

As Biden and Trump seek reelection, who are the oldest – and youngest – current world leaders?

Janakee Chavda : 6-7 minutes

Joe Biden, at 81, is the [oldest American president](#), a distinction he's held since entering office at age 78. As Biden runs for reelection in 2024, he is the ninth oldest national leader in the world, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of sitting leaders in 187 United Nations member states.

Former President Donald Trump, who is [running for the White House](#) again this year, is younger than Biden. But at 77, Trump also falls among the 20 oldest world leaders when compared with those currently in power.

With current U.S. President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump both running for reelection to the country's highest office, Pew Research Center examined the ages of current national leaders to place the ages of Biden and Trump into a global context.

This analysis examines the ages of the current heads of government in 187 countries that are member states of the United Nations, relying on government biographies and regional news articles. It reflects the ages of national leaders – and in a few instances, acting or interim leaders – as of May 1, 2024. It excludes six UN member states for which an exact birth date of the leader could not be found: Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Mali, Niger and Somalia. For each of these countries, we reached out to embassy officials in the United States but did not receive further information.

This analysis focuses mostly on heads of government as defined by a country's political system or constitution. In some cases, we determined the national leader based on which executive has the power to appoint/dismiss the nominal head of government. In San Marino, where there are two captains regent who share power, we included data for Alessandro Rossi, as he assumed the position most recently.

This analysis also draws on [Freedom House country rankings](#) to determine whether countries are free, partly free or not free. These rankings are based on two numerical scores assigned to each country for its political rights and civil liberties.

The median age of each country's overall population is a 2024 projection from the UN's [World Population Prospects 2022 report](#). The [projections](#) are based on "all available sources of data on population size and levels of fertility, mortality and international migration."

American voters are skeptical about both candidates' fitness for the job, [according to a recent Center survey](#). Only about four-in-ten U.S. registered voters are extremely or very confident that Trump has the mental fitness to be president (38%), while a similar share are confident in his physical fitness (36%). Even fewer express this degree of confidence in Biden's mental (21%) and physical (15%) fitness for the role.

Below are five key facts about the ages of current national leaders.

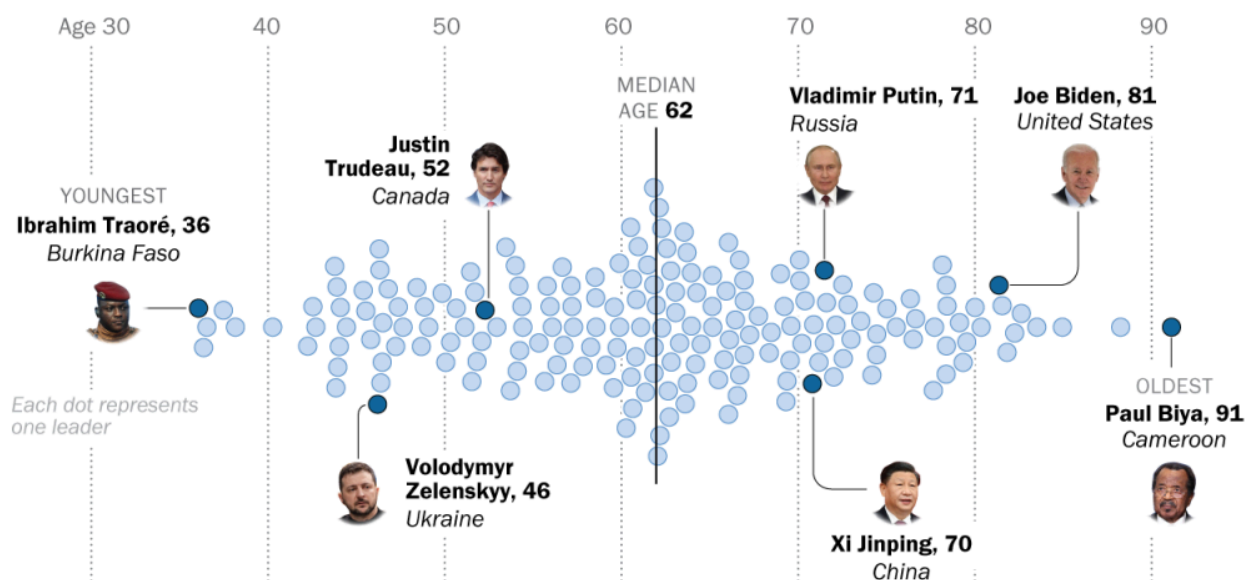
National leaders range in age from their mid-30s to 91. The youngest leader is Burkina Faso's Ibrahim Traoré, who is 36. He only slightly edges out two fellow 36-year-olds, Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa and Montenegrin Prime Minister Milojko Spajić. Only two other world leaders are in their 30s: Irish Taoiseach Simon Harris and Chilean President Gabriel Boric.

The oldest national leader is President [Paul Biya](#) of Cameroon, who was born in 1933 and took office more than 40 years ago. Biya is the only current national leader in his 90s.

The median age of current national leaders is 62, as of May 1, 2024. The largest share of global leaders today (34%) are in their 60s. Roughly a quarter (22%) are in their 50s; 19% are in their 70s; and 16% are in their 40s. Biden is among the 5% of leaders who are in their 80s.

Most global leaders are in their 50s and 60s

Country leader's age



Note: Figures are through May 1, 2024. Data is available for 187 of 193 UN member states.

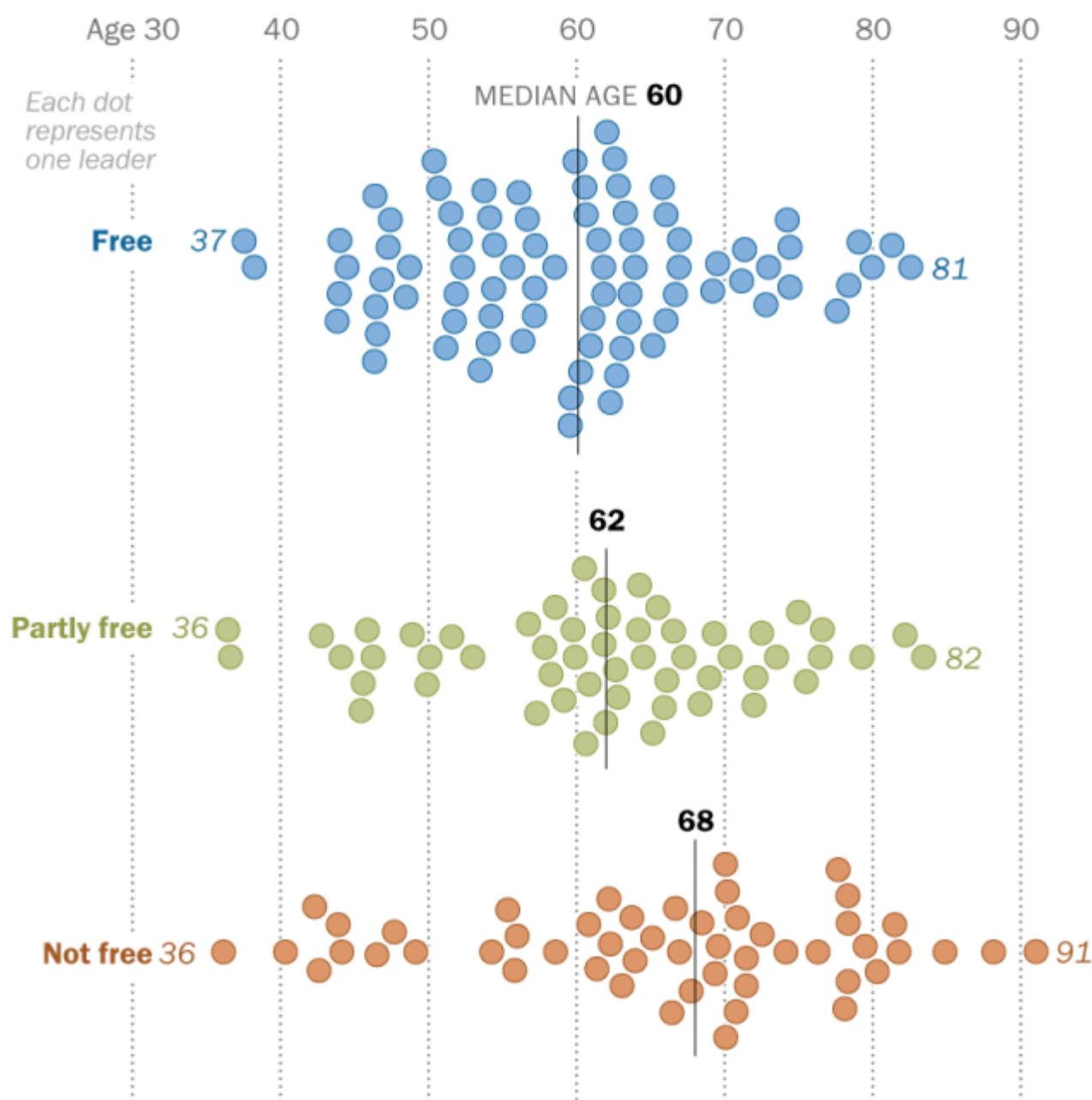
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of government biographies and regional news articles.

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Countries that are less free tend to have older leaders. In countries that [Freedom House](#) classifies as “not free,” the median age of the national leader is 68. That compares with 62 in countries that are classified as “partly free” and 60 in countries classified as “free.”

Countries ranked less free tend to have older global leaders

Country leader's age, by Freedom House ranking



Note: Figures are through May 1, 2024. Data is available for 187 of 193 UN member states.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of government biographies and regional news articles; Freedom House data.

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The United States is one of only three countries that are classified as free and have a leader age 80 or older; the other two are Ghana and Namibia. In Ghana, President Nana Akufo-Addo recently turned 80 in

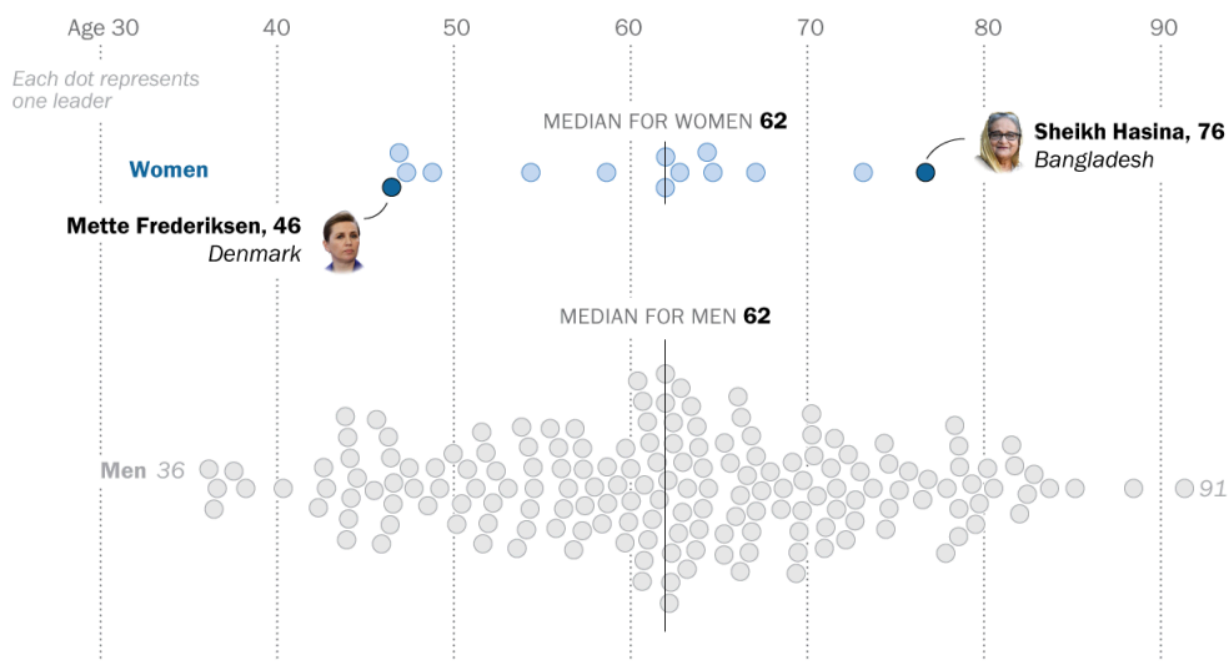
office. And in Namibia, 82-year-old Nangolo Mbumba took over as president earlier this year following the previous leader's death in office at age 82.

The median age for women leaders and men leaders is the same. Among men who are world leaders, 3% are in their 30s, while no women leaders are in this age group. Yet, of the 14 women leaders currently in power, 29% are in their 40s, compared with 14% of leaders who are men.

Prime Minister [Mette Frederiksen](#) of Denmark is the youngest female leader at 46, followed closely by fellow 46-year-old [Kaja Kallas](#), the prime minister of Estonia. Prime Minister [Sheikh Hasina](#) of Bangladesh is the oldest female leader at 76.

Median age for men and women leaders is the same

Country leader's age, by leader's gender



Note: Figures are through May 1, 2024. Data is available for 187 of 193 UN member states.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of government biographies and regional news articles.

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In most countries, the leader is significantly older than the median member of the population. For example, the median American is 38, according to UN population projections for 2024, while Biden is more than twice as old. In fact, the only countries that have a leader who is *younger* than the median resident of the country are Montenegro, Ireland and Italy. Andorran Prime Minister Xavier Espot Zamora, at 44, is the same age as the median Andorran resident.

In general, countries that Freedom House classifies as free are more likely than those classified as partly free or not free to have leaders who are closer in age to the median resident of the country.

Note: This is an update of a post originally published on March 24, 2023.