

# 30 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY UNVEILED



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

**BRIEF**

**9**

Written By:

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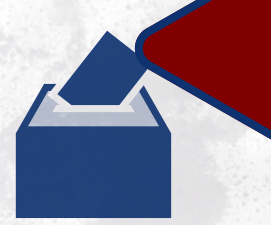
Designed by:

**Nomshado Nkosinkulu**

ELECTIONS



# 1. INTRODUCTION



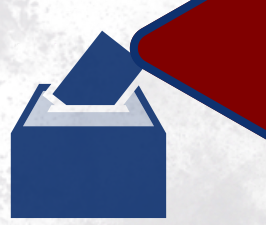
Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) is conducting monitoring of media coverage of the 2024 South African National and Provincial Elections (NPE) to identify the prioritised issues, dominant political parties, and any potential biases in the coverage. The monitoring includes the public broadcaster, South African 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 21st June to 4th July, 2024. A total of 490 articles were collected during this two-week period, averaging 35 stories per day. This is a decrease from the previous monitoring period which recorded 621 stories on the NPE.

The decrease in coverage of the NPE can be attributed to the fact the monitoring period includes dates outside of the May 29 elections. This is the last elections brief that MMA will publish. In a few weeks, detailed reports analysing how the SABC, Other News Media and Community Media reported the 2024 NPE will be published.



## 2. FINDINGS



### ARTICLE COUNT OVER TIME

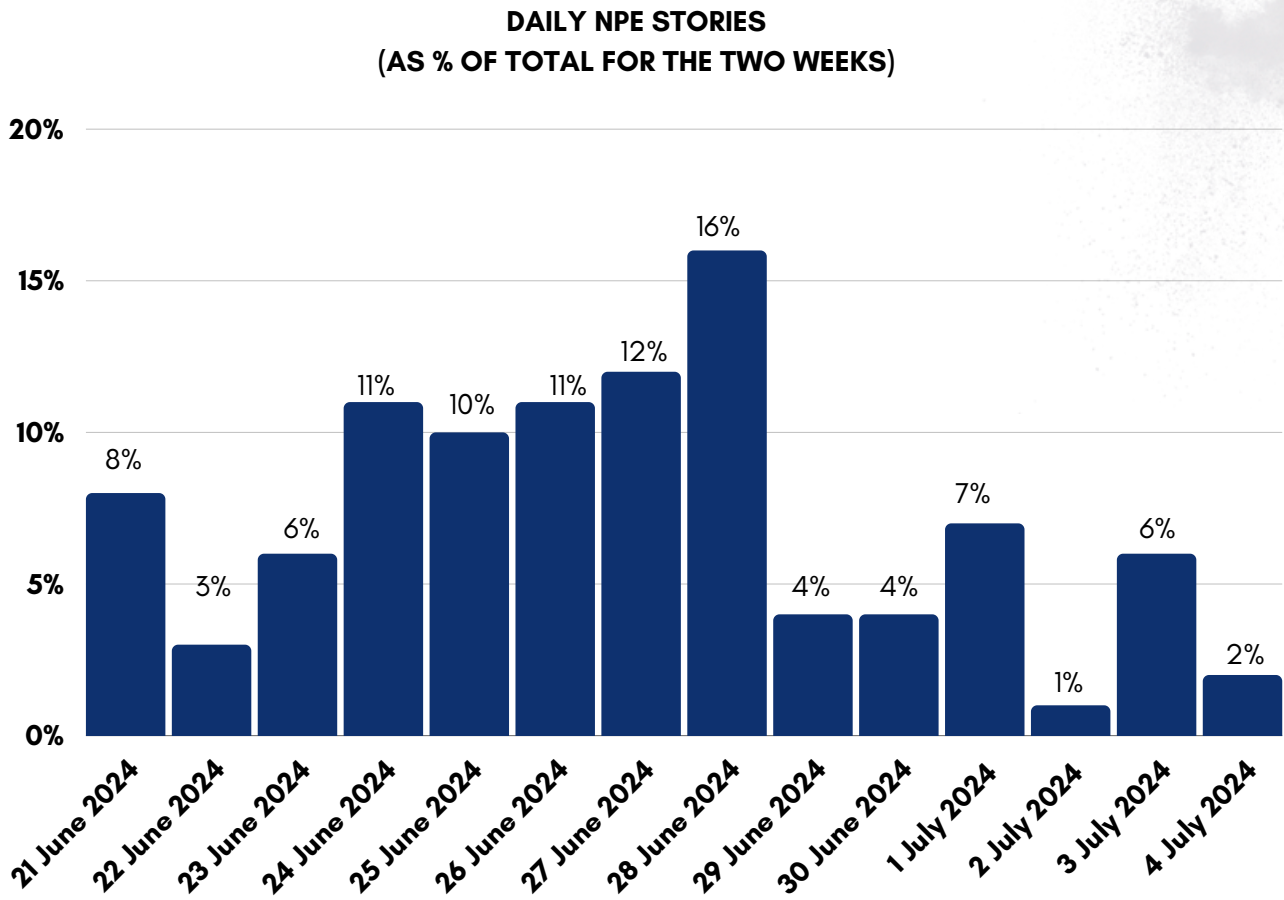


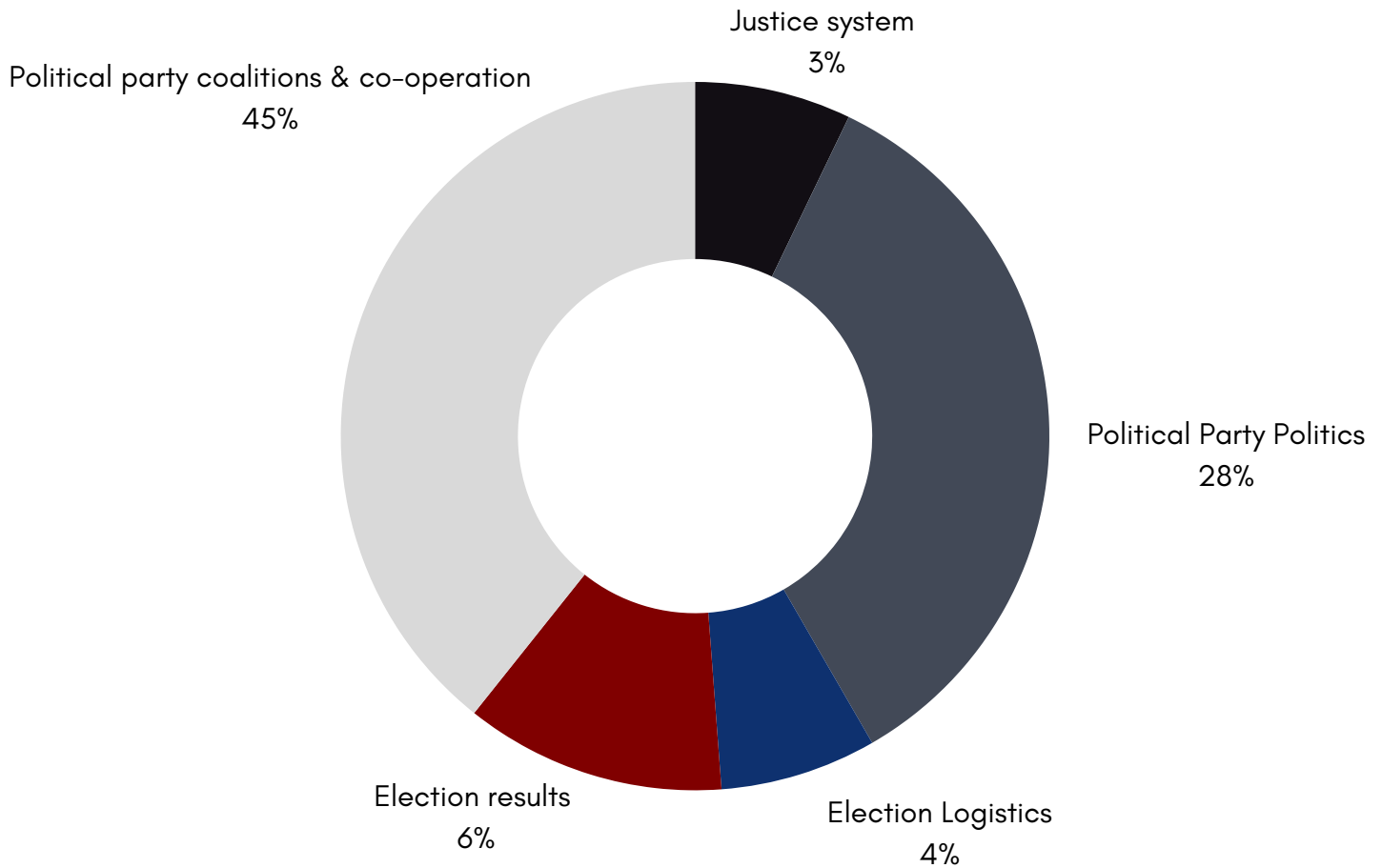
Figure 1: Daily percentage of stories on NPE

The graph shows the daily percentage of stories on the National and Provincial Elections (NPE) from 21st June to 4th July, 2024. Coverage of NPE during this monitoring period was lesser than the previous monitoring period where 621 stories were recorded and, far lesser coverage than that recorded around voting day.



## TOP 5 TOPICS

### TOP 5 TOPICS (WHICH IS 87% OF ALL CODED TOPICS)



**Figure 2: Top 5 topics in coverage**

The graph shows the top 5 topics in the media coverage of the NPE. As can be seen, political party coalitions & co-operation as a topic dominated with 45% of coverage followed by political party politics at 28%. These two topics dominated because of the focus on coalitions and the Government of National Unity formed after the elections. The top 5 topics shown in Figure 2 collectively make up 87% of all the election-coded topics – one of the highest coverage share recorded since the beginning of monitoring!

# TOP 10 PARTY & ELECTIONS RELATED GROUP COVERAGE

## TOP 10 PARTY & ELECTIONS RELATED GROUP COVERAGE

POLITICAL PARTY/GROUP COVERAGE (WHICH IS 62% OF ALL CODED POLITICAL PARTIES/GROUPS)

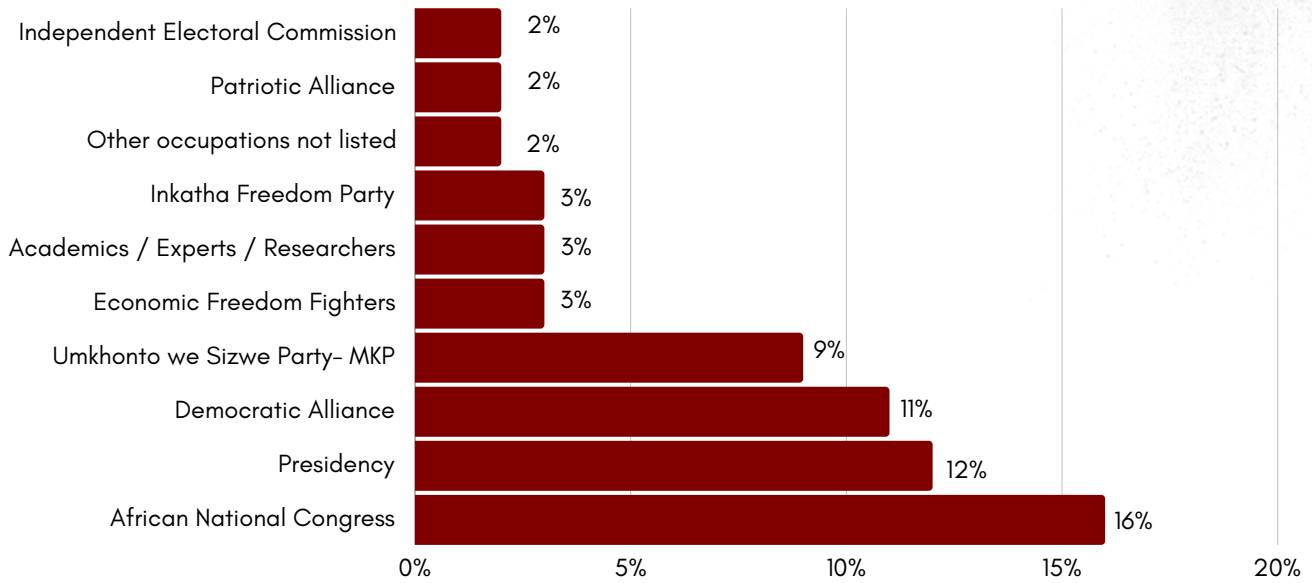
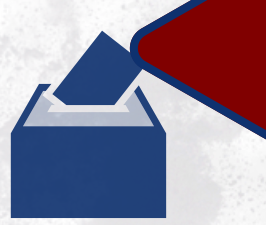


Figure 3: Top 10 political party/group coverage

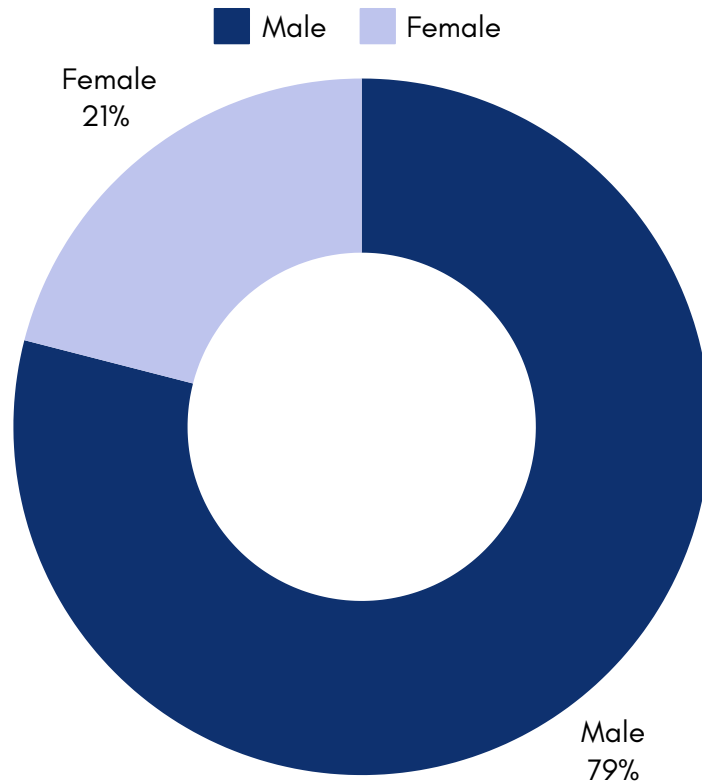
The graph shows the top 10 political party/group coverage in the media. The African National Congress (ANC) continued to dominate throughout the entire monitoring period, accounting for 16% of the total coded political parties/groups in this monitoring period. The Umkhonto we Sizwe Party (MKP) which has been coming in second to the ANC during the entire monitoring period featured 4th on the list during this monitoring period and is replaced by the Presidency with a voice share of 12%. The top 10 political party/group coverage collectively make up 62% of all the coded political parties/groups.



# GENDER REPRESENTATION OF SOURCES



## Gender representation of sources

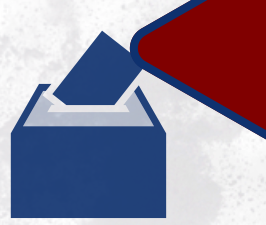


**Figure 4: Gender representation of sources in coverage of NPE**

The graph shows the gender representation of sources in the media coverage of the NPE. Male sources account for 79% of the total sources, while female sources account for only 21%. While this is an increase from the previous monitoring periods including the recent one which had 17% voice share for female sources, it is still a far cry from the gender equality and equity being sought in media coverage of events and issues of national importance.



## CONCLUSION




The media coverage of the 2024 South African National and Provincial Elections (NPE), as monitored by Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), reveals several key trends and areas of concern. Throughout the monitoring period from June 21 to July 4, 2024, there was a notable decline in coverage compared to previous periods, reflecting a shift away from the immediate post-election period. This decrease underscores a potential decrease in public interest or a reorientation of media priorities towards other topics.

The dominant themes in media coverage continued to revolve around political party coalitions and cooperation, reflecting the ongoing negotiations and formation of the Government of National Unity. This focus on political dynamics suggests a persistent interest in governance and leadership structures post-election.

The African National Congress (ANC) maintained its position as the most covered political entity, followed by other significant parties such as the Presidency and Umkhonto we Sizwe Party (MKP).

Despite slight improvements, gender representation remains skewed in media sources, with male voices significantly outnumbering female voices. This disparity underscores ongoing challenges in achieving gender equality in media coverage, despite incremental gains in representation.


While the media provided extensive coverage of critical election-related topics and key political players, there is a clear need for greater diversity in coverage focus and more equitable representation of voices to enrich public discourse and foster inclusive democratic participation in South Africa.




# ELECTIONS

# CONTACT US



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