



Star Awards
Gaborone, Botswana
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News release

Majority of Batswana support media freedom

By a 2-to-1 margin, Batswana support the freedom of the media to publish without government interference, according to the latest Afrobarometer survey.

Freedom of information is one of the yardsticks that measure the extent to which a country is transparent and willing to subject itself to public scrutiny. The role of the media in this regard is paramount as it not only keeps the population knowledgeable but also helps hold the government accountable.

Key findings

- Almost two-thirds (62%) of Batswana “agree” or “agree very strongly” that the media should have the right to publish any views or ideas without government censorship. One in three respondents (32%) favour the government's right to prevent publication of things it considers harmful to society (Figure 1).
- Popular support for media freedom increased by 7 percentage points from 2014, though it remains below the 2008 level of 80%.
- City dwellers are more likely to support press freedom (66%) than semi-urban (62%) and rural (58%) residents, as are better-educated respondents compared to those with less education. The middle-aged are more likely to agree that the media should be free of government interference than are youth or the elderly (Figure 2).
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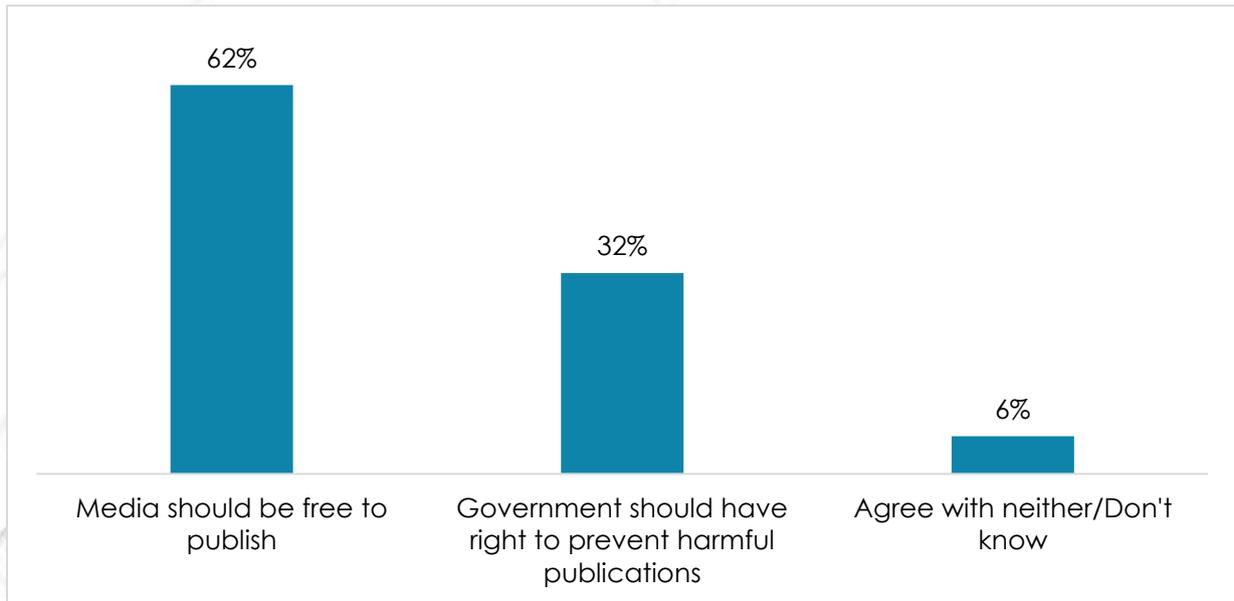
Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues in African countries. Six rounds of surveys were conducted in up to 37 countries between 1999 and 2016, and Round 7 surveys are currently underway. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Botswana, led by Star Awards Pty Ltd, interviewed 1,200 adult Batswana in July 2017. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3% at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Botswana in 1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012, and 2014.

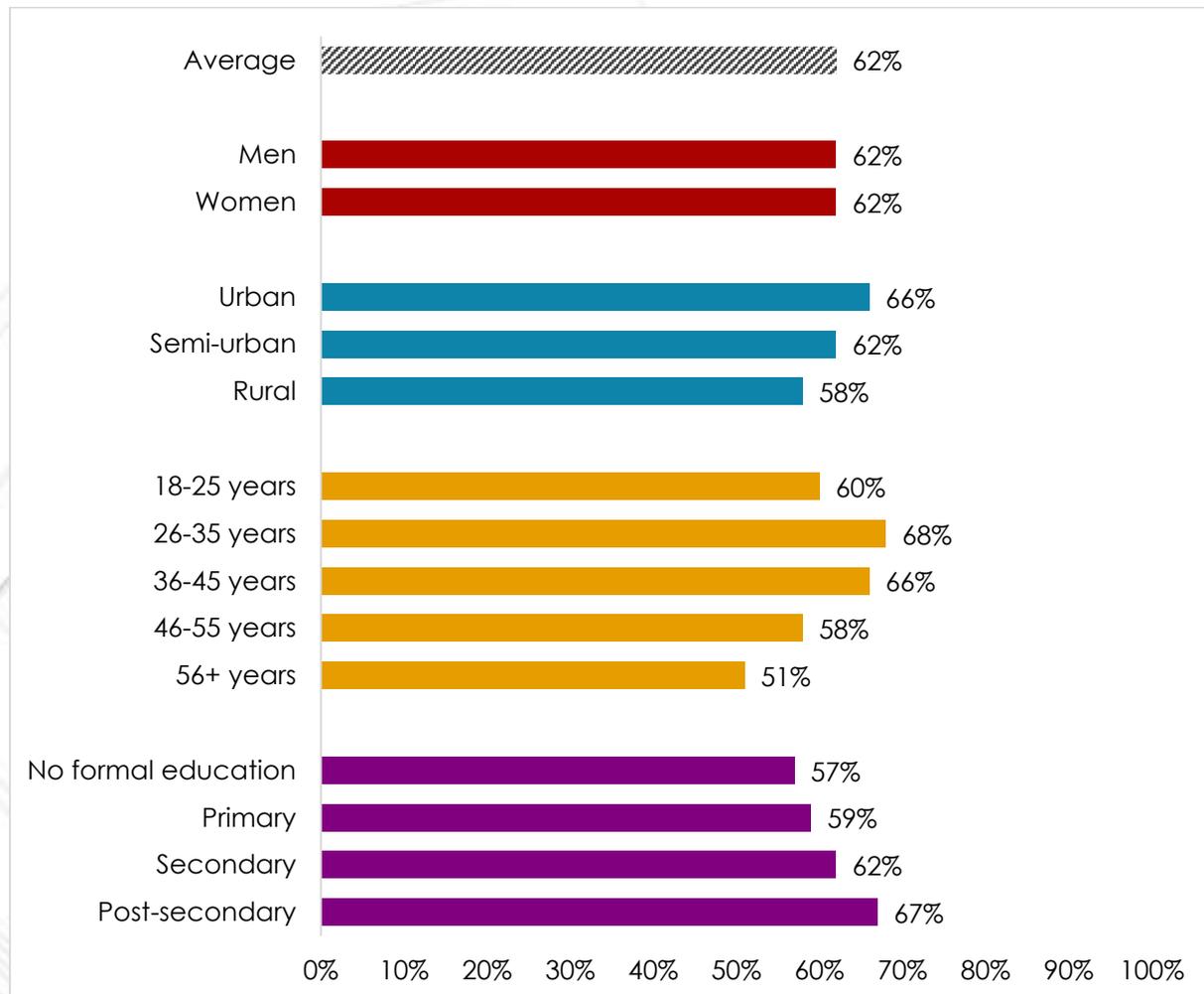
Charts

Figure 1: Media's right to publish vs. government control | Botswana | 2017



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 or ideas without government control.
Statement 2: The government should have the right to prevent the media from publishing things that it considers harmful to society.

Figure 2: Media's right to publish vs. government control | by socio-demographic group | Botswana | 2017



(% who "agree" or "strongly agree")

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