

# The Election Misinformation Guide

A guide on how to identify,  
debunk and stop of election  
and election related



# OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA AND DIGITAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN KENYA

Kenya's media ecosystem is both complicated and sophisticated. From colonial times to the present, media growth in Kenya has been inextricably related to the country's history. The two most influential newspapers in Kenya today, for example, have their origins in colonial Kenya, with one, The Standard, considered an instrument for aristocratic control and the preservation of the imperialist status quo, and the other, The Nation, viewed as a direct resistance to colonialism.

Even while that past — whose main impact was a British policy of "divide and rule" — still shapes politics and media practice in Kenya today, technology is the most powerful force determining media execution. Kenya's media landscape now includes a diverse range of print, television, and online mediums. The creation and delivery of information are primarily in the hands of the private sector, albeit it is heavily regulated by the government.

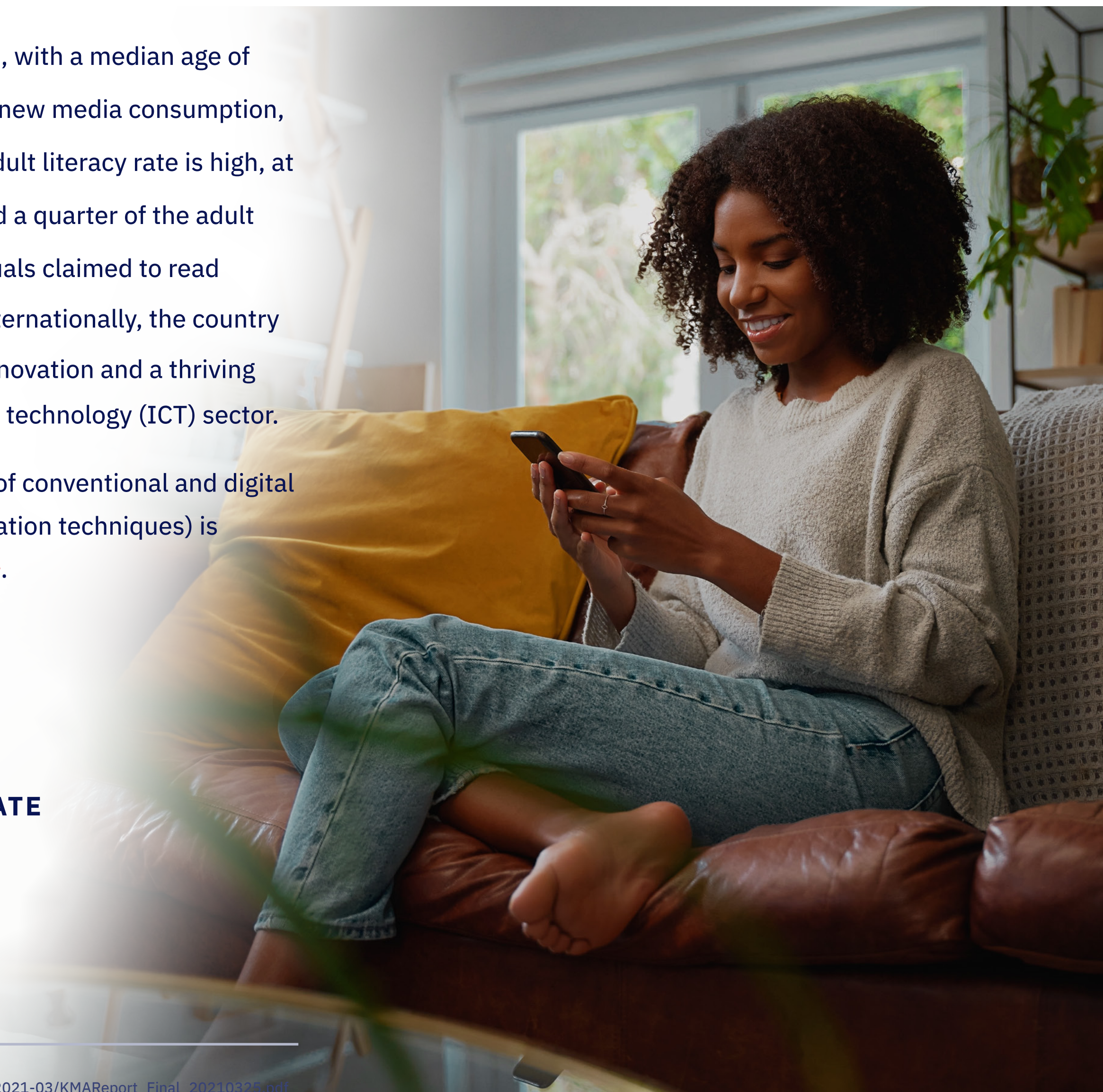
Kenya has a youthful population, with a median age of 20.1, explaining the increase in new media consumption, particularly social media. The adult literacy rate is high, at 82%. Up until a year ago, around a quarter of the adult population of 20 million individuals claimed to read newspapers on a daily basis. Internationally, the country is being recognized for digital innovation and a thriving information and communication technology (ICT) sector.

Innovative hybrid media (a mix of conventional and digital media production and dissemination techniques) is reshaping the media landscape<sup>1</sup>.

# 82%

**THE ADULT LITERACY RATE**

<sup>1</sup> The Kenya Media Assessment 2021 - [https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/2021-03/KMARReport\\_Final\\_20210325.pdf](https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/2021-03/KMARReport_Final_20210325.pdf)

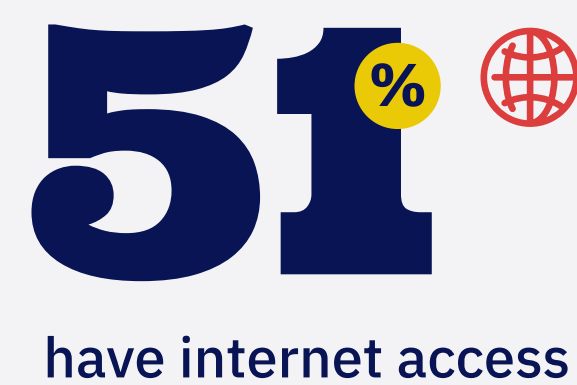


# TRADITIONAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE

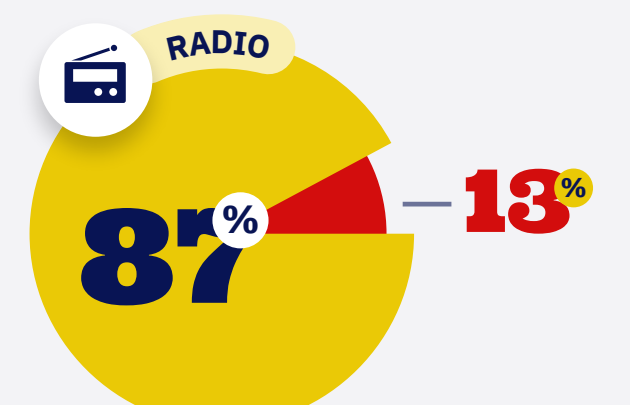
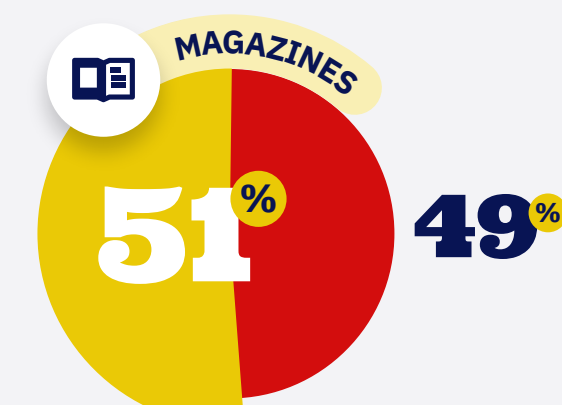
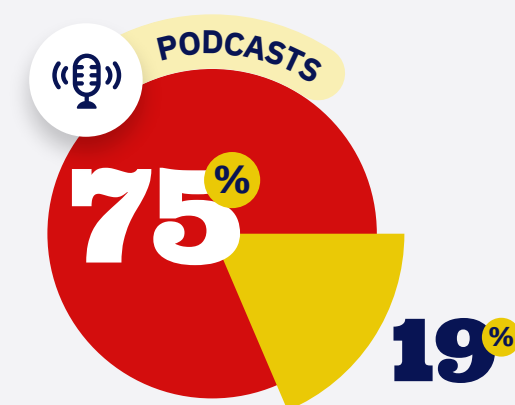
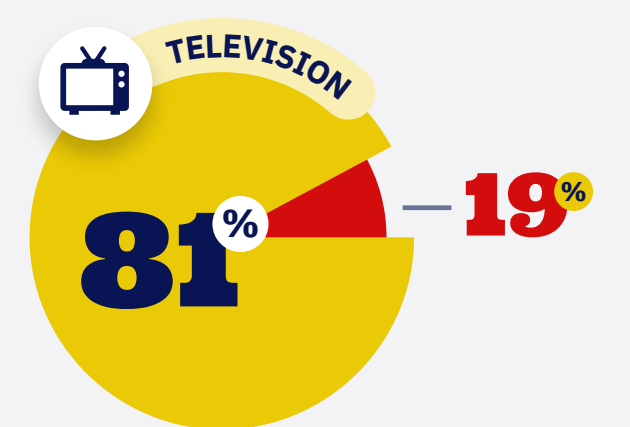
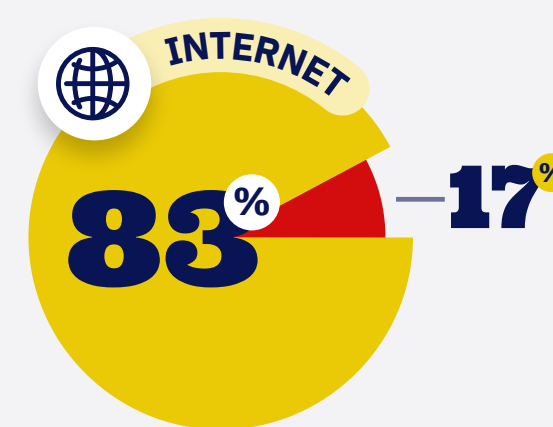
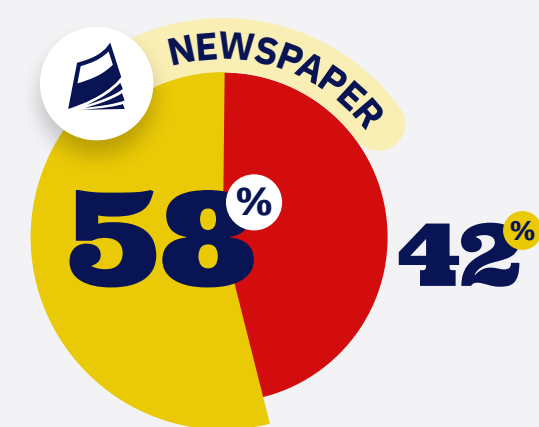
According to a nationally representative study conducted by BBC Media Action in 2015, virtually all of Kenya's adult population (98%) has access to radio and a mobile phone (97%). Connection to television is also widespread (81%), and more than half of the adult population has internet access (51%)<sup>2</sup>.

Six years later, according to a GeoPoll National Media Establishment Survey sampling 1905 respondents, radio still remains the most popular form of media, with nearly nine out of every ten respondents in the study having

listened to the radio in the previous 30 days. The internet has surpassed television. In the previous 30 days, 8 out of every 10 persons had access to both sorts of media. Furthermore, print readership is accessed by just above half of the sampled respondents.



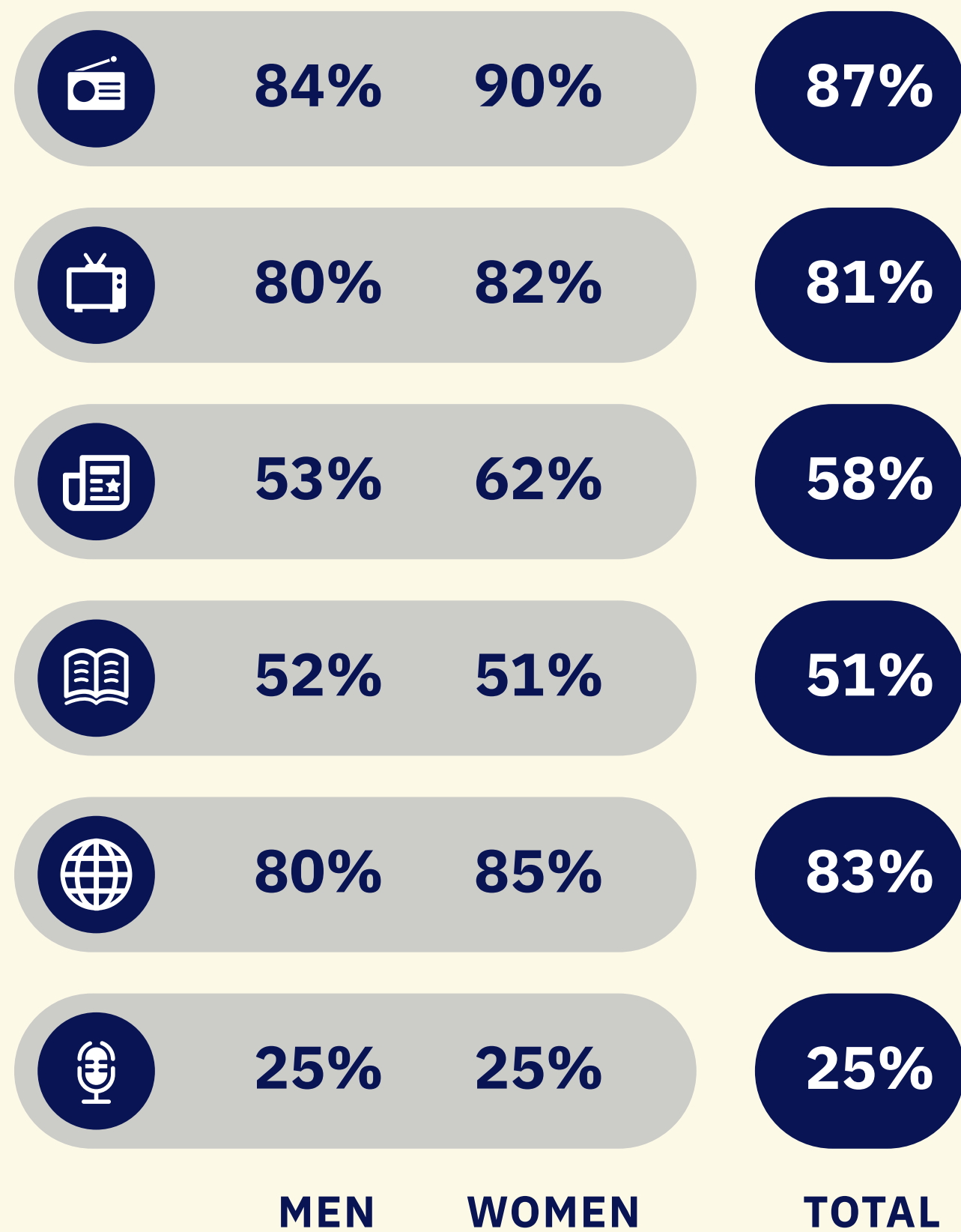
(Figures include access at home or elsewhere) Base=3,003  
Note: figures exclude those who answered 'don't know and those who did not answer



● Had access ● No access

# ACCESS TO MEDIA BY GENDER

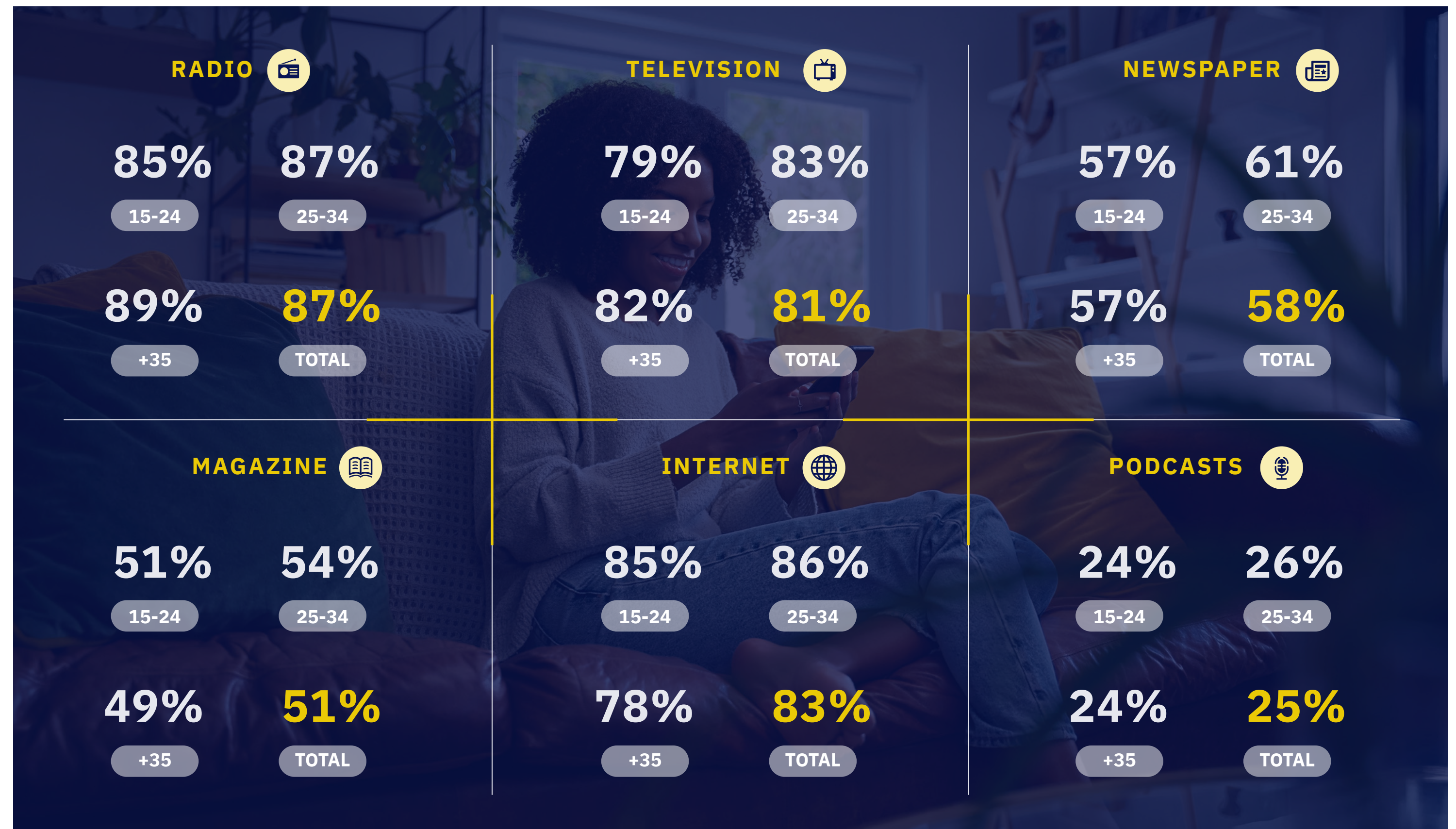
The prevalence of media consumption differs by gender for some media. When compared to females, males had more access to the radio (+6%). This was further separated in newspaper readership, where males were found to be +9% higher than females.



# ACCESS TO MEDIA BY AGE

While radio listenership was strong (over 80%) across all age categories, there was a larger tilt as respondents got older. TV viewership was also greater among individuals aged 25-34 and 35+ compared to the younger 15-24 year-olds.

Print media, such as newspapers and magazines, is more popular among people aged 25 to 34. As predicted, internet usage in the last 30 days is greater among the younger age groups (15-24 year-olds and 25-34-year-olds) than among those aged 35+.



# RADIO

*According to the 2021 Status of Media Report by the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), radio was the primary source of information in Kenya and most popular media platform at 74% of Kenyans. The country has 200 licensed radio stations, all of which are operational.*

In Kenya, despite a high concentration of radio stations in metropolitan areas, over 60 private vernacular radio stations operating in several languages have a strong reach in rural regions. There are over 40 community radio stations among them.

Regrettably, many of these radio stations are ill-equipped and understaffed, and the majority are either owned by or linked with politicians. For example, Mediamax which owns Kameme FM, and Milele FM among others have ties to the First Family.

The Standard Group which owns Radio Maisha, Vybes Radio and Spice FM has ties to the Moi family, while Royal Media Services which owns 14 radio stations including Radio Citizen is owned by businessman Samuel Kamau Macharia who is a close associate of Raila Odinga. Kass FM is owned by Joshua Chepkwony who is said to have close ties to Deputy President William Ruto.

This brings up the fundamental issue of editorial independence.

According to Q 1 2022 GeoPoll Audience Measurement, which collects daily data on TV and radio ratings in Kenya, the data shows that between January and March 2022, Radio Citizen was the most listened to radio station, with a 10.2% share of the radio audience in Kenya.

Radio Africa Group's sister stations – Radio Jambo and Classic 105, followed closely with 8.7% and 7.3% of the audience respectively. Radio Maisha (7.2%) and Kiss FM (6.9%) completed the top five.



# Top Radio Stations in Kenya

Q1 2022



10.19%



8.69%



7.26%

TOP 3 RADIO STATIONS



7.23%



6.86%



6.43%

3.46%



2.89%



2.88%



2.80%



Others  
41.3%

# TELEVISION

Television in Kenya has also had its highs and lows in recent years. Its more recent low was in February 2018 when the government shutdown Citizen TV, Nation TV, and KTN TV for more than a week for broadcasting the swearing in of Raila Odinga as ‘the Peoples’ President’ despite being warned by the government against it. Even though its top managers and editors were summoned to State House and told not to broadcast it, they considered it an issue of editorial independence and went ahead to broadcast it.

Its high could arguably be during the COVID-19 period when according to the 2020 Status of Media Report by the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), they had a reach of 74% of Kenyans, similar to radio. This was because the movement restrictions by the government compelled people to remain at home. The 2021 report that was released in January 2022 however put TV popularity at 58%, signalling a reduced audience reach and COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

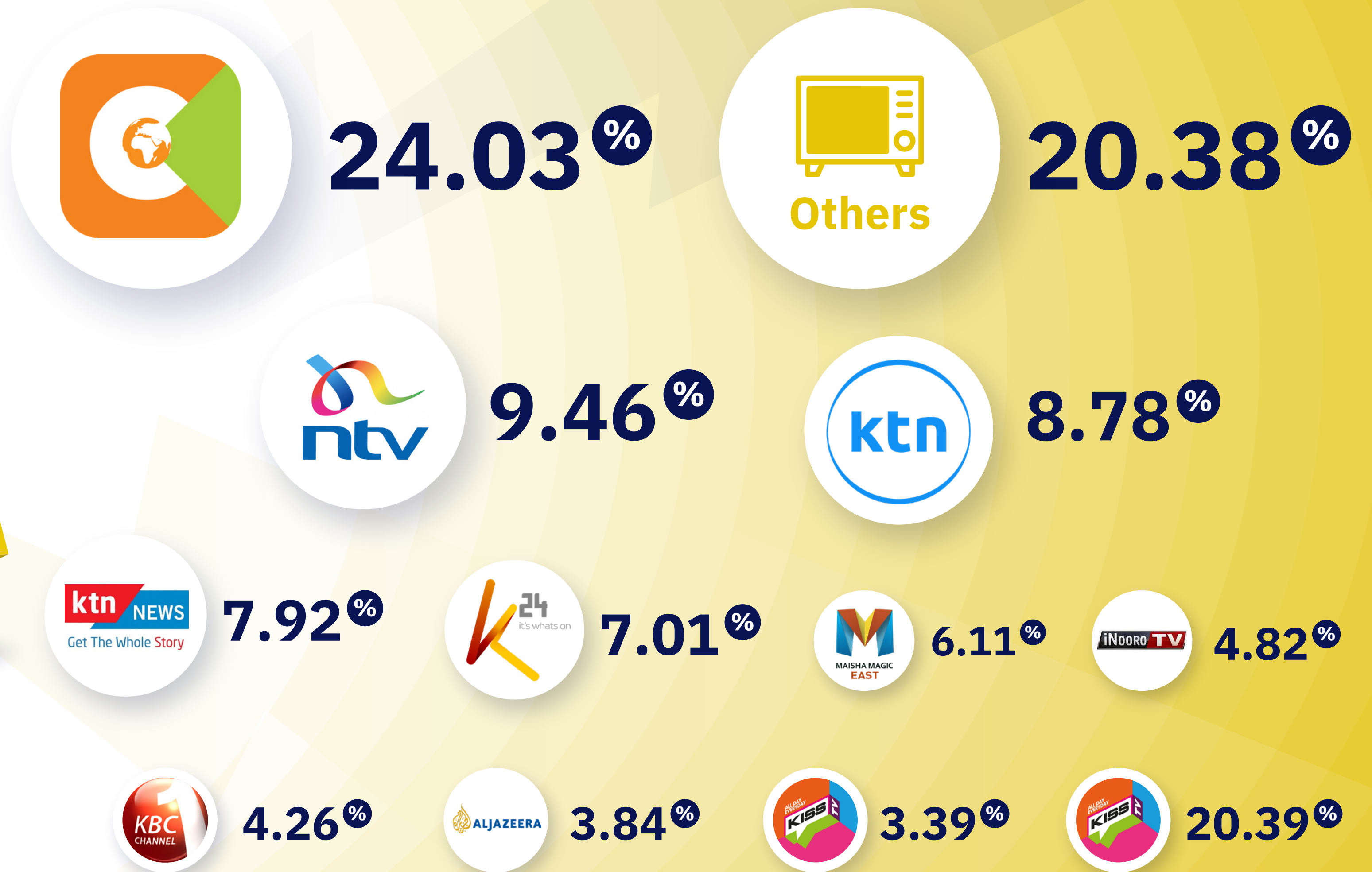
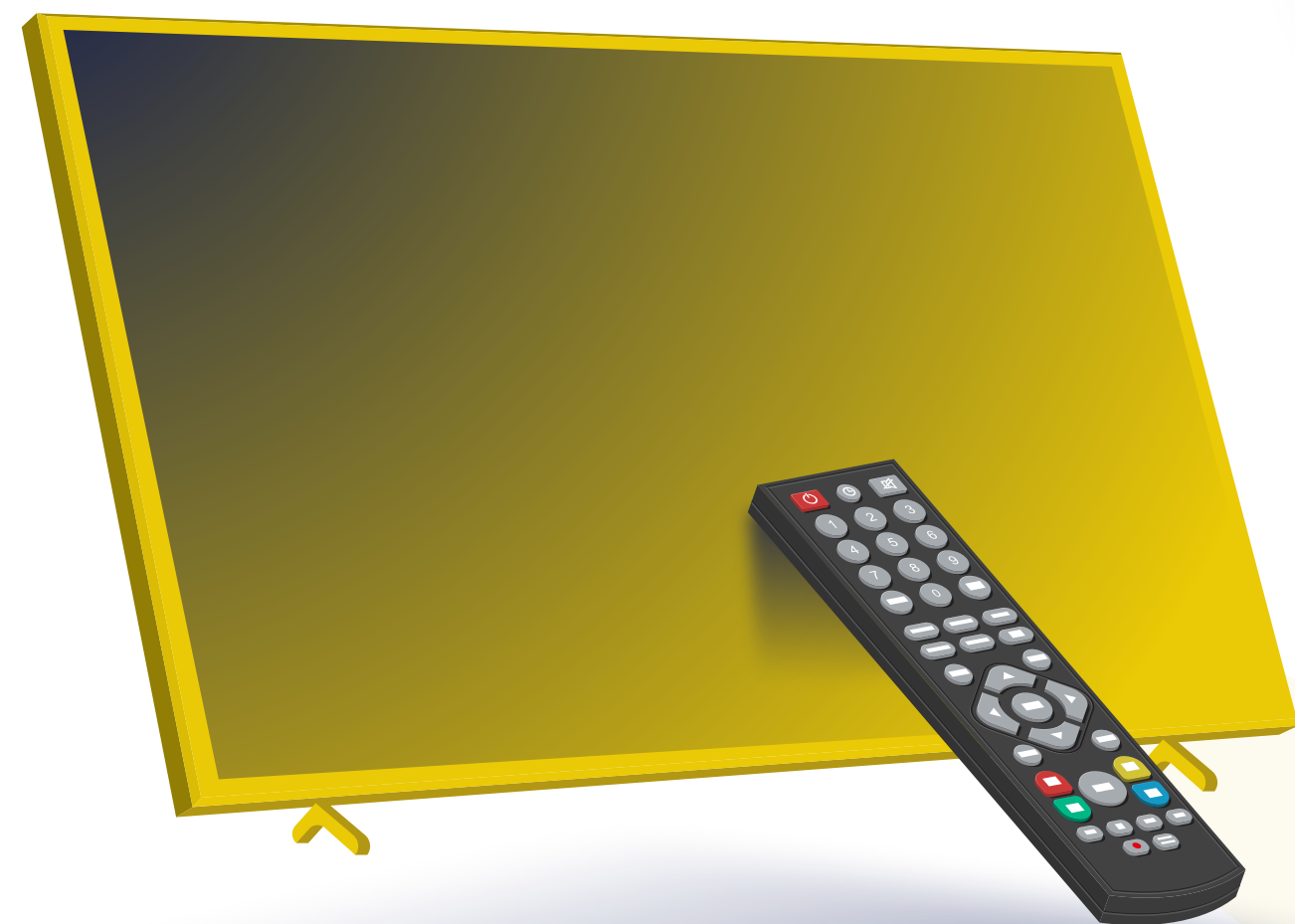
The same ownership dynamics of radio as embroil TV. The First Family which is said to own Mediamax has K24 as its TV station, Royal Media Services have Citizen TV while the Standard Group have KTN and KTN News. NTV is owned by the Aga Khan. Both Nation and Standard are listed in the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), but the real owners are covered under nominee businesses and names.

Data from the Quarter 1, 2022 Geopoll measurement survey indicates that Citizen TV continued to dominate the Kenyan airwaves, with an overall share of 24%. NTV (9.5%) had the second-largest share, followed by The Standard Group’s sister channels – KTN and KTN News – and K24. Inooro TV (4.8%) and Al Jazeera (3.84%) were the only vernacular and international channels, respectively, among the top ten channels by viewership.



# Top TV Channels in Kenya

Q1 2022





# DIGITAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Out of Kenya's total population of 55.60 million, there are 23.35 million internet users! Kenya's internet penetration rate stood at 42% of the total population at the start of 2022.

The internet has caught up with television. In a 2021 GeoPoll survey sampling 1905 respondents, 8 out of every 10 persons had access to both sorts of media within the last 30 days. According to the Communication Authority (CA), Kenya has 44.4 million data/internet subscribers in the second quarter of the year 2020/2021. Internet usage is likely to continue "changing swiftly" due to increased technological innovation, the availability of more cheap smartphones on the market, and improved connections (3G, 4G, and 5G) in the nation.

Furthermore, there were 11.75 million social media users in Kenya in January 2022. Kepios analysis reveals that social media users in Kenya increased by 750,000 (+6.8%) between 2021 and 2022.

## Kenyans on the Internet



# DIGITAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Kenya has an active social media landscape that reflects the wide range of information viewers want as well as the culture of online content consumption. Kenyan blogs alone are in the thousands. There are 19,000 blogs in Kenya, according to the Bloggers Association of Kenya [BAKE], a membership group.

There are blogs on almost everything, from money to cuisine. However, political blogging reigns supreme. Interactions on social media are also largely political and, on Facebook and WhatsApp, notably tribal or ethnic in nature. And it is on social media that fake news flourishes!

# 19,000

There are 19,000 blogs in Kenya, according to the Bloggers Association of Kenya [BAKE], a membership group.



## Most Visited Websites



# DIGITAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE





# **DIGITAL MEDIA MIS-INFORMATION SPACE**

# DIGITAL MEDIA MIS-INFORMATION SPACE

Kenya's media was a trusted institution between the 1980s and the early 2000s. It was part of the campaign for multipartyism and a more free and democratic Kenya. But not any longer. "Perhaps," says Denis Galava, Managing Editor of the Standard Newspaper until December 2020, "because the idealistic motives for the establishment of media institutions in Kenya had given way to the seduction of the financial motive along the line, causing major trust difficulties among readers."

For example, according to the most current quantitative data from a GeoPoll study conducted for Internews as part of this research, 64% of Kenyans "don't entirely" trust the media.

# 64%

**About 64% of the respondents do not completely trust the news and information they get from the media.**



The decline of faith in the media began earlier but peaked in 2007, when a disputed election resulted in Kenya's worst post-election violence, in which elements of the media were blamed for producing and disseminating inciteful content, self-censorship, and biased reporting. To bring the point home, a journalist, Joshua Sang', was

among six suspects before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity.

Furthermore, partisanship in the media, as represented in ownership, management, and editorial decisions, has been highlighted as a major barrier to confidence in the media.



# DIGITAL MEDIA MIS-INFORMATION SPACE

Part of this scepticism stems from the rise of fake news (which is partially driven by technology). Between August and October 2017, Kenya experienced an extremely contentious electioneering season.

As previously stated, the country suffers from significant tribal polarization, a remnant of the British colonial policy of "divide and rule" that has been carried on by post-independence, African-led administrations to the present day, and which normally peaks around pre-election and election times. Fake news and hate speech in the media increased significantly in 2017, and this trend has continued to this day.

In fact, according to Safaricom, the largest mobile service provider with over 26 million subscribers, the most difficult challenge they faced in 2017 was the sheer volume of fake news running through their servers. The problem is so widespread that organisations have been formed solely to combat false news, and it remains a major concern as another election fast approaches this year.



**In fact, according to Safaricom, the largest mobile service provider the most difficult challenge they faced in 2017 was the sheer volume of fake news running through their servers**

# THE MOST SHARED STORIES FROM



Timeframe: 16th May, 2021 to 16th May, 2022



**Fact-checking Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta's 2021 state of the nation address**

**149** ↗  
**Forwards**

**Context:**

Every year, by law, any Kenyan president is required to tell the country about its progress and setbacks. But this needs accurate data.



**Fact-checked: Six claims by Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta in 2021 national day speech**

**119** ↗  
**Forwards**

**Context:**

In his last Heroes' Day address as president, Kenyatta shone a light on his achievements in office.



**President Kenyatta did send billions to Mt Kenya counties, but misled on how much Kenya's economy has grown under his watch**

**96** ↗  
**Forwards**

**Context:**

With politics making strange bedfellows in Kenya, the president has been playing up his record to convince his supporters to vote for a former rival.



**As Raila Odinga jets into London, we fact-check Kenyan deputy president's**

**88** ↗  
**Forwards**

**Context:**

With politics making strange bedfellows in Kenya, the president has been playing up his record to convince his supporters to vote for a former rival.

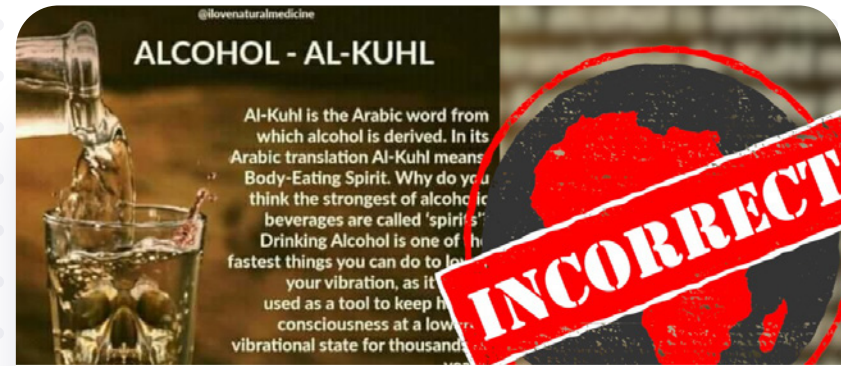
# THE MOST SHARED STORIES FROM



Timeframe: 16th May, 2021 to 16th May, 2022



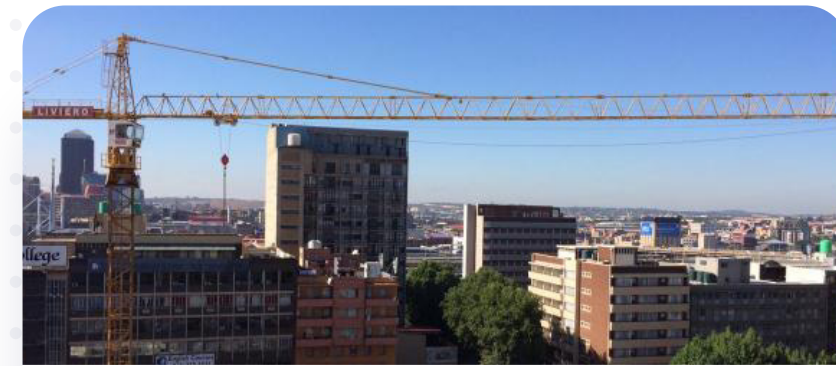
**Woman gives birth to puppies? No, humans and dogs can't reproduce**



**No, 'alcohol' doesn't come from Arabic word for 'body-eating spirit'**



**No, elephants don't think people are 'cute' – in the wild they see us as a threat**



**GUIDE: Where was that photo taken? How to locate (almost) any place on Earth**



**No, sharks not immune to 'every known disease'**



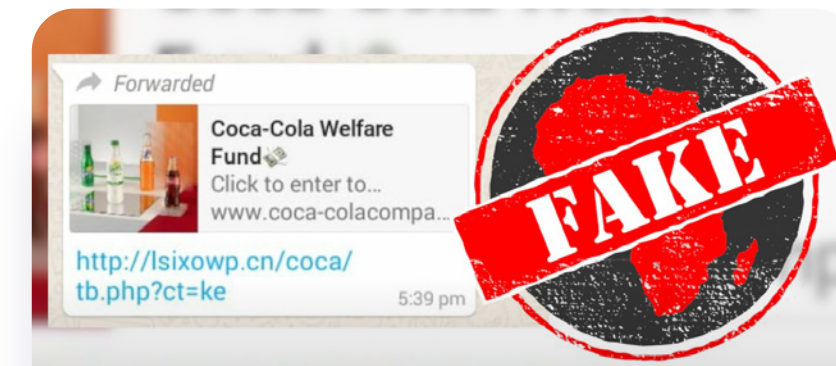
**'Poisoned' Dew bottled water hoax still being shared online**



**Demon angel at the Vatican? No, computer-generated video from Nicaragua**



**No, viral photo not of Turkish investor Harun Aydin deported from Kenya**



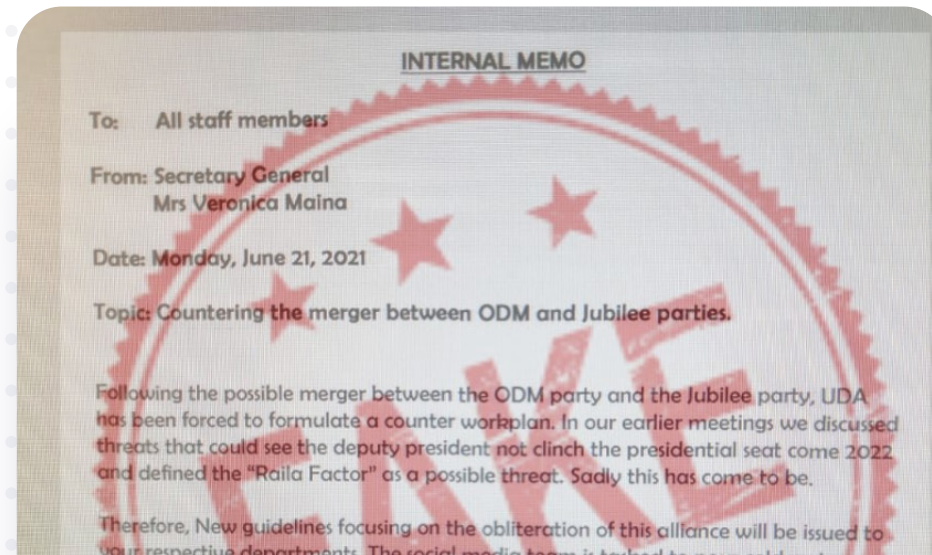
**'Coca-Cola 20th anniversary celebration' giveaway page a scam**



# THE MOST SHARED STORIES FROM



Timeframe: 16th May, 2021 to 16th May, 2022

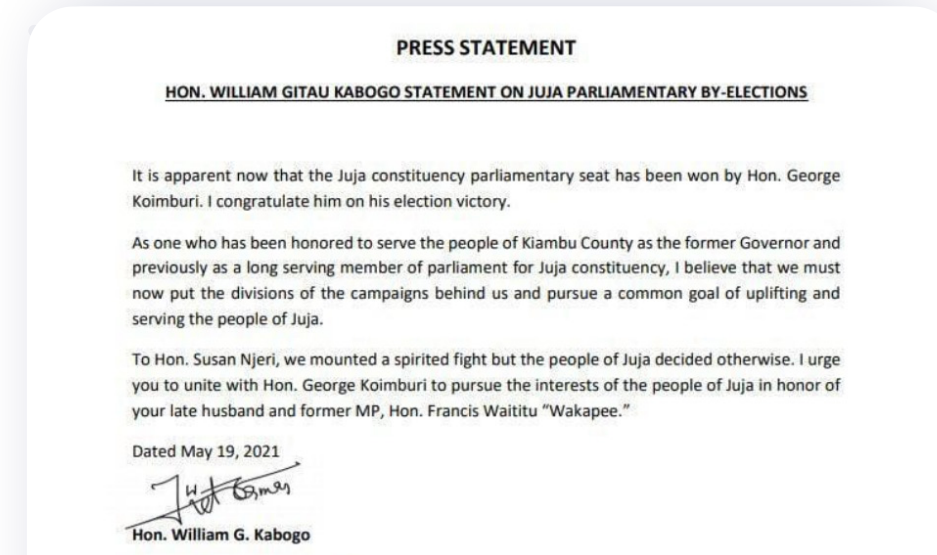


**FAKE:** This internal memo on countering the ODM and Jubilee parties merger is not from UDA party

**138** ↗  
Forwards

### Context:

The UDA party chairman, Johnson Muthama, has dismissed the internal memo as fake.



**FAKE:** This statement purportedly issued by former Kiambu Governor William Kabogo is fabricated

**109** ↗  
Forwards

### Context:

Mr Kabogo has disowned the statement which claims that he conceded defeat in the May 2021 parliamentary by-election.



**FAKE:** This announcement that Kenya's deputy president will feature in a live TV47 broadcast is fabricated

**57** ↗  
Forwards

### Context:

Although the image of a journalist affiliated with TV47 Kenya and the branding of the station are used, the broadcaster has disowned the poster.



**FALSE:** This photo does not show Nakuru residents protesting high fuel prices

**11** ↗  
Forwards

### Context:

CORD coalition supporters from Kibera in Nairobi County are seen calling for forceful removal of commissioners serving in Kenya's electoral body in this 2016 photo.

# THE MOST SHARED STORIES FROM



Timeframe: 16th May, 2021 to 16th May, 2022



**FAKE:** This digital card with a quote attributed to politician Gathoni Wamuchomba is fabricated

8 ↗

Forwards

**Context:**

Both the legislator and TUKO.co.ke, the news organisation whose branding appears on the said digital card, have disowned it.



**FALSE:** Interpol did not tweet about the arrest of a Turkish businessman in Kenya

8 ↗

Forwards

**Context:**

The image is fabricated using the Twitter handle of music band, @Interpol, and has no association with the international police organisation INTERPOL.



**FAKE:** This gazette notice purportedly showing President Uhuru Kenyatta's appointment of a State House chaplain is fabricated

7 ↗

Forwards

**Context:**

The said gazette notice is a doctored version of a legitimate notice bearing the same number.



**FAKE:** This is not a blueprint of William Ruto's bottom-up economic approach

6 ↗

Forwards

**Context:**

UDA party that Kenya's Deputy President Ruto is affiliated to has dismissed this blueprint as fake.



**FALSE:** This appeal by Barack Obama to President Kenyatta to 'stop fighting his deputy' is fabricated

6 ↗

Forwards

**Context:**

There is no credible evidence that the former US president made this statement.

# THE MOST SHARED STORIES FROM



Timeframe: 16th May, 2021 to 16th May, 2022



**HOAX:** Reports that Ugandan MP Francis Zaake has died are false



**False:** Tom and Jerry did not commit suicide in the final episode of the cartoon series



**FAKE:** This William Ruto Facebook account claiming to give each Kenyan Ksh 45,000 is a hoax



**SATIRE:** This claim that Machakos University has launched a degree in witchcraft is sarcastic



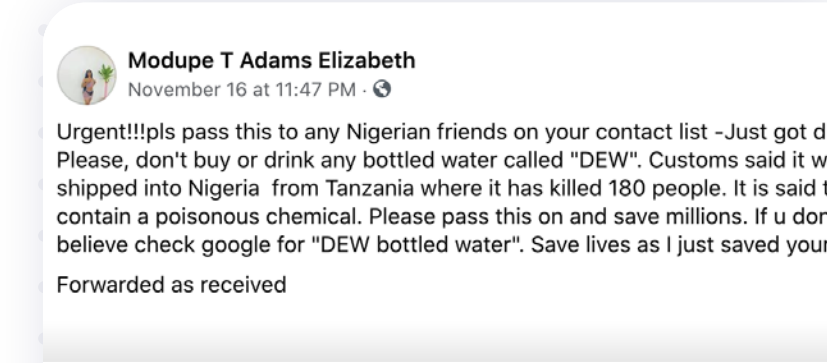
**FALSE:** China has not taken over command of the Zambian police



**FALSE:** Joshua Ladu is not listed as the tallest man by the Guinness World Records



**ALTERED:** This image does not show General Bacha Debele of the Ethiopian army



**FALSE:** This message of 'Poisoned' Dew bottled water is a hoax



**ALTERED:** This image of Alula Solomon, the Tigray Media House's CEO, is doctored

In examining the spreadsheet, data not related to political content tends to have high engagement, this is evident from Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and online forum shares, the numbers are high. For political content the numbers are low as compared to other content type.

This could signify that most people on social media have an understanding of political activities currently taking place and are able to detect fake content around politics. It could also mean there is a general lack of significant interest by Kenyans online on political content, to warrant their sharing of false publications.

# QUOTE PICS

Many people repost articles on social media after reading the headline, but without reading the whole text. Putting a misleading title on real news is one of the most common fake news techniques.

Taking quotations out of context is another common trick. An example is a quote attributed to the National Rainbow Coalition-Kenya (NARC-Kenya) party leader, Martha Karua, commenting about the Amani National Congress (ANC) party and United Democratic Alliance (UDA) party union.

Karua hails the new ANC and UDA partnership in the quote and urges Kenyans to reject ‘political projects’, which is inaccurate.

“The union of ANC and UDA has started a new chapter of Killing all political conmanship and politics of deceit In Kenya. Together we can reject political projects! ~~Iron lady Martha Karua,” the quote reads.

However, through her verified Twitter account, Karua has termed the quote, also shared on Twitter, fake.



**KUTIT MEDIA 254**

Yesterday at 8:25 AM · 🌐



MARTHA KARUA: The union of ANC and UDA has started a new chapter of Killing all political conmanship and politics of deceit In Kenya. Together we can reject political projects!

~~Iron lady Martha karua



# PARTY DEFECTS

In Kenya's 2017 election campaign, the issue of fake news shot into the limelight in April when a doctored front page of the Daily Nation circulated in Busia County during the primaries. It claimed that the opposition Orange Democratic Movement's Dr. Paul Otuoma had defected to the ruling Jubilee party. The story was designed to discredit him on the day of the nomination.

Deliberately false or inaccurate news is commonplace during elections, especially stories about supposed defections. An analysis of the content suggests that much of it is part of political actors' orchestrated and strategic campaigns.

In our very own SRV quiz, we address two stories about Dr. Eric Mutai and Dr. Boni Khalwale.

A screenshot of what appears to be a post by Emoo FM, a radio station in Kenya broadcasting in the Kalenjin dialect, was shared on Facebook. The 11th February 2022 post claiming Eric Mutai had left the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) "to be Independent was fake.



Furthermore, a message posted on Facebook in late January 2022 quotes Kenyan politician Boni Khalwale, a former Senator for Kakamega county and member of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), as saying he may leave his party to join the Azimio la Umoja coalition of political parties.

**According to Africa Check, this account is false.**

# PHOTO MANIPULATION

Photo manipulation is the easiest way to fake news, but also the simplest to expose. There are two common techniques of photo manipulation.

The first is editing photos in special programs, such as Adobe Photoshop. The second is presenting real photos as having been taken at another time or place.

One example featured on the SRV quiz is a photo circulating on Facebook that shows Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga and his son Raila Odinga Junior.

The son, wearing a yellow shirt and navy blue bomber jacket, is standing next to his father whose eyes are focused on a newspaper on a table. Two words on the son's shirt, printed in black ending in "rm" and "DA", are partially hidden by his jacket.

The colours and slogan are associated with the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), a party marketed by deputy president William Ruto in his political campaigns, Raila's rival.

Users who posted the photo-filled in the missing words based on the hashtag used by the UDA's #FormNiUDA, which translates from Sheng urban slang as "The trend is UDA".

"Kube Raila's Son ni wa UDA...?! Or what do those words in his shirt reads.. #FormNiUDA or what!!" exclaimed one user. The Kiswahili roughly translates as: "You mean Raila's son belongs to the UDA party?"





# **ELECTION POLITICS 101**



## Uhuru Kenyatta

- He is the President of the Republic of Kenya.
- He is serving his last term in office, having served for the maximum two terms since 2013.
- He is not new to politics. In 2002, he vied for President under the Independence party KANU but lost to Mr. Mwai Kibaki. He became the opposition leader.
- In the 2007 General Election, he supported President Kibaki and was subsequently appointed Deputy Prime Minister in the Grand Coalition Government.
- He was also MP for Gatundu South constituency from 2002 to 2013.



## William Ruto

- He is the Deputy President.
- He was MP for Eldoret North from 1997 to 2013. He also served as Minister for Agriculture, and later, Higher Education, in the Grand Coalition Government.
- In 2013, his United Republican Party (URP) merged with Mr. Kenyatta's The National Alliance (TNA) to form the Jubilee Party.
- They won the election in 2013 and 2017, with Dr. Ruto as the running mate of Mr Kenyatta.
- The two would later have a falling out, with President Kenyatta choosing his 2013 and 2017 opponent, Mr. Raila Odinga, over his deputy, to succeed him.
- Under the Kenya Kwanza Alliance umbrella, Dr. Ruto is currently a presidential aspirant for the 2022 General Election.



## Raila Odinga

- He is a veteran politician, having served in various capacities in his political career.
- He leads the Azimio la Umoja Coalition, with the backing of President Kenyatta.
- From 1992 to 2007, he was the MP for Lang'ata constituency.
- He has served in different Cabinet Ministries since 2001 and was the Prime Minister between 2008 and 2013.
- This will be the fifth time Mr. Odinga runs for president.



# The Falling-out Between President Kenyatta And His Deputy William Ruto



In 2013, when President Kenyatta and his deputy got into power, they supposedly had a gentleman's agreement – made public by President Kenyatta – for a 20-year deal, with each leading for the maximum 10 years.

But nine years later, the two have since fallen out, with the Uhuru-Raila 'Handshake' – a political truce between the erstwhile rivals – seen as the main reason for the breakup.

The 'Handshake' happened on March 9, 2018, when President Kenyatta and Mr. Odinga agreed to work together in a bid to end the divisive politics and animosity that pervaded political discourse at the time.

This signalled a start to the Opposition working with the government. Dr Ruto did not seem to appreciate this union and started to drift away.

Two political groupings emerged. One became known as Tangatanga and the other was referred to as Kieleweke. Tangatanga consisted of the DP's allies, while Kieleweke was supporting Mr. Kenyatta, and welcomed the Handshake.

It soon became clear that the President and his deputy would never be on good terms again as long as Mr. Odinga was in the equation. Dr. Ruto who has been running political campaigns since the Handshake, formed a new party, the United Democratic Alliance (UDA).

It became the new political outfit for the DP and his allies as well as those who were defecting from the Jubilee Party.

# Political Alliances and Coalitions

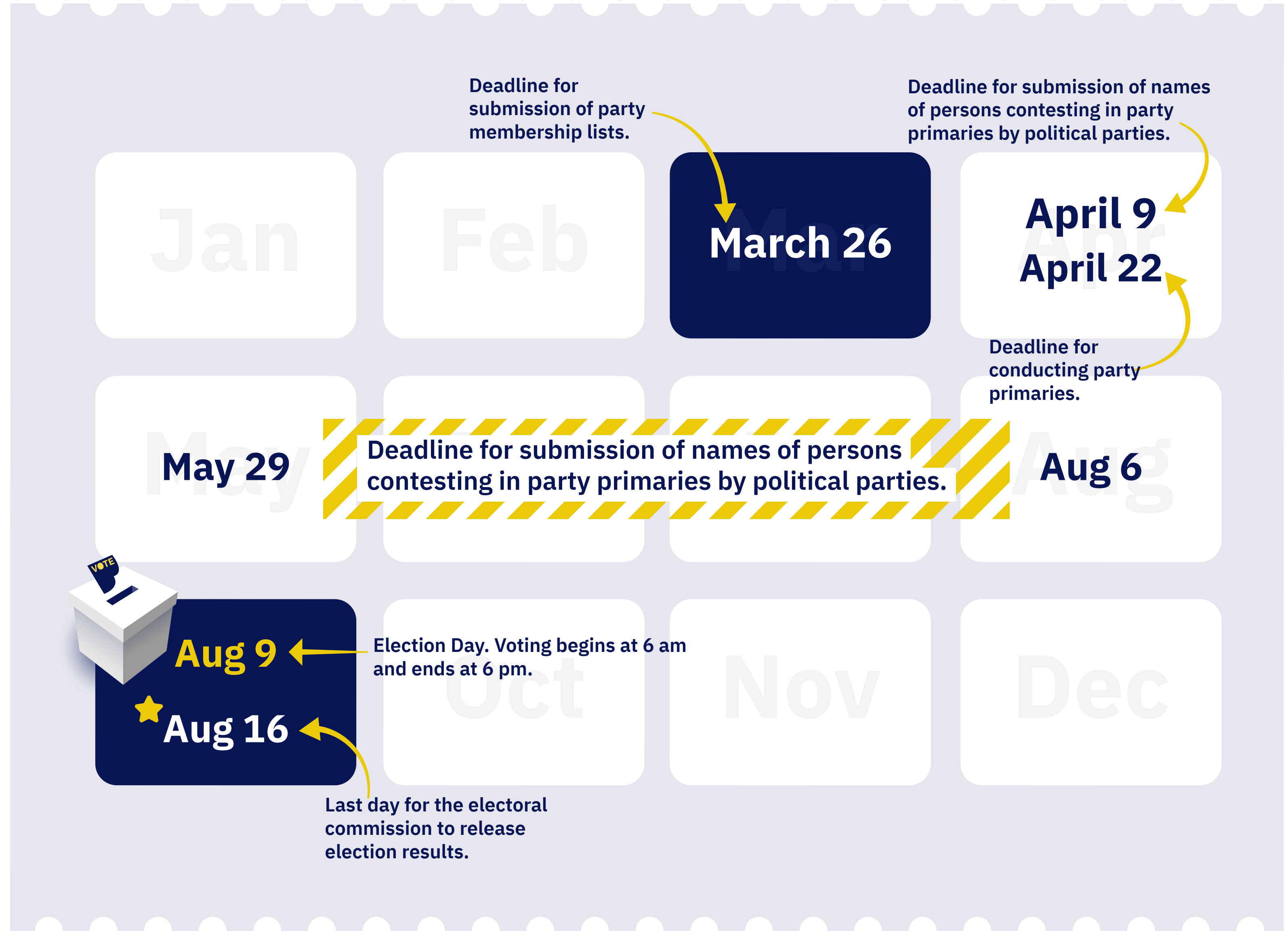
Despite the country having many parties, most are racing to join coalitions endorsing either Dr. Ruto or Mr. Odinga for the top seat at the August 9 General Election. There are currently two main political coalitions, Azimio la Umoja and the Kenya Kwanza Alliance.

Azimio, which named Mr. Odinga as its presidential flag bearer consists of the Jubilee Party, Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), the Wiper party, Kanu, Party of National Unity (PNU), Democratic Alliance Party- Kenya (DAP-K), Narc-Kenya, United Democratic Party (UDP), United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Kenya African National Union (KANU), Kenya Union Party (KUP), and United Party of Independent Alliance (UPIA), among others.

The Kenya Kwanza alliance consists of UDA, Amani National Congress (ANC), Ford-Kenya, The Service Party, Chama Cha Kazi, Tujibebe, Pamoja African Alliance (PAA), Chama Cha Mashinani, Safina and Farmers Party. While ideology is the main way to woo voters, Kenyan politics is still largely about ethnic mobilisation. To put this into perspective, both Mr. Odinga and Mr. Ruto are working to ensure they win votes in the Mt. Kenya region by choosing a running mate from there.



# Key Dates of the 2022 General Election



A person wearing a blue suit is sitting at a desk, typing on a silver laptop. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

## Recommendations

The public's perception of political leaders is heavily influenced by media's depiction of issues, personalities and events. Headlines, images, social media teasers, and other content can be used directly or inadvertently to promote fake news, support or legitimize misinformation, and feed conspiracy theories.

During the previous election in 2017, the country witnessed firsthand how disinformation, sows distrust, weakens democracy, disintegrates the sense of common reality, and generates violence. The media must do everything possible to prevent tribalism and misinformation from derailing the upcoming elections.

# How To Avoid Bias and Disinformation When Reporting - For Media Staff

- Consider biases related to tribe, gender, ability, orientation, and other protected classes. Question and debunk stories, lines of questioning, and language that perpetuates bias.
- Women often face challenges of being stereotyped, objectified, and hypersexualized. Be mindful of avoiding these tropes and debunk them whenever possible.
- When choosing a nominee photo, ensure that it looks professional and doesn't play into any negative stereotypes.
- Ambition in women is often portrayed as a negative and praised in men - avoid playing into this sexist stereotype.
- Use gender-neutral language to help stop gender bias.
  - Use businessperson, chairperson, congressperson, etc
  - Avoid using Mrs. unless it's preferred by the nominee, use Ms. because it doesn't designate marital status. Single women have historically been seen as undesirable or unworthy.
  - Use the proper title, such as Honorable, Senator, Secretary
- Reporting on disinformation rather than debunking it can help spread it. You must call out disinformation as unfounded, a conspiracy theory, debunked, dubious, unlikely, misleading, a lie, false, etc. in the headline if you must write about disinformation.
- Avoid covering "trending" topics on Twitter as reflective of broad public support. Twitter "trends" are based on many factors and do not necessarily mean that a large number of users are participating in the conversation.
- Think about your personal biases otherwise known as confirmation bias. This is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports one's prior beliefs or values.
- Explore [AfricaCheck](#), [PesaCheck](#), [PigaFirimbi](#), and [AFPCheck](#) among other fact-checking platforms that are helping to debunk misinformation and disinformation.
- Check out [TinEye](#) and [Reverse Image Search](#) for images you doubt their authenticity and Amnesty International's YouTube Dataviewer or download the InVid browser extension for videos.
- Whenever you are [suspicious](#) of an article, [check the URL](#) and read some more articles in the same website. Some platforms are quite good at sneaking in a few false articles amidst many true or accurate articles, to deepen the believability of the fake ones. Also do check the URL clearly to ensure its not cyber squatting, where it mimics a true or genuine website.

# How To Avoid Spreading Fake News and Disinformation - For Individuals

Stop, Reflect and Verify. Practice evaluation skills and develop a critical mindset. Don't just look at what a web page tells you about itself. Instead, do a web search and find out what others are saying about them. This will help you determine the accuracy of the information. What to look for:

- **Authority** - who is the author and where did the item originate? Check on the individual, company or institution, to see where their biases (personal inclinations/favouritisms) are. Is the author's name listed? What are the credentials that make them an expert in the topic?
- **Accuracy** - information that is accurate and free from errors is considered more reliable. One or two typos are ok but information that is presented in a sloppy manner with too many spelling or grammatical mistakes comes across as unprofessional. Are there links to other resources to back up the claims one source is making? For statistical references and data check where they come from. Numbers can be easily changed and manipulated to show personal opinions. Fact and opinion are different.
- **Objectivity** - check to see if the information is presented with the least amount of prejudice or personal bias. Is it an opinion or is it trying to sell you something?
- **Timeliness** - when was the information first published? Is the content you are looking at up-to-date, or is the website updated regularly, or is it something that is old made to look like new information?
- **Platforms** - you should be suspicious of every content you meet, including audio, text and videos. Today, social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube and Instagram are as active or popular in sharing misinformation and disinformation as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.

# Fact-Checking Resources and Tools

## Web Search and Wikipedia

Start your research journey with a web search to see what others are saying and follow it with a Wikipedia search. Although Wikipedia is self-regulated - meaning anyone can edit another person's entries and comments on the site - it's generally a good place to start gathering information on any given topic.

**WIKIPEDIA**  
The Free Encyclopedia

## Verify Images

Find out if an image has been used many times already by doing a reverse image check. You can upload or drag and drop pictures on sites like Google Images, Yandex, and TinyEye.

**Google**

**Yandex**

**TinEye**

# The Election Misinformation Guide

#FORWARDTHEFACTS

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