



## Daily Media Monitoring Report

Issue 1: 31 May 2018

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*The media have an ethical obligation to be impartial in their coverage of electoral processes; this requires fairness and balance in their representation of the prevailing context.* 1

## 1.1 Introduction

This first media monitoring report on the 2018 elections highlights trends in the Zimbabwean media's performance in their coverage of the elections. The study assessed:

- The level to which the media is fair and balanced in representing political players
- The media's election agenda and what they consider the most important electoral issues
- The media's professional conduct in reporting elections

The report covers events reported by the media on the first day of the election period – 30 May 2018.

## 1.2 Key Events

The report is written against the backdrop of President Emmerson Mnangagwa's proclamation of the date of polling set as 30 July 2018. The proclamation was done through Proclamation 2 of 2018 (SI 83 of 2018). The Electoral Amendment Bill was also gazetted into law on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2018.

## 1.3 Media Monitored

<b>News Platform</b>	<b>Print</b>	<b>Broadcast</b>
<b>Public media</b>	<i>The Herald</i>	ZTV
	<i>The Chronicle</i>	SFM
		Radio Zimbabwe
<b>Private media</b>	<i>NewsDay</i>	Star FM
	<i>Daily News</i>	ZiFM

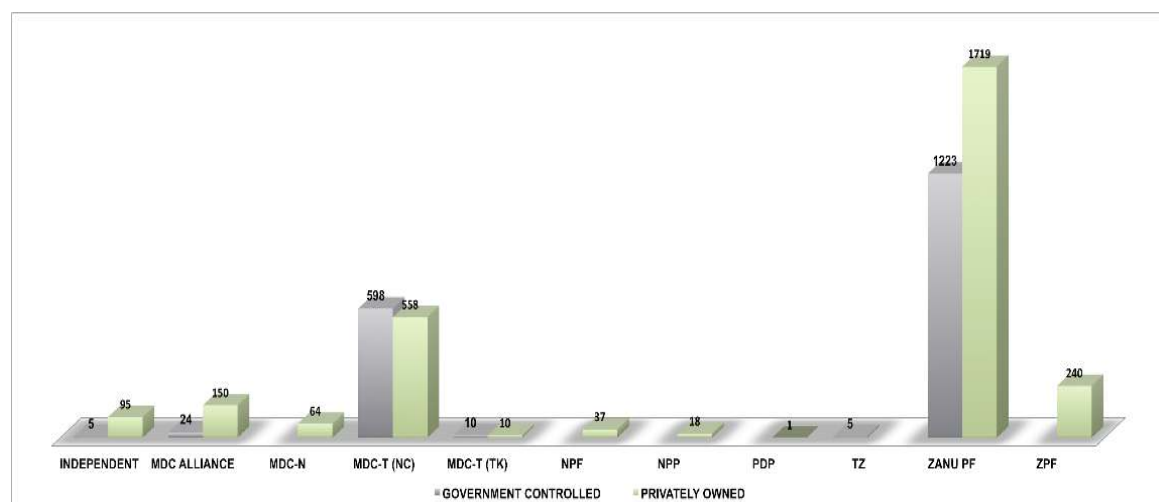
## 2.0 Did the media represent political parties in a fair and balanced manner?

The proclamation of the election date marks the beginning of the official election period in which the news media is legally bound to treat all political parties and candidates equitably, in terms of the “extent, timing and prominence of the coverage accorded to them.”<sup>1</sup> None of the media monitored is yet to achieve the requirement as stated in the Electoral Act as there is little diversity in the media’s coverage of political parties.

Ten political parties received coverage in both the print and electronic media platforms that were monitored. ZANU PF accounted for 69% of the coverage that was recorded followed by MDC-T (NC) (Led by Nelson Chamisa) with 12% and Bethel Christian Party (BCP) 11% while the remaining eight parties combined for the remaining 8%.

## 2.1 Space and time dedicated to political parties in private and public media

### *Space allocated to political parties in the print media*

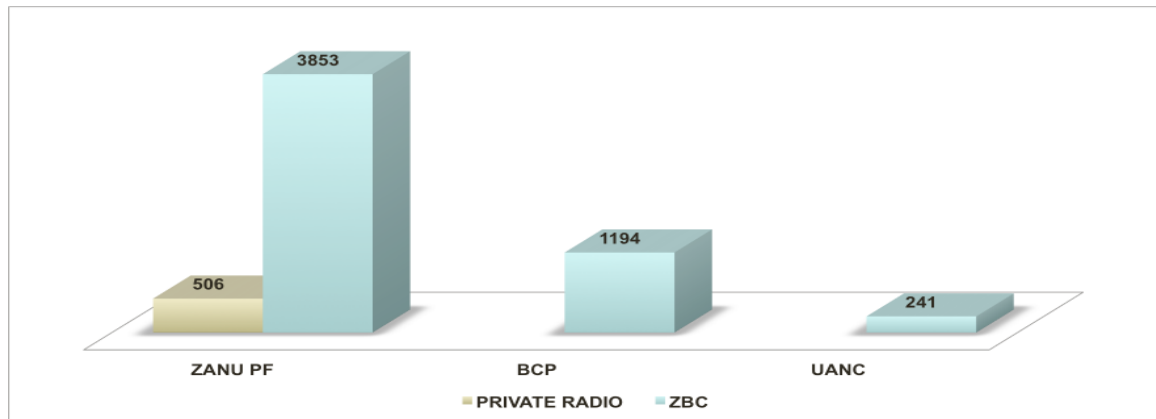


<sup>1</sup> Section 160J, Electoral Act

<sup>2</sup> <http://kubatana.net/2018/03/26/zesns-comment-zec-bvr-provisional->

*The media have an ethical obligation to be impartial in their coverage of electoral processes; this requires fairness and balance in their representation of the prevailing context.* 3

### *Time dedicated to political parties in the electronic media*



## **2.2 Space and time dedicated to political actors in private and public media**

Seventeen political actors featured in the broadcast media monitored and 40 featured in the print media. The top ten featured political players are represented in the tables below

### *Top political actors in the press*

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Total Space in cm<sup>2</sup></b>
Emmerson Mnangagwa	1804
Nelson Chamisa	656
Dumiso Dabengwa	240
Constantino Chiwenga	121
Engelbert Rugeje	116
Morgan Komichi	114
Themba Mliswa	95
Vimbai Java	95
Lewis Matutu	84
Tongai Mnangagwa	78

### *Top political actors in the electronic media*

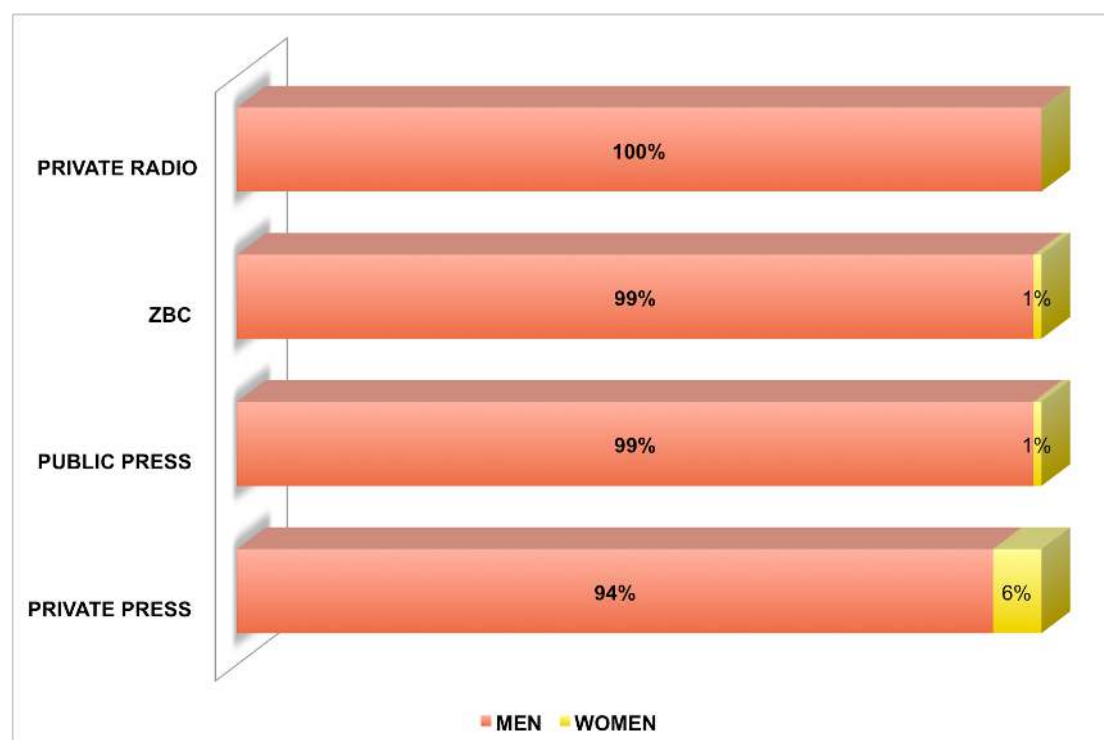
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Total time in seconds</b>
Danny Musukuma	1953
Willard Mugadza	1194
Emmerson Mnangagwa	988
Munashe Mututsa	539
Simon Khaya Moyo	324
Gwinyai Muzorewa	232
Ziyambi Ziyambi	213
Owen Ncube	110
David Parirenyatwa	64
Simbarashe Mutukwa	44

*The media have an ethical obligation to be impartial in their coverage of electoral processes; this requires fairness and balance in their representation of the prevailing context.*

## 2.3 Gender representation in election programmes

Women political players were grossly underrepresented in both the print and electronic media; they made up 2% of the coverage, while men made up 98%.

*Gender representation in both the private and public media*



## 2.4 Youth representation in election programmes

Even though provisional statistics from ZEC show that 70% of the people who registered to vote are aged between 18 and 44-years<sup>2</sup>, only 7% of the political actors who featured in the news fell in this age group. It should be noted that none of these actors were youths (18-34 years). The average age of political actors who received media coverage was 68.

*Average age in the private and public media*

News platform	Average age of actors (years)
Privately owned newspapers	64
ZBC (radio and TV)	70
Government controlled newspapers	72
Privately owned radio	74

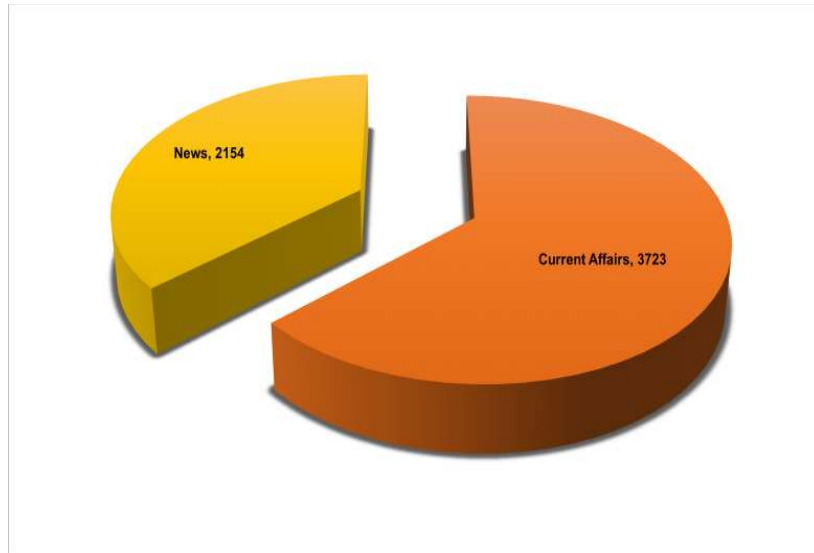
*\*Statistics included were for political players where data was available*

<sup>2</sup> <http://kubatana.net/2018/03/26/zesns-comment-zec-bvr-provisional-statistics/>

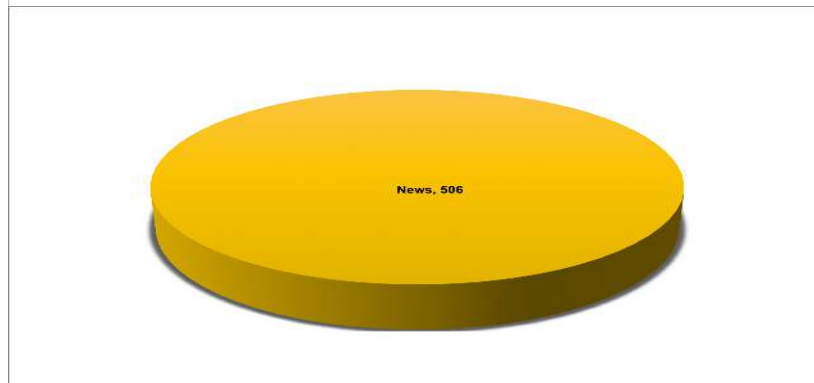
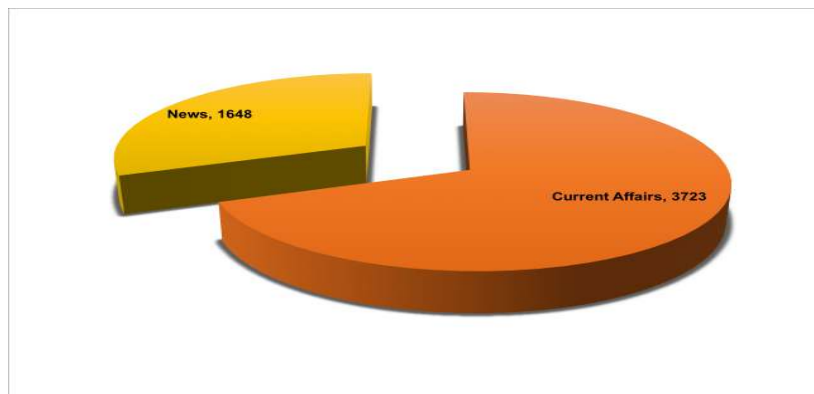
## 2.5 Time dedicated to political players in the different programme types in broadcast media

In the electronic media, political actors were featured more in current affairs programmes than in the news. For the day, only the government controlled radio and TV stations carried current affairs programmes that featured political actors.

*Overall time dedicated to political players*



*Overall time dedicated to political players on (a) ZBC (b) Private radio*



*The media have an ethical obligation to be impartial in their coverage of electoral processes; this requires fairness and balance in their representation of the prevailing context.*

## **Conclusion**

Reporting of the first day of the official election period shows that media has so far not adhered to legally laid out provisions on treating political players in an equitable manner. Political programmes do not show the diversity of political players contesting this election according to their political affiliation, gender or age.

Media Monitors recommends that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission urgently put in place an effective mechanism to monitor, supervise and sanction the media where there are glitches in electoral reporting.

Media houses, particularly the public media should also consider publicizing internal guidelines that allow political players to access space on their platforms.