

30 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY UNVEILED



**AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA'S COVERAGE OF
THE 2024 SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS**

BRIEF

5

Written By:

Lister Namumba

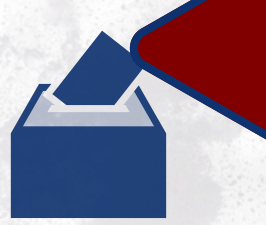
Designed by:

Nomshado Nkosinkulu

ELECTIONS



1. INTRODUCTION

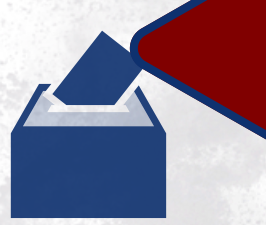


Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) is conducting monitoring of media coverage of the 2024 South African National and Provincial Elections (NPE) to identify the prioritised issues, dominant political parties, and any potential biases in the coverage. The monitoring includes the public broadcaster, South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), community media, and other news media. The data collected will be analysed in separate detailed reports for SABC, community media, and other news media. MMA will also release bi-weekly briefs to highlight any gaps in the coverage to encourage improvement.

This fourth brief focuses on the key trends observed in media coverage of the National and Provincial Elections from April 26th to May 9th, 2024. A total of 698 articles were collected during this two-week period, averaging 50 stories per day. This was a higher count compared to the previous monitoring period, which had 551 articles.



2. FINDINGS



ARTICLE COUNT OVER TIME

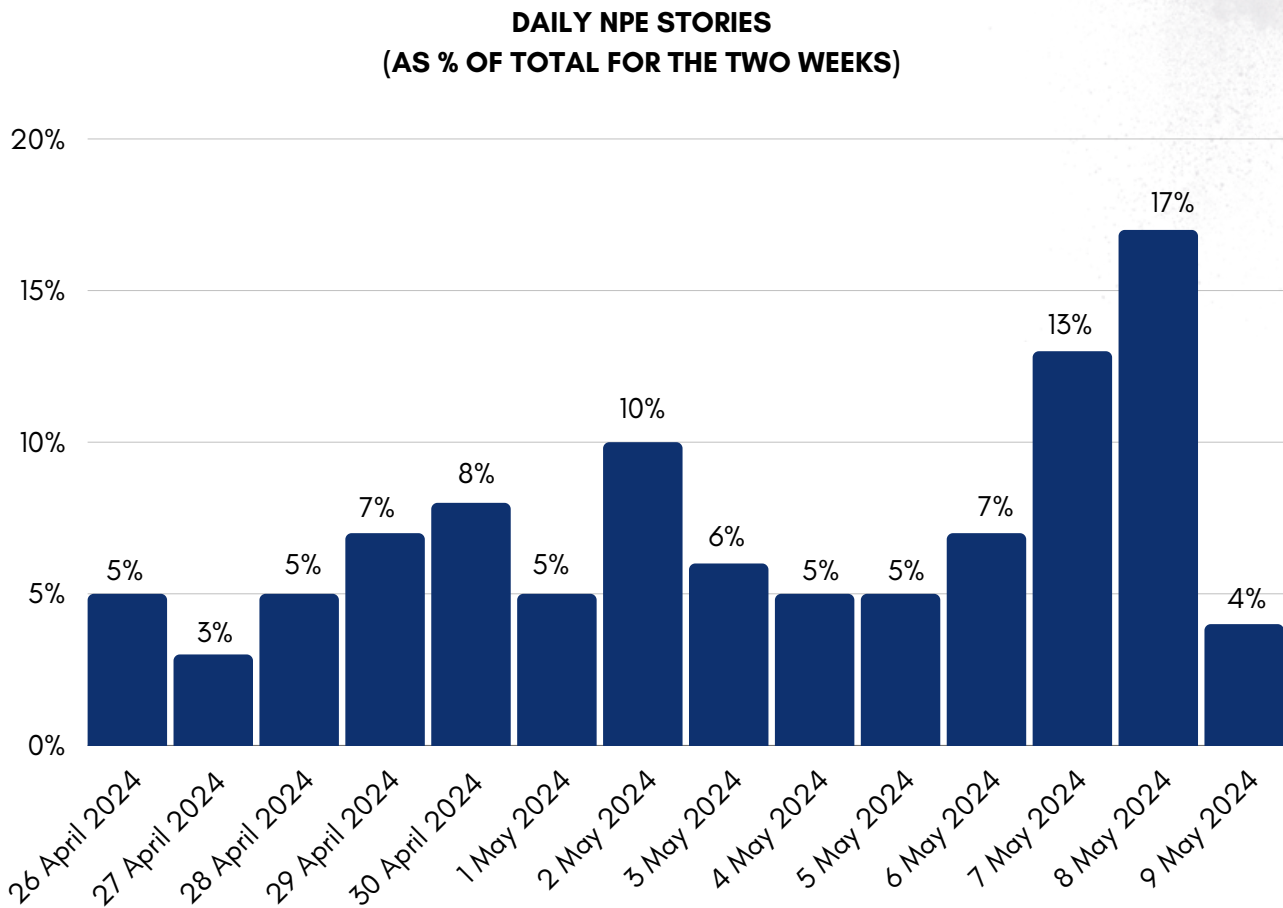


Figure 1: Daily percentage of stories on NPE

The graph shows the daily percentage of stories on NPE over a two-week period from April 26th to May 9th, 2024. The percentage of stories varied each day, with some days having higher coverage than others. The highest percentage of stories occurred on the 13th day, accounting for 17% of the total stories collected.



TOP 5 TOPICS

TOP 5 TOPICS (WHICH IS 64% OF ALL CODED TOPICS)

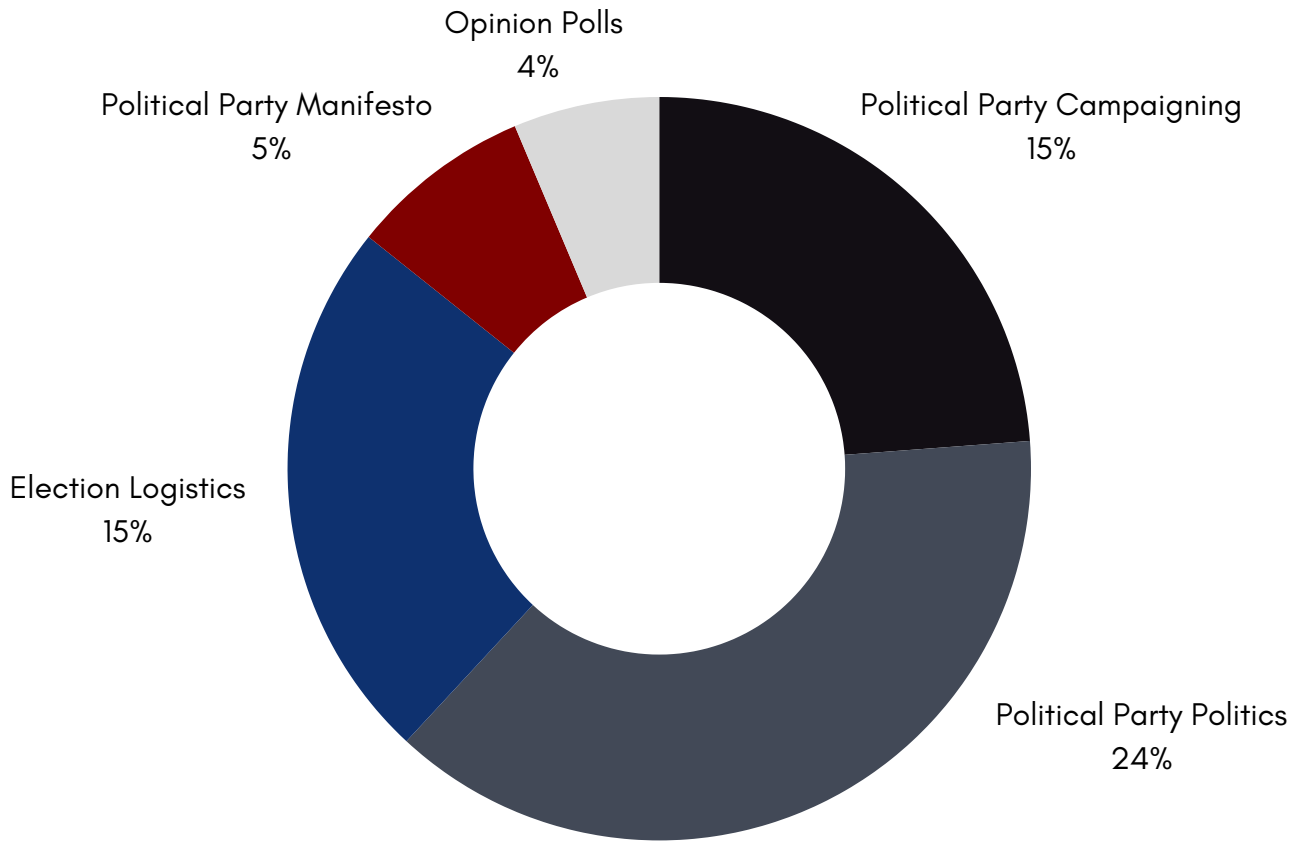


Figure 2: Top 5 topics in coverage

The graph displays the top 5 topics covered in the media's coverage of the elections.

The most dominant topic was political party politics, accounting for 24% of the coverage. Other dominant topics included political party campaigning (15%), election logistics (15%), political party manifesto (5%), and opinion polls (4%). These top 5 topics collectively accounted for 64% of all coded topics, leaving only 36% to be shared among the other 9 elections-coded topics that MMA has.

ELECTIONS

TOP 10 PARTY & ELECTIONS RELATED GROUP COVERAGE

TOP 10 PARTY & ELECTIONS RELATED GROUP COVERAGE

POLITICAL PARTY/GROUP COVERAGE (WHICH IS 65% OF ALL CODED POLITICAL PARTIES/GROUPS)

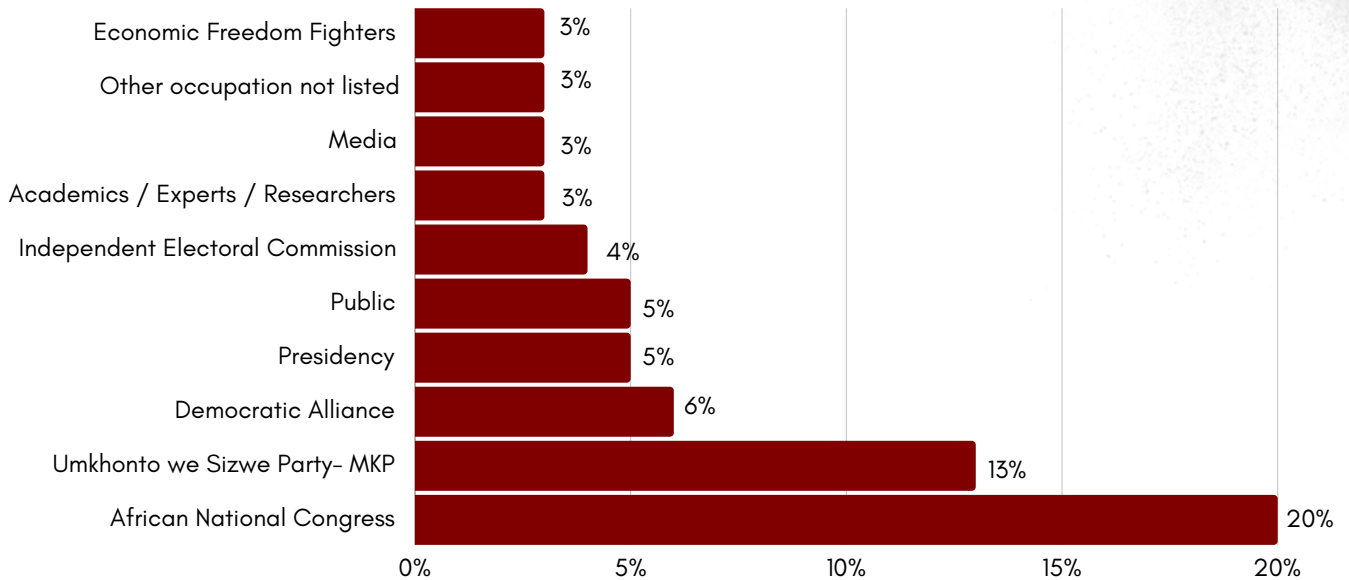
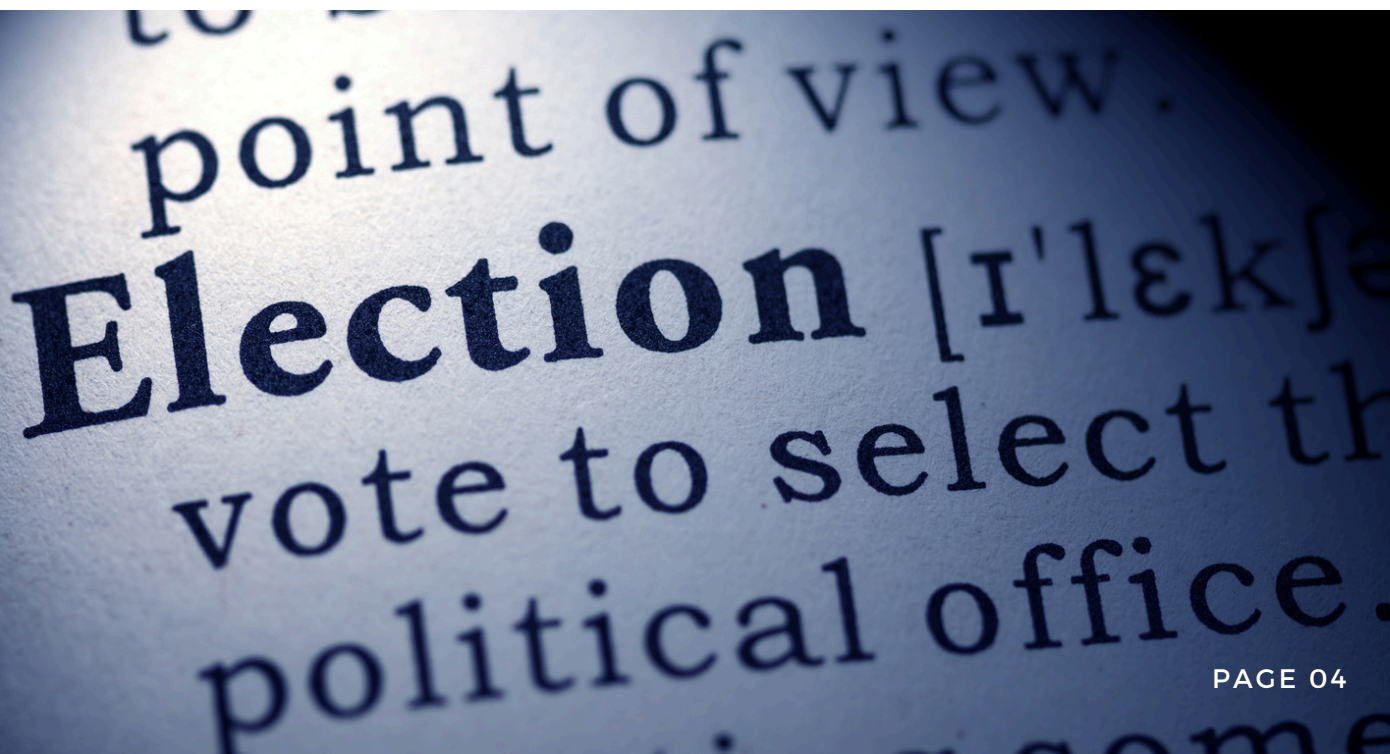
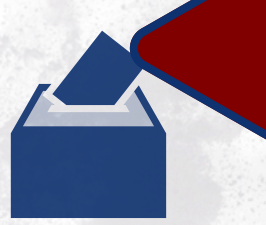


Figure 3: Top 10 political party/group coverage

The table presents the top 10 political parties/groups that received coverage in the media. The African National Congress (ANC) received the highest coverage, accounting for 20% of the total coverage. Other parties/groups that received notable coverage include Umkhonto we Sizwe Party (13%), Democratic Alliance (6%), Presidency (5%), and Public also with 5%. These top 10 parties/groups collectively accounted for 65% of all coded parties/groups.



GENDER REPRESENTATION OF SOURCES



Gender representation of sources

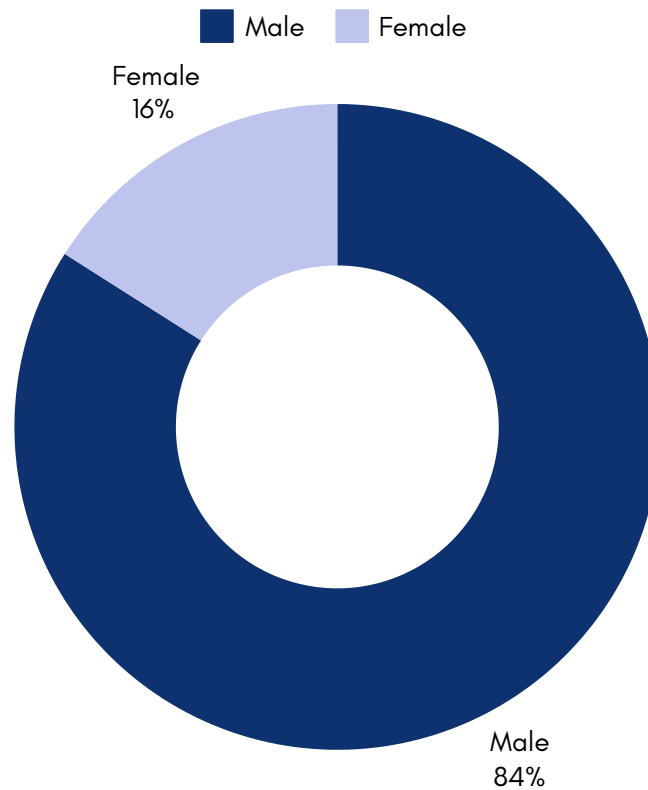


Figure 4: Gender representation of sources in coverage of NPE


The graph illustrates the gender representation of sources in the media coverage of the NPE. The majority of sources were male, representing 84% of the total sources. Female sources were significantly underrepresented, accounting for only 16% of the sources.


CONCLUSION

The analysis has revealed several key findings. The coverage of the NPE saw an increase in the number of articles compared to the previous monitoring period with an average of 50 stories per day during the monitoring period. The top topics covered included political party politics, campaigning, election logistics, party manifestos, and opinion polls showing that coverage is still not issue-based. The African National Congress (ANC) received the highest coverage among political parties, followed by Umkhonto we Sizwe Party and the Democratic Alliance. However, there was a significant gender imbalance in the representation of sources, with males dominating the coverage - a trend that MMA has observed not only since monitoring of the 2024 elections commenced, but also since the first monitoring of elections was done 30 years ago! These findings highlight the importance of monitoring media coverage to identify biases and encourage improvement in future election reporting.

CONTACT US



 listen@mma.org.za

 011 788 1278

 www.mediamonitoringafrica.org

 @Mediamattersza

 @Mediamattersza

 Media Monitoring Africa

 Media Monitoring Africa