

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	166
Land:	Rwanda
Kilde:	Freedom House
Titel:	Freedom of the Press 2017 - Rwanda
Udgivet:	7. november 2017
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	1. marts 2018



Freedom of the Press 2017 - Rwanda

Publisher [Freedom House](#)

Publication Date 7 November 2017

Cite as Freedom House, *Freedom of the Press 2017 - Rwanda*, 7 November 2017, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5a01a219a.html> [accessed 12 December 2017]

Disclaimer This is not a UNHCR publication. UNHCR is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily endorse, its content. Any views expressed are solely those of the author or publisher and do not necessarily reflect those of UNHCR, the United Nations or its Member States.

Press Freedom Status: Not Free

Total Score: 79/100 (0 = Most Free, 100 = Least Free)

Legal Environment: 23/30

Political Environment: 34/40

Economic Environment: 22/30

Quick Facts

Population: 11,900,000

Freedom in the World Status: Not Free

Net Freedom Status: Partly Free

Internet Penetration Rate: 18.0%

Key Developments in 2016:

- In August, Sana Radio journalist John Ndabarasa disappeared under mysterious circumstances, and had not reemerged at year's end.
- A journalist with the public broadcaster was elected chairperson of the Rwanda Media Commission (RMC), a self-regulatory body established in 2013. The RMC had been without permanent leadership since its previous leader, Fred Muvunyi, fled Rwanda in 2015 after learning of ambiguously worded threats against him.
- A number of independent or opposition-aligned online news outlets remained inaccessible.

Executive Summary

Media freedom in Rwanda remains severely restricted, despite assurances by government officials of their commitment to review the situation. Journalists risk arrest under a variety of restrictive laws, and can face long jail terms if convicted. Journalists also face intimidation from authorities, as well as arbitrary detention and arrest on trumped-up charges unrelated to their work. Many have fled the country to avoid persecution and reprisals, but even in exile Rwandan journalists have experienced extralegal intimidation, leaving a chilling effect that extends beyond the country's borders. Most private outlets do not cover controversial topics, though a few radio stations have shown a willingness to criticize government policies. Progovernment newspapers and radio stations dominate the media landscape.

In 2015, RMC Chairman Muvunyi fled the country after learning of ambiguously worded plans to "remove" him; Muvunyi was known for successfully pushing back against government infringements on press freedom, and his departure left the body's independence in question. In December 2016, Christopher Barore, a journalist with the public broadcaster, was elected to a three-year term as chairperson of the RMC. Barore had served as the RMC's acting chair after Muvunyi left Rwanda.

Government censorship of internet content has increased in recent years. Several independent or opposition-aligned news outlets remained inaccessible in 2016, including the websites of *Inyenyeri News*, *Veritas Info*, *the Rwandan*, and *Leprophete*.

Journalists continued to face trumped-up charges and arbitrary arrest and detention in connection with their work in 2016. In January, writer and editor John Williams Ntwali, whose reporting had been critical of the government, was arrested, accused of the rape (later reduced to indecent exposure after evidence of an attack failed to materialize), and illegally detained for 13 days. In February, Ivan Mugisha of the *East African* weekly newspaper was arrested on legally dubious grounds, and interrogated about his reporting on a tax investigation into a Rwandan stone quarrying company.

In August, Ndabarasa, a journalist with Sana Radio, disappeared under mysterious circumstances, and had not reemerged at year's end. A friend said they had received a message, purportedly from Ndabarasa, explaining that he had gone abroad. However, his family stated that they did not believe he left the country, and media watchdogs have expressed uncertainty about the message's provenance.

Explanatory Note

This country report has been abridged for *Freedom of the Press 2017*. For background information on press freedom in Rwanda, see [Freedom of the Press 2016](#).

Copyright notice: © Freedom House, Inc. · All Rights Reserved

Search Refworld

by keyword	Enter a word or phrase
and / or country	All countries ▼
Clear	Search

[Advanced Search](#) | [Search Tips](#)

Countries

- [Rwanda](#)

Topics

- [Freedom of expression](#)
- [Freedom of information](#)