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Cape Verde

Country:

Cape Verde

Year:

2015

Press Freedom Status:

F

PFS Score:

27

Legal Environment:

6

Political Environment:

9

Economic Environment:

12

Cape Verde has historically been among the freest media environments in both Africa and the broader Lusophone world, and it maintained this status in 2014.

Legal Environment

The constitution directly provides for freedom of the press as well as confidentiality of sources, access to information, and freedom from arbitrary arrest. A 1999 constitutional amendment excludes the use of freedom of expression as a defense in defamation cases, but no such cases have been brought against journalists since 2002. Government officials broadly adhere to Cape Verde's access to information law.

The law requires broadcasters to obtain operating licenses, and government approval is needed to establish new newspapers and other publications. In 2011, the parliament approved the creation of a Regulatory Authority for the Media, whose goal is to protect press freedom and ensure that a diversity of opinions can be expressed. In February 2014, lawmakers delayed a decision that would have formally installed the authority's members, in a move connected to political disputes between the ruling party and the opposition. It was unclear whether the media regulator was operational at year's end.

Political Environment

The government respects press freedom and generally does not restrict access to or content on the media that it controls. Self-censorship, a somewhat underdeveloped journalistic cadre, and an incomplete incorporation of local Creole dialects into the country's media prevent Cape Verde from further improving the freedom and diversity of its information landscape. Intimidation of journalists in Cape Verde is rare. No attacks on media workers were reported in 2014.

Economic Environment

Many media outlets are state owned, though there are some private publications and broadcast outlets. The state runs the primary television channel, TCV, and a radio station, Radio Nacional de Cabo Verde. A number of independent and community-run radio stations broadcast regularly. Print media include a government publication and a handful of independent weeklies—including *A Semana*, the largest paper, as well as *Expresso das Ilhas* and *A Nação*—and monthlies, such as *Artiletra*. Portuguese and Brazilian newspapers are also available.

Geographic barriers in the country, which is made up of several islands, constitute impediments to the distribution of newspapers and other media products. This has contributed to the importance of the community radio sector. Difficulties raising funds and a lack of specific regulations governing community radio have been identified as major challenges for the sustainability of this sector, and community radio advocates have called for new legislation and government help with operating costs.

Internet usage has risen dramatically in recent years, from 8 percent of the population in 2007 to more than 40 percent in 2014. There were no reports that the government restricted or monitored internet use.

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