
Digital radio continues to make strides – especially in the car

Digital Migration working group publishes half-yearly report on radio use

Bern, 10 February 2023 – The switch to digital radio has progressed across all regions, age groups and places of use. Almost one in every three minutes of radio listening in the car is now via a digital platform. Overall, digital radio accounts for 77% of use.

Digital radio use has soared in recent years, from 49% in autumn 2015 to 77% last autumn. Over the same period, FM radio use has more than halved from 51% to 23%. DAB+ appears to have stabilised at around 41% of all radio use. The growing share of digital radio use – at the expense of FM – is mainly driven by internet listening, which now accounts for 36% of total use.

Growth in digital driven by internet radio

While DAB+ radio use has stabilised at around 41% of total use, the internet is now the fastest growing digital radio platform. Internet radio is particularly popular in the French- and Italian-speaking regions (40% and 35% respectively of all radio use). In the German-speaking part of the country, DAB+ remains the most popular way of listening to the radio (43%).

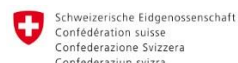
Across all age groups, digital radio now represents at least 73% of use. FM still accounts for around one-fifth of radio listening in the 15–54 age group and more than one in four minutes among the over-55s. In the youngest cohort, listeners aged 15 to 34 prefer internet radio (45% of total use), while the middle age group is equally divided between internet and DAB+ radio (40% and 41% respectively). The most popular digital platform among the over-55s is DAB+ (44%).

Sharp rise in digital radio in the car

The most popular place for listening to the radio is at home (63%), followed by work or school (18%). Whether at home or at work, analogue radio still accounts for about one fifth of radio listening (21% and 19% respectively). Around 13% of all radio use is in the car, where listening via FM has fallen dramatically in the past three years (-21 points). FM still accounts for around 35% of radio listening in the car, while more than half (53%) is now via DAB+ and 12% via the internet.

Digital-only use on the rise

Digital radio currently reaches 76% of the Swiss population, with 45% using digital radio exclusively. A little over one in ten people (11%) still listen only to analogue radio, while around 31% tune into analogue radio in addition to digital radio at least sometimes or in at least one other place. Compared to the previous survey, the share of digital-only users has again gained some ground at the expense of FM-only users.



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Digital Migration working group (WG DigiMig)

In spring 2013, the radio industry together with the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) formed the Digital Migration working group (WG DigiMig). The working group includes representatives from the Swiss Association of Private Radio Stations (VSP), the Union Romande des Radios Régionales (RRR), the Union of Non-Profit Local Radio Stations (Unikom), as well as SRG SSR and the multiplex operators. In Switzerland, digital radio is set to replace analogue FM broadcasting by 2024 at the latest. In late 2014, AG DigiMig presented the Federal Council with a scenario for the switchover from analogue to digital. The SRG and most private radio stations already broadcast their radio programmes via DAB+ in parallel with FM, some exclusively digitally. Since autumn 2015, GfK Switzerland has conducted a half-yearly survey of radio usage by distribution channel in Switzerland on behalf of the Digital Migration working group.

The advantages of DAB+

The digital broadcasting technology DAB+ has significant advantages over FM. There is a much wider range of stations throughout Switzerland than with FM. At the same time, with up to 18 radio stations per transmission frequency, overall energy consumption is much lower. In many places in Switzerland, DAB+ radio already provides better audio quality and less interference than with FM. A DAB+ radio can receive stations practically everywhere with an antenna. It does not need an internet connection and, unlike online reception, cannot be monitored.

Further information

The presentation of radio usage figures is available on the OFCOM website at:

[Digital transmission \(admin.ch\)](#)

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