



Factsheet on the universal radio and television fee – January 2019

Exemption and opting out for households

In principle, every household pays a fee, but there is no rule without exceptions. Recipients of supplementary benefits are exempt. Opting out is a transitional solution for those households which completely do without the consumption of electronic media and which cannot receive electronic media.

On application, persons are exempt from having to pay the fee if they receive an annual supplementary benefit (SB) from the Confederation in relation to disability or old-age (OASI or DI). The exemption applies from the time the supplementary benefits are received, for a maximum of five years back, but not retroactively to the period before 2019. For an exemption application, the confirmation letter from the SB implementation authority concerning receipt of SB must be submitted. If one member of a private household is exempt, the obligation to pay the fee no longer applies to all members of the household concerned.

Households which consist only of deaf-blind persons do not have to pay the fee. Foreign diplomats and consular officials as well as the administrative, technical and service personnel of diplomatic missions with identity cards listed in the Radio and Television Ordinance are also exempt.

Exemption for recipients of social welfare assistance is not provided, as social welfare assistance takes the fee into account in the basic amount. Discounts or waivers cannot be granted.

Legal basis

- Federal Radio and Television Act (RTVA; CC 784.41) Article 69b
- Radio and Television Ordinance (RTVO; CC 784.401) Article 61

Transitional arrangements: opting out for five years

In order to take into account those households which have no technical possibility of receiving radio or television programme services, parliament has provided for a five-year transitional arrangement. For example, someone who possesses neither a radio, a television, a car radio, a smartphone, a computer with internet access nor a tablet can benefit from exemption from the fee (opting out). As soon as a household has received the bill from Serafe - and not before - it can submit an application. Serafe provides an application form for this purpose.

Exemption from the fee applies in each case for one year; for each subsequent fee period a request must be re-submitted on receipt of the bill. An exempt household which acquires the possibility of receiving radio or television programme services must notify Serafe immediately and waive the exemption.

The Federal Office of Communications OFCOM is responsible in law for prosecuting and judging infractions. It can carry out checks on households exempted from the fee and, in the event of a violation of the radio and television legislation, may initiate an administrative criminal procedure.

Legal basis

- Federal Radio and Television Act (RTVA; CC 784.41) Article 109c

- Radio and Television Ordinance (RTVO; CC 784.401) Articles 94 - 96