

Social media overtakes TV as Kenya's top news source

Social media has overtaken television as the leading source of news in Kenya, with 39% of respondents naming it as their primary platform, according to the latest State of the Media Survey released by the Media Council of Kenya.



Source: www.unsplash.com

Television followed at 31%, radio at 19%, and other sources made up the remainder. Overall, 74% of Kenyans now use social or digital media platforms for news.

The survey was conducted between 15 and 23 April 2026 and sampled 3,774 Kenyan residents aged 15 and above across 47 counties, using a nationally representative methodology.

The findings highlight a fundamental shift towards digital platforms. When asked which medium they had used in the past week, social media (27%) edged ahead of television (25%), with radio at 19%. Print media continued its steep decline, with weekly newspaper readership falling from 20% in 2024 to 13% in 2025 – its lowest level yet, down from 26% in 2023.

Daily television viewership dropped from 63% in 2024 to 57% in 2025, although prime-time slots between 7pm and 10pm remain popular. Citizen TV retained its position as the most-watched station (56% of respondents), while Radio Citizen led radio listenership with a 17% audience share.



MEDIA

Sunday Times editor Makhudu Sefara placed on special leave amid SIU probe

29 Apr 2026

Despite the overall decline in print readership to 13%, specific publications continue to lead the remaining market share. *The Daily Nation* tops the rankings with 49%, followed by *The Standard* at 18%, *Taifa Leo* 9%, *People Daily* at 7%, *The Star*, *Citizen Weekly*, and *Business Daily* at 4% each, *The Nairobiian* at 3% and *MyGov* at 2%. This readership is increasingly Promoting Media Freedom and Responsible Journalism niche, with a significant portion accessing content via digital e-papers rather than physical copies.

Among the 45% of Kenyans who actively visit news websites, *Tuko.co.ke* leads (30% daily reach; 33% primary), followed by *Citizen Digital* (25%; 20%), *Standardmedia.co.ke* (21%; 14%) and *Nation.Africa* (13%; 10%). Other sites such as *Kenyans.co.ke* (11%) and *Pulselive.co.ke* (10%) follow. More than half of Kenyans (55%) do not visit any news websites regularly, underscoring that social media platforms, not direct web traffic, now serve as the primary gateway to news.

Social and digital media

Mobile phones remain the dominant device for accessing social media (91 per cent). WhatsApp (19.8 per cent) and Facebook (18.2 per cent) are still the most popular platforms, followed by the rapidly growing TikTok (14.9 per cent) and YouTube (12.3 per cent). More than half of Kenyans do not regularly visit news websites, underscoring how social platforms have become the primary gateway to news.

Trust, government coverage and public concerns

Public trust in the media rose to 79% in 2025, up from 74.5% the previous year. Fifty-four percent of Kenyans believe the media covers the government fairly.

The main concerns cited were the spread of false or misleading information and inadequate coverage of key issues (both 28%), followed by bias in reporting (17%). Kenyans continue to value media freedom (34%) and the speed of information dissemination (26%).

Artificial intelligence and the media

The survey also examined the growing role of artificial intelligence. While 59% of respondents were aware of AI's use in media, 63% could not identify AI-generated content. Sixty-one per cent said they used platforms deploying AI, with nearly half reporting an improved experience.

Commenting on the findings, MCK CEO David Omwoyo said: "These results confirm what we have long anticipated. Kenya's media ecosystem has crossed a Promoting Media Freedom and Responsible Journalism historic threshold. Social media is now the primary arena for public discourse, with significant implications for regulation, ethics and misinformation.

"The MCK remains committed to ensuring this transition serves the public interest and upholds journalistic integrity. The decline in print readership, the shift from traditional platforms, and the difficulty in identifying AI-generated content all demand urgent attention. We call on all media stakeholders to respond with transparency and accountability."