

Port Louis, Mauritius  
3 October 2024

## News release

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### **Mauritians' confidence in the freedom of their press dwindling, new Afrobarometer survey reveals**

Mauritians' confidence in the freedom of their news media is waning, a new Afrobarometer survey indicates.

Even though most citizens support the media's independence and its role as a watchdog over government, only a slim majority perceive their media as "somewhat" or "completely" free – a dramatic change from four years ago.

Television and radio are the most popular news sources in Mauritius, but social media plays an important role, too – its popularity has doubled over the past decade.

#### **Key findings**

- A slim majority (52%) of Mauritians consider the country's news media to be "somewhat free" or "completely free" from government censorship or interference (Figure 1).
  - The share of Mauritians who hold this opinion has dwindled from 69% in 2020, a fall of 17 percentage points in perceived media freedom.
- But almost nine in 10 citizens (86%) say the media should have the right to publish any views and ideas without government control, while just 11% instead believe the government should have the right to prevent the media from publishing things it disapproves of (Figure 2).
- An equally large majority (86%) say the news media should constantly investigate and report on government mistakes and corruption (Figure 3).
- Almost all Mauritians (96%) say they get news from television "a few times a week" or "every day." Radio (94%) and social media (88%) follow close behind as popular sources of news (Figure 4).
- The use of social media as a source of news has doubled over the past decade (Figure 5).

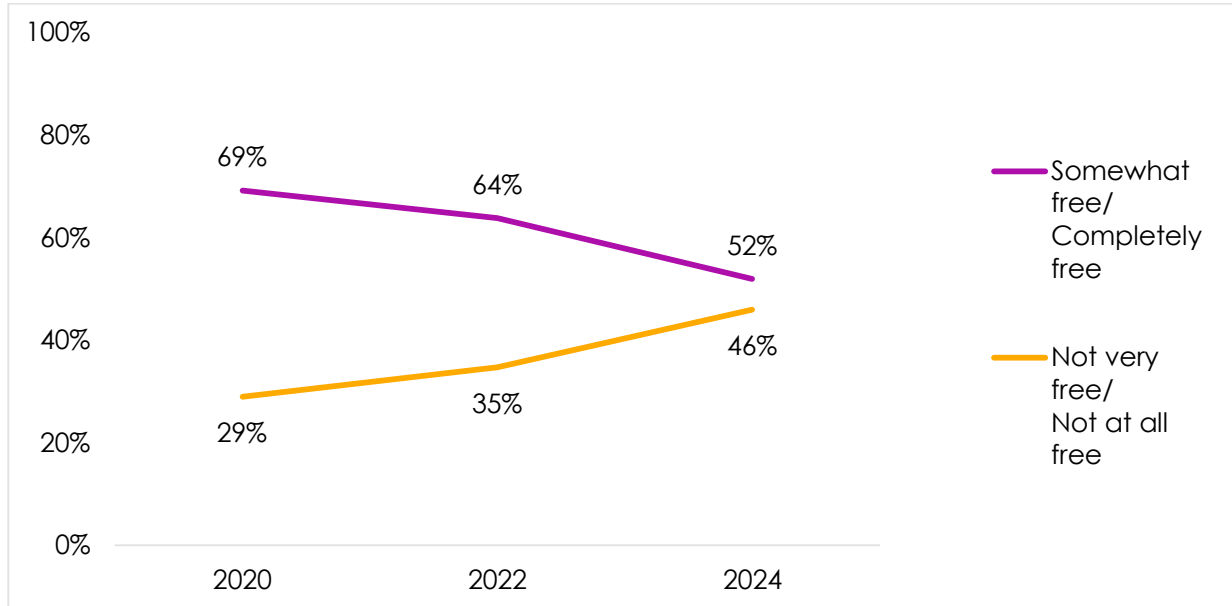
#### **Afrobarometer surveys**

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 survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 10 surveys were launched in January 2024. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Mauritius, led by StraConsult, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Mauritians between 24 April and 11 May 2024. 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 Mauritius in 2012, 2014, 2017, 2020, and 2022.

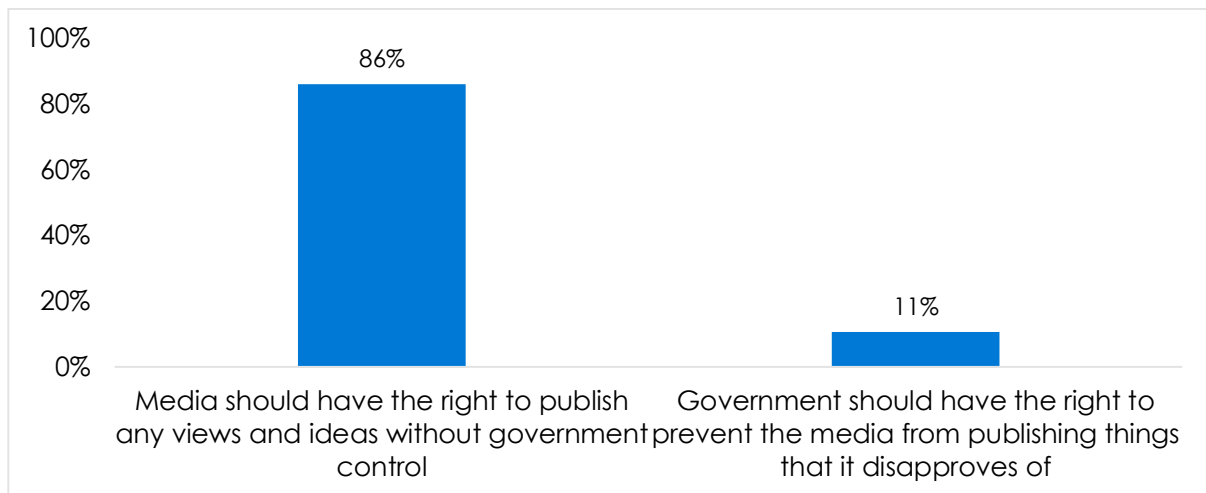
**Charts**

**Figure 1: How free is the news media? | Mauritius | 2024**



**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?*

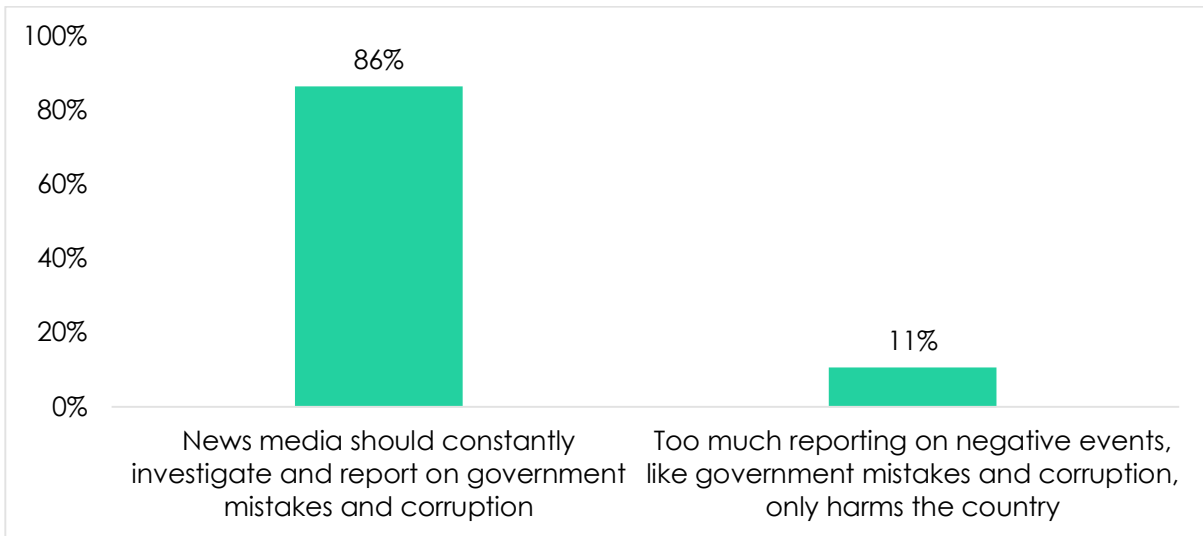
**Figure 2: Should the media be free? | Mauritius | 2024**



**Respondents were asked:** *Which of the following statements is closest to your view?*

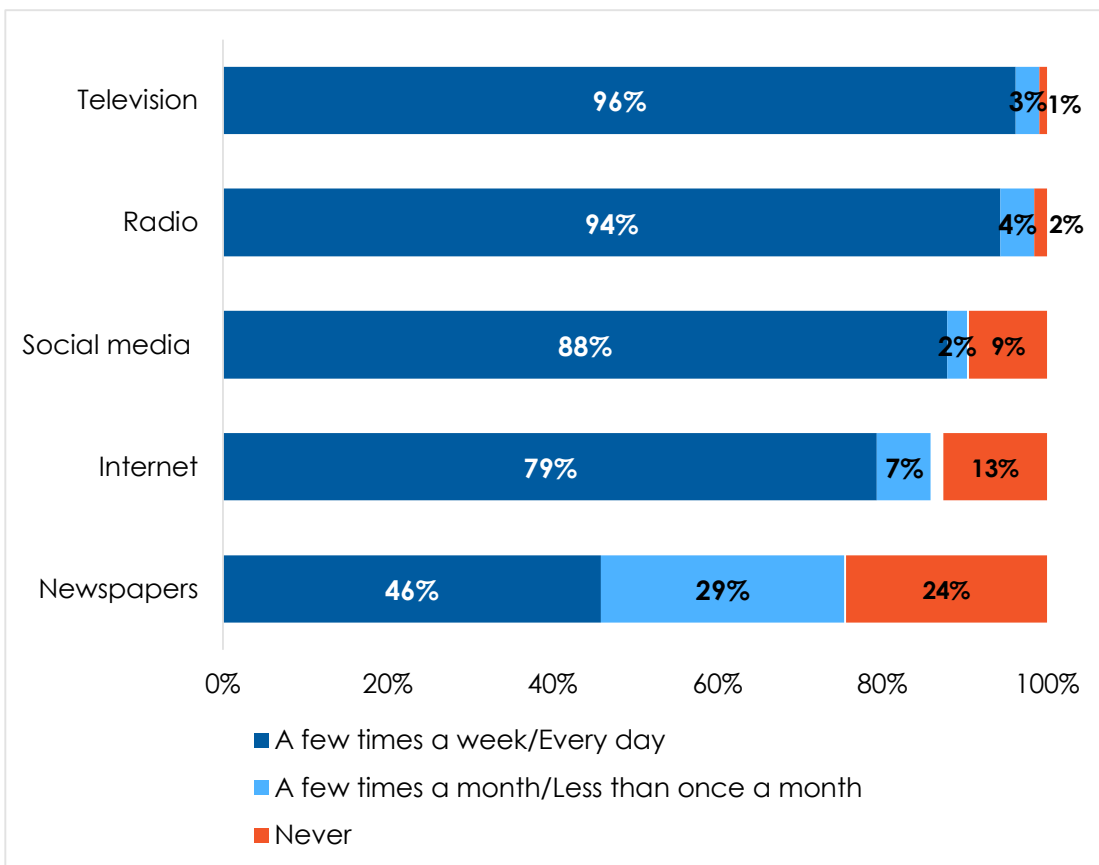
*Statement 1: The media should have the right to publish any views and ideas without government control.*  
*Statement 2: The government should have the right to prevent the media from publishing things that it disapproves of.*

**Figure 3: Support for media's watchdog role | Mauritius | 2024**



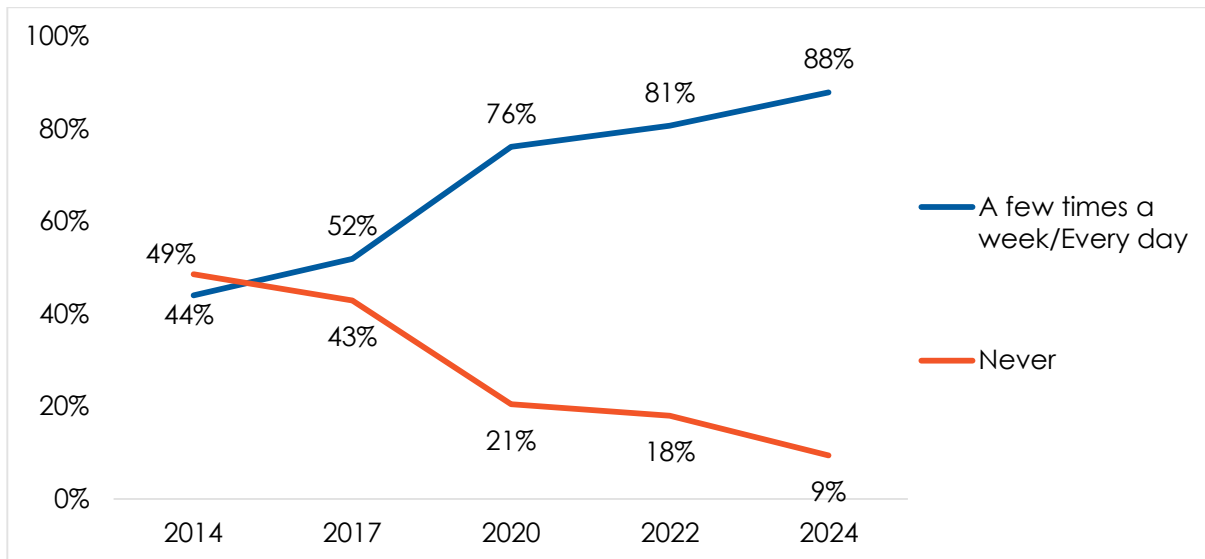
**Respondents were asked:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view?  
 Statement 1: The news media should constantly investigate and report on government mistakes and corruption.  
 Statement 2: Too much reporting on negative events, like government mistakes and corruption, only harms the country.

**Figure 4: Sources of news | Mauritius | 2024**



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

**Figure 5: Social media as a source of news | Mauritius | 2024**



**Respondents were asked:** How often do you get news from the following sources: Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, or others?

**For more information, please contact:**

StraConsult  
 L. Amédée Darga  
 Telephone: +230 210 70 33  
 Email: [straconsult@intnet.mu](mailto:straconsult@intnet.mu)

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