



Maputo, Mozambique
18 December 2023

News release

Mozambicans support media's watchdog role but endorse government restrictions on information

A majority of Mozambicans say the media should act as a watchdog over the government, constantly investigating and reporting on government mistakes and corruption, a new Afrobarometer survey shows.

But more than half of citizens also endorse a government right to limit the dissemination of information that the government disapproves of. A slim majority say media freedom exists in practice.

Majorities reject the notion that public information should be the exclusive preserve of government officials, including government bids and contracts, the salaries of teachers and local government officials, and expenditures for local government councils.

Television and radio still outpace the Internet and social media as popular news sources in Mozambique, especially in rural areas.

Key findings

- More than half (52%) of Mozambicans say the media should constantly investigate and report on government mistakes and corruption, while 43% believe too much reporting harms the country (Figure 1).
- But fewer than half (44%) insist on media freedom without government control, while 51% endorse a government right to prevent the publication of things it disapproves of (Figure 2).
- More than half (53%) of citizens say the country's media is "somewhat free" (33%) or "completely free" (20%) to report and comment on the news without government interference, but 41% disagree with that assessment (Figure 3).
- Majorities believe that government bids and contracts with businesses (67%), the salaries of teachers and local government officials (52%), and local government budgets (51%) should be shared with the public (Figure 4).
- Radio and television remain the most popular news source among Mozambicans, with 53% and 44%, respectively, saying they get their news via these channels "every day" or "a few times a week" (Figure 5).
 - One in four citizens turn to the Internet (25%) and social media (26%) as regular news sources, while 14% rely on newspapers.
- Urban residents are far more likely than their rural counterparts to get their news from social media (30% vs. 6%) and the Internet (31% vs. 6%) (Figure 6).

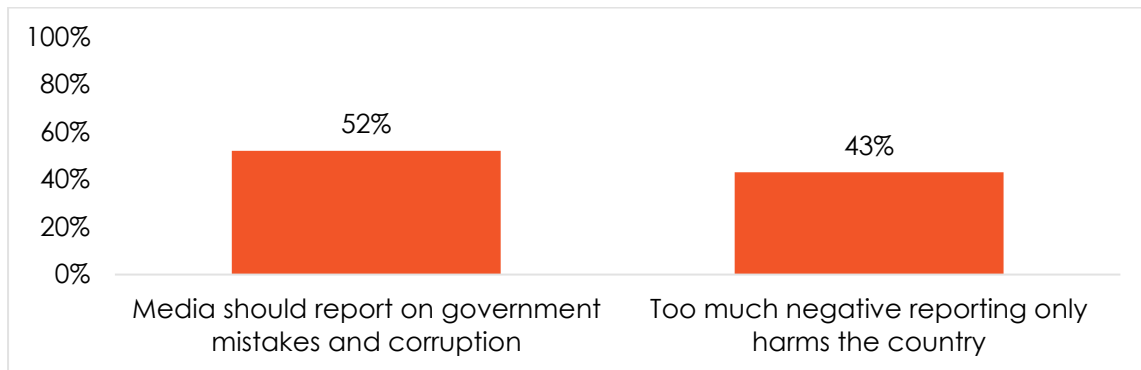
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Nine rounds of surveys have been conducted in up to 42 countries since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2023) cover 39 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Mozambique, led by Ipsos, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,120 adult Mozambicans in October, November, and December 2022. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Mozambique in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021.

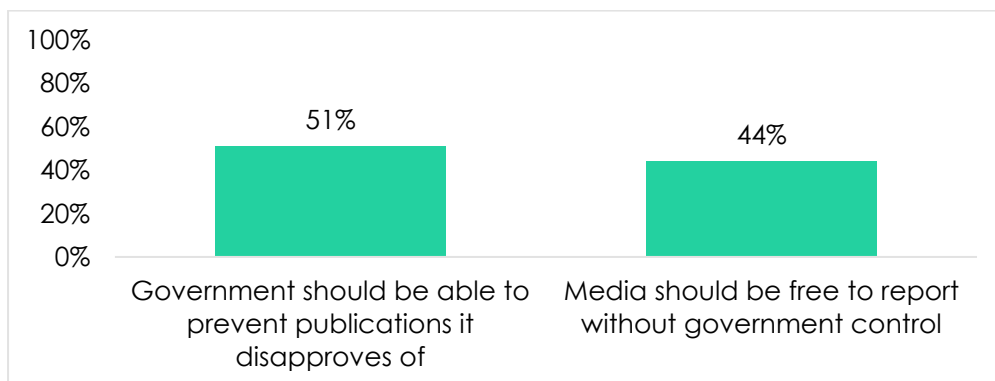
Charts

Figure 1: Media's watchdog role | Mozambique | 2022



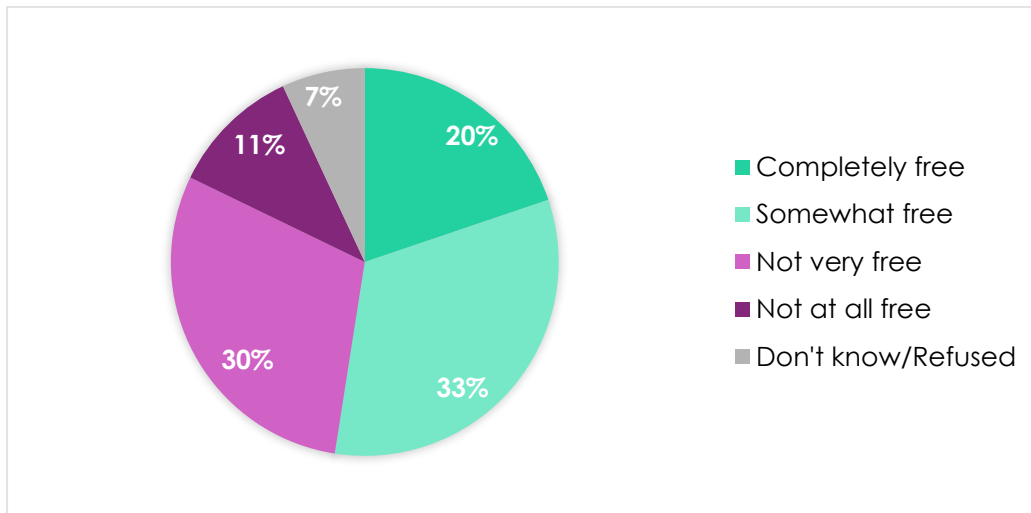
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: The news media should constantly investigate and report on government mistakes and corruption.
 Statement 2: Too much reporting on negative events, like government mistakes and corruption, only harms the country.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 2: Should the media be free? | Mozambique | 2022



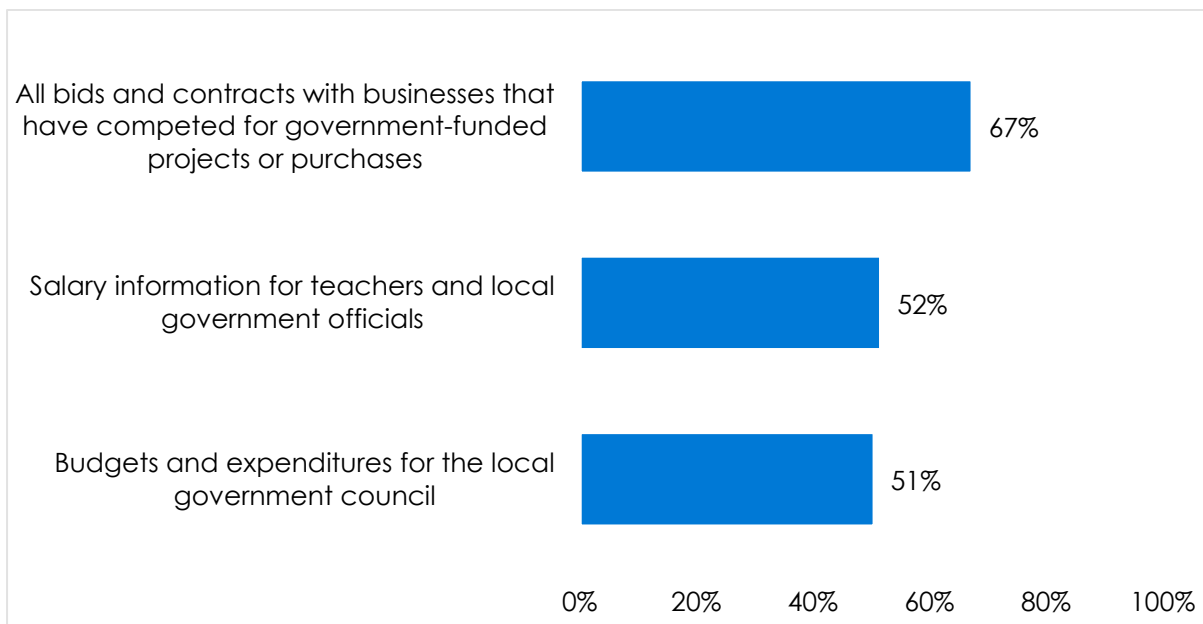
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: The media should have the right to publish any views and ideas without government control.
 Statement 2: The government should have the right to prevent the media from publishing things that it disapproves of.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 3: How free is the media? | Mozambique | 2022



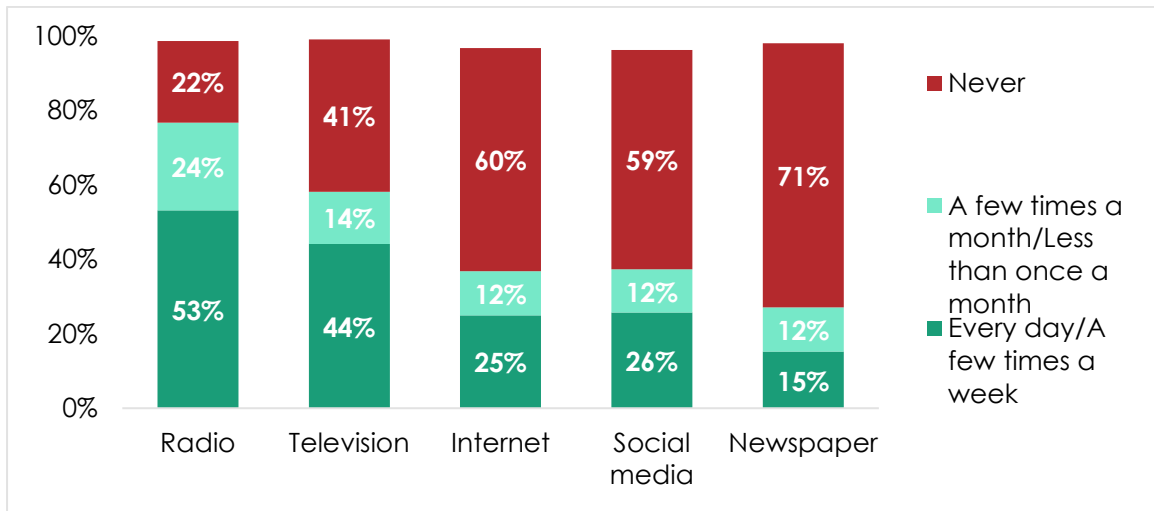
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how free is the news media in this country to report and comment on the news without censorship or interference by the government?*

Figure 4: Government should have to share certain types of information | Mozambique | 2022



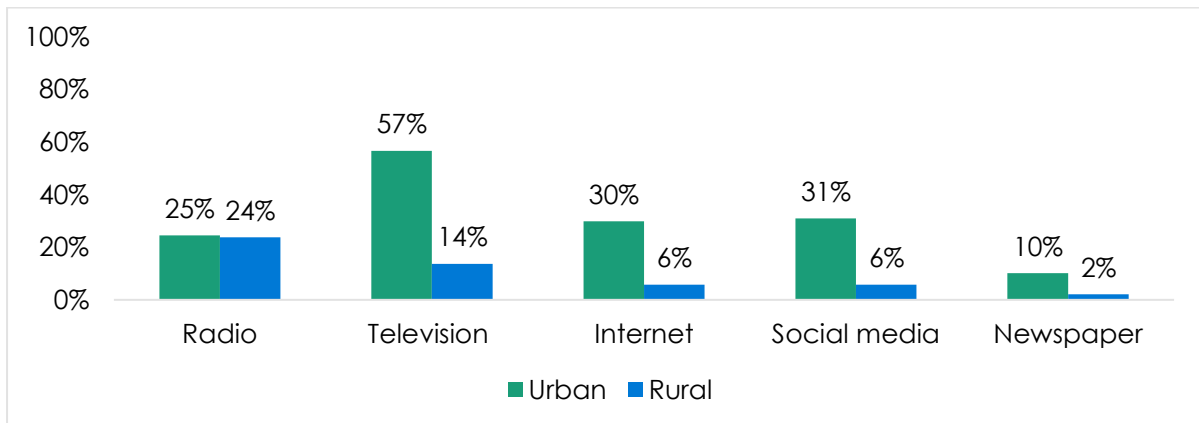
Respondents were asked: *For each of the following, please tell me whether ordinary citizens and news media should have the right to obtain this information from government, or whether government should be allowed to keep the information away from the public. (% who say this information should be available to the public.)*

Figure 5: Source of news | Mozambique | 2022



Respondents were asked: How often do you get news from the following sources?

Figure 6: Sources of news | by urban-rural location | Mozambique | 2022



Respondents were asked: How often do you get news from the following sources? (% who say "every day" or "a few times a week")

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