

## FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

# Suriname

[Suriname](#) | [Freedom of the Press 2012](#) | 

The government of Suriname generally respects freedom of expression and of the press, as provided for in the country's constitution. Libel is a criminal offense and can be punished with either fines or prison time; however, no cases against journalists were noted in 2011.

While there have been instances of threats and physical harassment directed at journalists in the past, no major incidents were reported in 2011. However, little investigative journalism takes place, and some journalists practice self-censorship due to pressure and intimidation from government officials. Coverage of certain issues, such as drug trafficking and the human rights abuses that took place under the Desi Bouterse dictatorship in the 1980s, are also discouraged. In 2010, Bouterse won Suriname's democratic presidential elections. Although he continues to face charges for the murders of five journalists in 1982, legal proceedings are suspended for the duration of his presidency. According to the Association of Surinamese Journalists (SVJ), communication between the Bouterse government and independent media worsened in 2011, and the government occasionally restricted the work of journalists.

Suriname has a robust media, with numerous newspaper publications. The two daily newspapers, *De Ware Tijd* and *De West*, are both privately owned, published in either Dutch or English, and maintain independent websites. Suriname has about 30 radio stations, including the government-owned Stichting Radio Omroep Suriname (SRS), two state-owned television stations, and one privately owned television station. The SVJ has reported that low salaries and poor training are leading to unprofessional conduct and hurting the profession. Chinese investment has recently surged in Suriname, resulting in an upgrade of a state television network. Additionally, the growing Chinese community has created two daily newspapers and a new television station that operates in Mandarin.

Approximately 32 percent of the population accessed the internet in 2011. The country has two internet service providers, and there are no restrictions on access.

## 2012 SCORES

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# Free

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