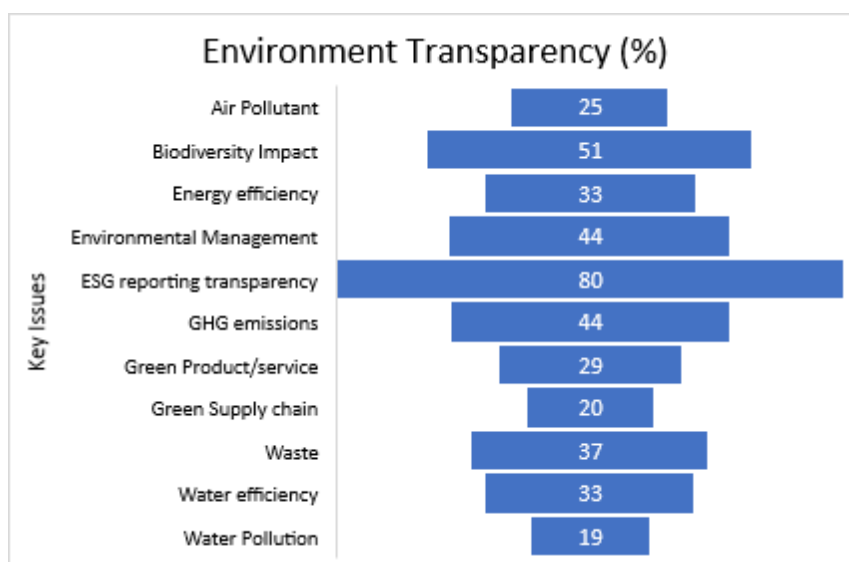


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
JSW Energy Limited
Tata Power Company Limited
Adani Transmission Limited

The companies forming a part of the power industry have better transparency in the material issues of committee functioning, financial audit & control, audit committee functioning, and board structure & functioning. All the companies forming a part of the power industry have scored 100% on reporting the compliance, performance, and results on committee functioning. In the power industry, 90% of the companies have scored 100% on reporting on transparency for financial audit & control.

Environment



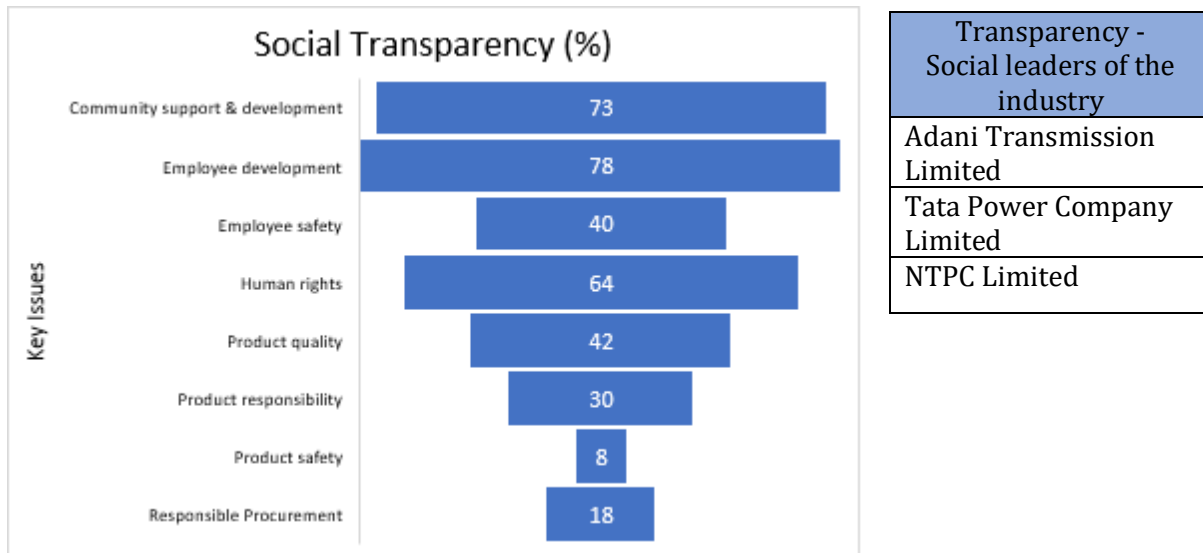
Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Adani Power Limited
Adani Transmission Limited
GAIL (India) Limited

The power generation & transmission industry has substantial carbon emissions and a toxic waste footprint. Issues such as sustainable supply chain, managing environmental impacts, and achieving energy efficiency are significant to this industry. Material issues like biodiversity impact, environmental management, and carbon emissions have a higher disclosure count

compared to other key issues in the environmental category. In the power industry, 20% of the companies have scored 100% on the transparency reporting for biodiversity impact and just 5% of the companies have 100% transparency reporting on greenhouse gas emissions.

Social

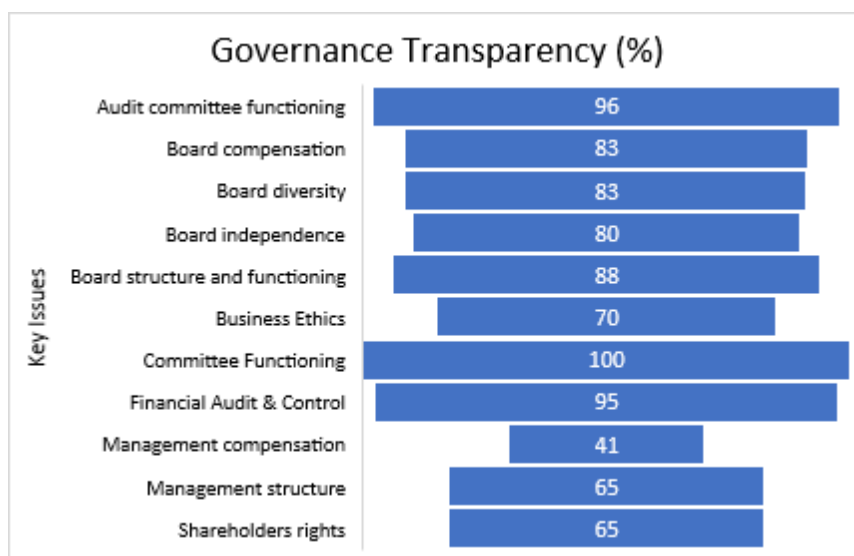


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Workplace health & safety standards, product safety, and community development are the key social issues critical to the power generation & transmission industry. The power industry has a better disclosure count in critical areas like employee development, community support & development, and human rights. In the power industry, 10% of the companies have 100% disclosures on community support & development, while 30% of the companies have 100% transparency reporting on employee development.

Real Estate Industry

Governance

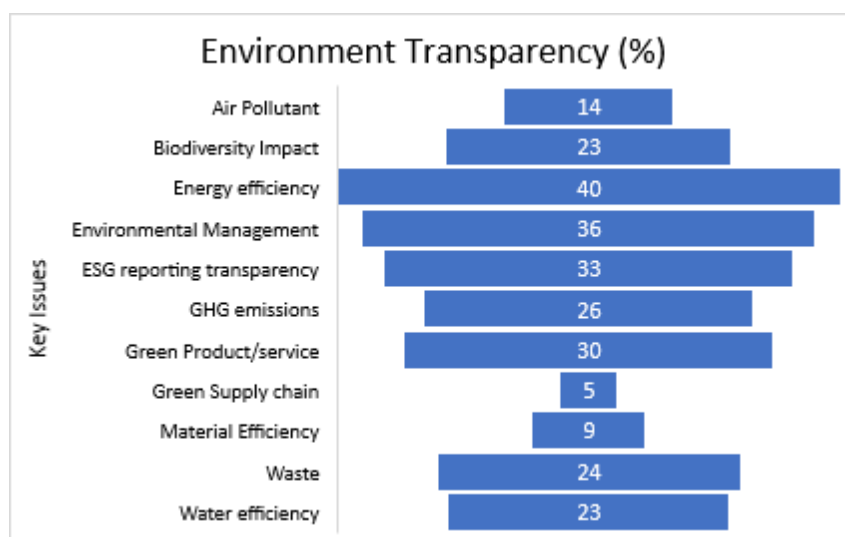


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
The Phoenix Mills Limited
Nesco Limited
Sobha Limited

All the companies forming a part of the real estate industry have made 100% disclosures on their committee functioning, followed by audit committee functioning, financial audit & control, and board structure & functioning where the industry average transparency is 96%, 95%, and 88% respectively. In audit committee functioning, 88% of the companies have scored 100% on their level of governance transparency reporting.

Environment

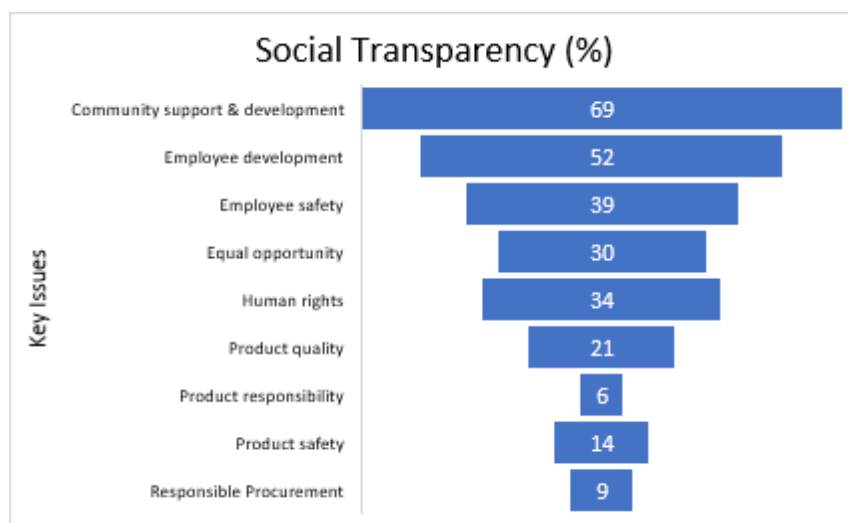


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Brigade Enterprises Limited
Mahindra Lifespace Developers Limited
DLF Limited

The environmental risks associated with the real estate industry are GHG emissions, providing green products/services, and waste management. Even though the key issues like energy efficiency and environmental management have better disclosure count compared to other material issues, the industry performs poorly in terms of being transparent on the overall environment parameter.

Social



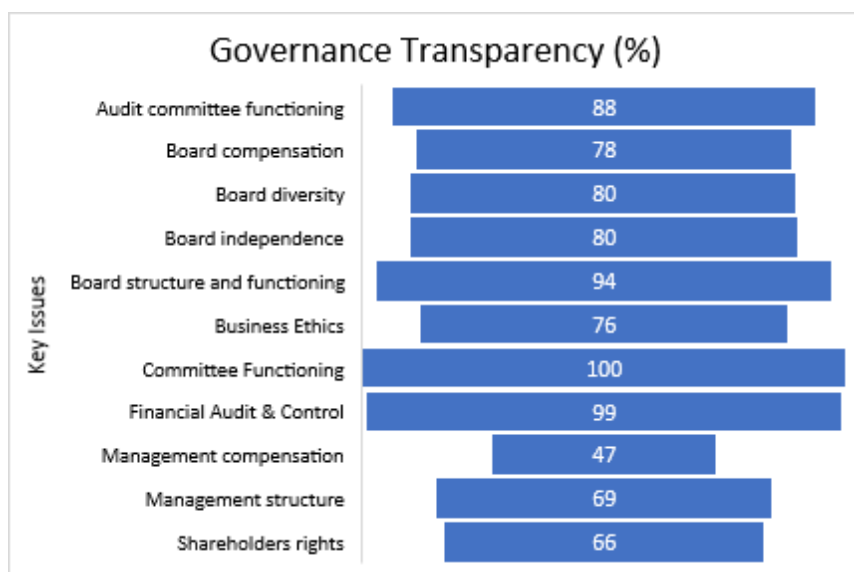
Transparency - Social leaders of the industry
DLF Limited
Sobha Limited
Brookfield India Real Estate Trust REIT

Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Community support and development, employee safety, and human rights are primary concerns for the real estate industry. The disclosure count on community support and development and employee development is higher than other material issues, in the real estate sector. In community support & development, 6% of the companies have scored 100% on the transparency reporting.

Civil Engineering Industry

Governance

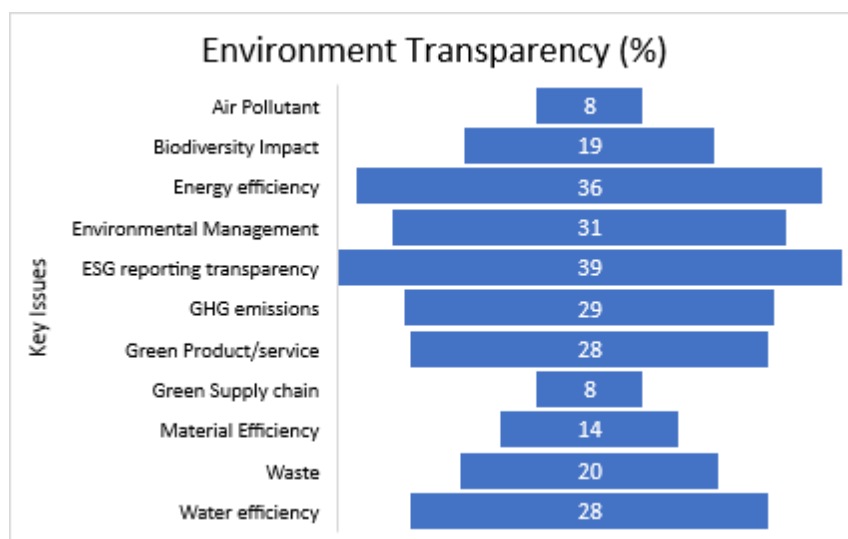


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
KEC International Limited
Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited
Larsen & Toubro Limited

All the companies in the civil engineering industry have scored 100% in terms of transparency in the material issue of committee functioning. In financial audit & control and board structure & functioning, the industry has 99% and 94% reporting on transparency, respectively. For financial audit & control, 94% of the companies have scored 100% on reporting their transparency, and for board structure & functioning, 39% of the companies have scored 100% on transparency reporting.

Environment

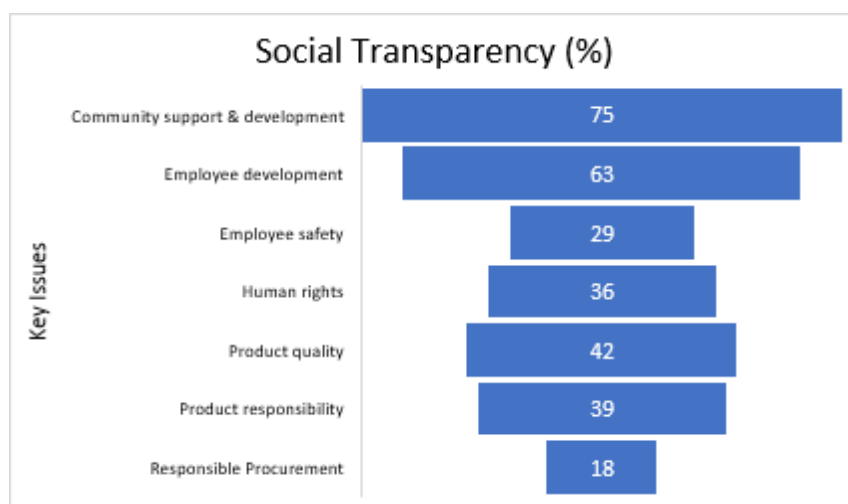


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Larsen & Toubro Limited
KEC International Limited
Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited

The environmental risks associated with this industry are GHG emissions, material efficiency, and waste management. Key issues like energy efficiency and environmental management have a better disclosure count in the civil engineering industry compared to other material issues. However, the overall performance of the civil engineering industry on environmental transparency is poor.

Social



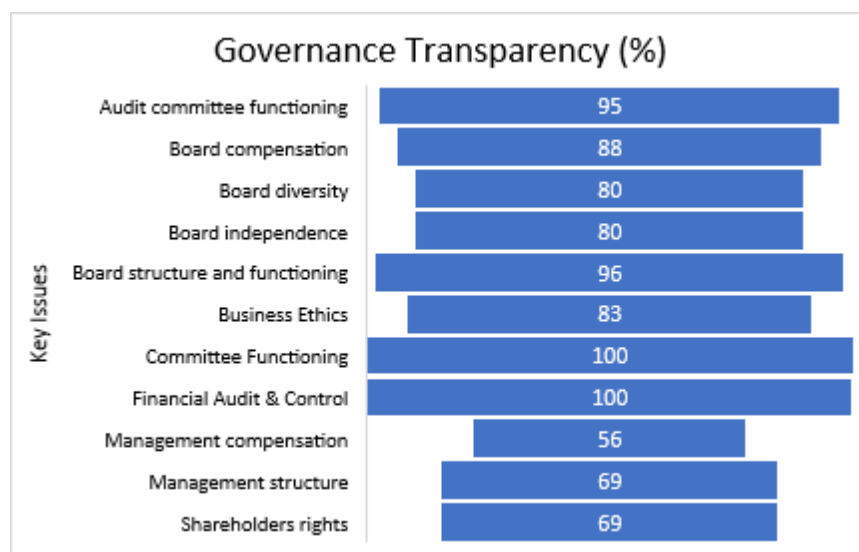
Transparency - Social leaders of the industry
Larsen & Toubro Limited
KEC International Limited
GE Power India Limited

Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Employee safety, community support & development, and human rights are primary concerns for the civil engineering industry. The disclosure count on key issues like community development and employee development is higher than it is for other material issues in the civil engineering sector. In community support & development and employee development, 11% and 6% of the companies have scored 100% on the level of transparency reporting, respectively.

Information Technology (IT) Industry

Governance

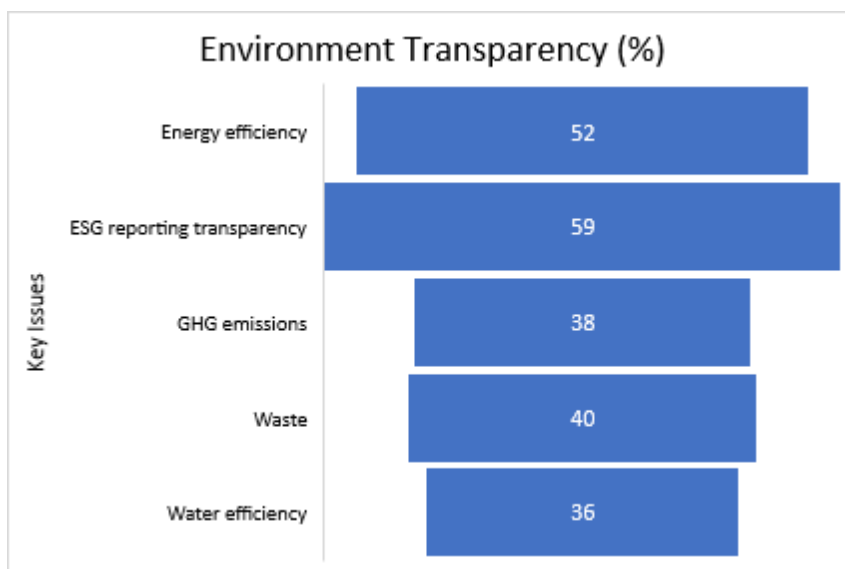


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Wipro Limited
Info Edge (India) Limited
Larsen & Toubro Infotech Limited

IT Industry has scored 100% in transparency reporting in the committee functioning key issue. Financial audit & control and board structure & functioning have scored 100% and 96% on the level of transparency, respectively. For board structure & functioning, 68% of the companies have scored 100% on their transparency reporting out of the total IT companies forming a part of the NSE 600 list.

Environment

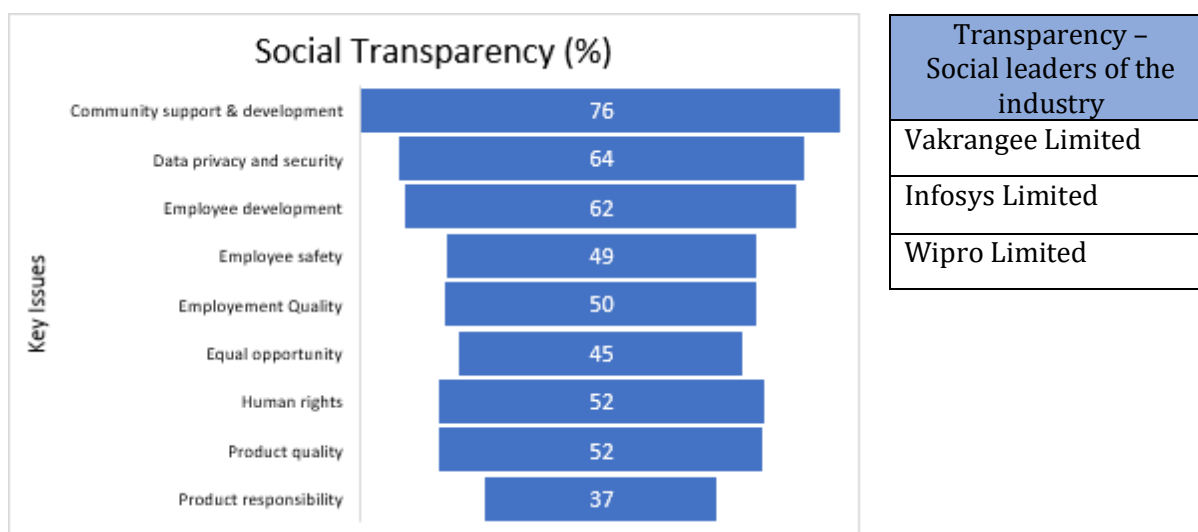


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
Infosys Limited
Larsen & Toubro Infotech Limited
Hexaware Technologies Limited

The exposure of the IT industry to environmental risks is limited. Issues such as greenhouse gas emissions, energy & water efficiency, and waste management are significant for the industry. In the material issues of greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency, 22% of the companies have scored a 100% in transparency out of the total information technology companies forming a part of the NSE 600 list.

Social

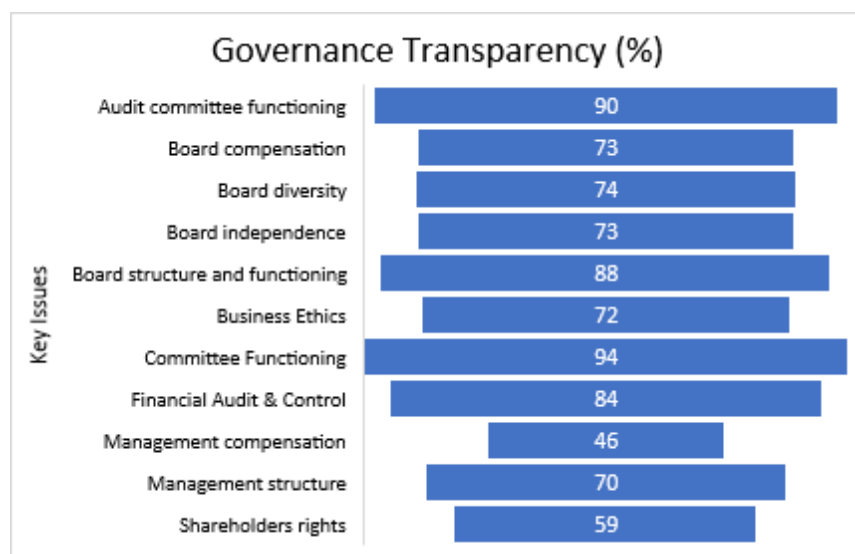


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Data privacy and security, community support & development, employment quality, and equal opportunity are material issues for the information services industry. The industry has better transparency on key issues of community support & development, data privacy & security, and employee development. In the material issue of community support & development, 11% of the companies have scored 100% in transparency. For data privacy & security, 19% of the companies have scored 100% in transparency reporting out of the total information technology companies forming a part of NSE 600 list.

Financial service activities (Banking) Industry

Governance

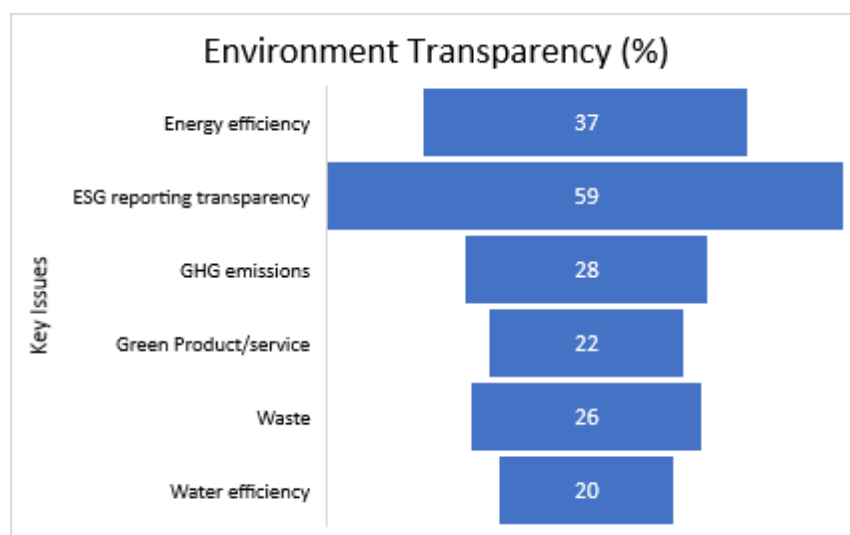


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
HDFC Bank Limited
Axis Bank Limited
Bandhan Bank Limited

The banking industry has performed well in being transparent in the key issues of committee functioning, audit committee functioning, and board structure & functioning. In committee functioning, 90% of the companies have scored 100% on the level of transparency reporting. In the material issue of audit committee functioning, 73% of the companies have scored 100% in transparency out of the total banking companies forming a part of the NSE 600 list.

Environment

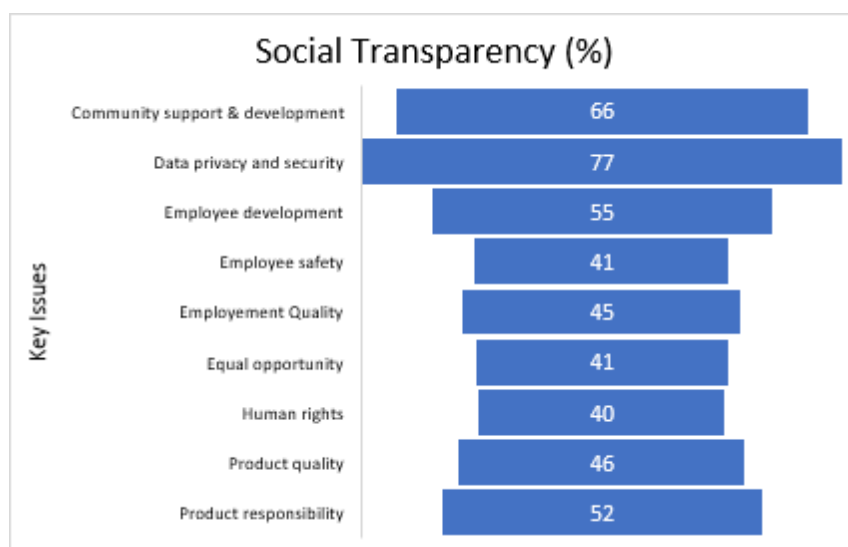


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
State Bank of India
Axis Bank Limited
HDFC Bank Limited

The banking industry has low exposure to environmental risks. Scope 2 emissions (indirect emission) related to data centers, electronic waste, and energy efficiency are key material issues. For the key issue of energy efficiency, the industry has 37% of transparency, which is the highest among other material issues. However, only 3% of the companies have scored 100% on the level of transparency reporting on energy efficiency.

Social



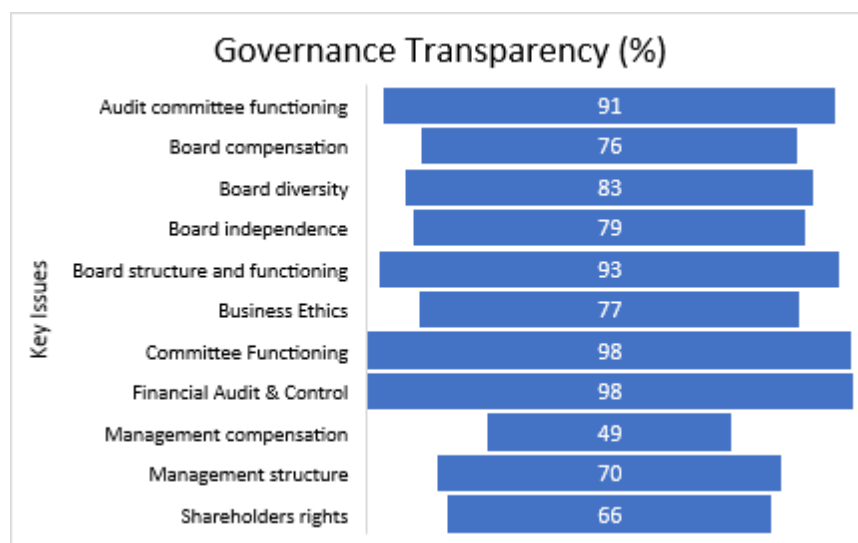
Transparency - Social leaders of the industry
HDFC Bank Limited
Axis Bank Limited
The Federal Bank Limited

Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

In the banking industry, the material issues are community support & development, employee development, and equal opportunity. The companies in this industry have performed well in their disclosure of material issues like community services (66%), data privacy & security (77%), and employee development (55%). 42% of the companies have 100% disclosures on data privacy and security key issue.

Financial service activities (NBFCs) Industry

Governance

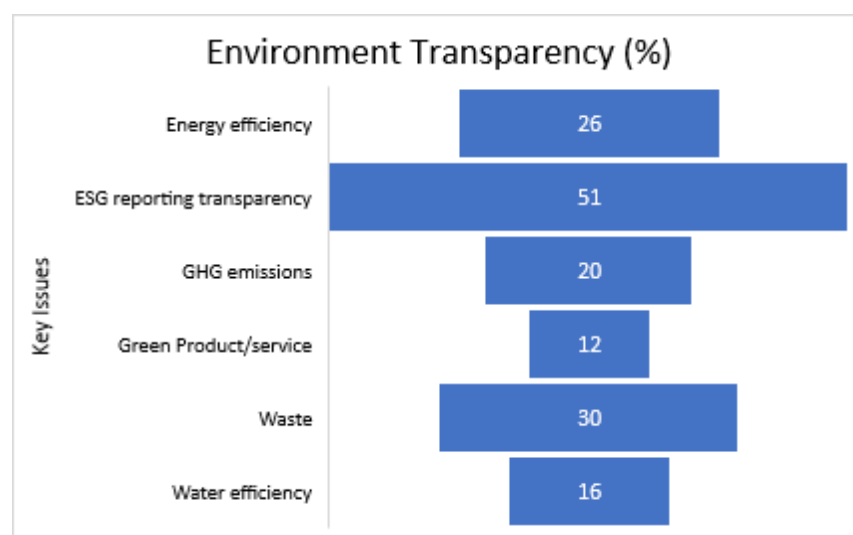


Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Governance leaders of the industry
Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited
Cholamandalam Financial Holdings Limited
Manappuram Finance Limited

The companies forming a part of NBFCs have better transparency in the material issues of financial audit & control, committee functioning, and board structure & functioning. In committee functioning, 95% of the companies have scored 100% on the level of transparency reporting. In the material issue of financial audit & control, 93% of the companies have scored 100% in transparency out of the total NBFCs forming a part of the NSE 600 list.

Environment



Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Environment leaders of the industry
L&T Finance Holdings Limited
Aditya Birla Capital Limited
Edelweiss Financial Services Limited

In the NBFC industry, the materiality of the environmental key issues is less. The material areas of risk in the NBFCs are carbon emissions, energy efficiency, and waste management. Moreover, the companies in the NBFC industry have shown poor disclosures on addressing the risks related to the overall environmental category.

Social



Source – ESGRisk.ai Research, 2022

Transparency - Social leaders of the industry
L&T Finance Holdings Limited
Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited
Creditaccess Grameen Limited

Community support and development, employee development, and equal opportunity are primary concerns for the financial services industry. For community support & development, 2% of the companies have scored 100% in transparency out of the total NBFCs forming a part of the NSE 600 list. For employee development, 11% of the companies have scored a 100% in transparency reporting.

Conclusion

ESG is a priority in the boardroom. Corporates disclose most of their corporate governance performance by the SEBI Listing obligations and Companies Act requirements.

According to the current market scenario, companies are expected to provide high-quality ESG disclosure, both for the benefit of external stakeholders and for management decision-making. By keeping ESG disclosures up to date, companies can enhance public perception of their brand and reputation. Among other things, directors may be in charge of communicating the company's sustainability story to their stakeholders. When ESG risks and opportunities are understood quickly, narratives can be purposefully crafted and likewise can be transparently communicated.

Let's take an example to understand, "why transparency is important for companies?" Let's say that a company reports on one of its risk areas related to environmentally responsible suppliers and receives a positive "Environment" ranking, while at the same time, the company has set a target on mitigating its GHG emissions and has an action plan to achieve the target but has not disclosed it. This lack of transparency can leave a critical flaw in assessing a company's performance. Hence, the companies need to disclose relevant data on the material issues related to ESG parameters.

While comparing manufacturing with the service industry, the companies of the service industry have performed better in terms of reporting their transparency on the material issues compared to the manufacturing industry and the overall universe of NSE 600. Industries like metal, NBFCs, telecommunication, tobacco, banks, and IT are leaders in reporting their ESG performance. In terms of disclosing material ESG issues, industries are more transparent on governance, followed by social and environmental parameters.

Nifty 50 companies perform better in transparency reporting concerning disclosures of material ESG risks compared to the rest of the companies from the universe of NSE 600. The level of transparency reporting is expected to improve even further for the fiscal year 2021-22, since SEBI has asked for the top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalization to voluntarily publish Business Responsibility & Sustainable Report (BRSR). Moreover, it is expected to improve even further for the financial year 2022-23, as SEBI has mandated BRSR reporting for the top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalization. The BRSR is intended towards having quantitative and standardized disclosures on ESG parameters to enable comparability across companies, sectors, and time. As a result, BRSR is likely to assist companies in reporting ESG parameters to the stakeholders, which in turn would increase their transparency. At the global level, in addition to balancing the playing field for financial market participants and financial advisers, the SFDR will promote transparency in relation to sustainability risks, the consideration of adverse sustainability impacts in their investment processes, and the provision of sustainability-related information to financial market participants.

There are still a lot of unknowns about how and what to disclose, however, the board's responsibilities for ESG reporting are likely to grow. Directors will need a deeper understanding of the connections between sustainability and strategy, as well as the opportunities and risks involved.

Annexure

Scoring a company's ESG disclosures and transparency

Based on the company's disclosure of indicators, ESG Risk AI will compute and publish two transparency scores, one will score the level of overall disclosures and the second will score the BRR disclosures, relevant largely in the Indian context.

Overall transparency score: The overall transparency score is calculated as:

$$= \frac{\text{Number of indicators where performance can be ascertained through disclosures}}{\text{Total material indicator}}$$