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FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

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Cape Verde

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Cape Verde has historically been among the freest media environments in both Africa and the broader Lusophone world, and it maintained this status in 2012. 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. The law requires broadcasters to obtain operating licenses, and government approval is needed to establish new newspapers and other publications. In October 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.

The government consistently demonstrates its commitment to respect and protect media freedom. Prime Minister José Maria Neves proclaimed in 2011, with no visible dissent, that when it comes to freedom of the press, "Cape Verde is a first-world country." The government does not generally restrict access to or content on the media that it controls. Intimidation of journalists in Cape Verde is rare. In 2012 there were no attacks on journalists nor any reports of intimidation. 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 media environment.

Many media outlets are state operated, although there are a growing number of private publications and broadcast outlets. The state runs the primary television channel, TCV, and a radio station, Radio Nacional de Cabo Verde. About a dozen independent and community-run FM radio stations broadcast regularly, and there are two private television channels. Print media include a government publication that appears twice weekly 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 readily 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 issues for the sustainability of this sector, and community radio advocates have called for government help with operating costs and new legislation.

Internet usage has risen dramatically over the last few years, from 8 percent of the population in 2007 to 35 percent in 2012. The cities have numerous cybercafés, giving residents regular access to the medium. There were no reports that the government restricted internet access or monitored e-mail messages.

2013 SCORES

PRESS STATUS

Free

PRESS FREEDOM SCORE

27

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

6

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

9

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

12

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