

---

## Three quarters of radio listening is via a digital platform

### Digital Migration working group publishes six-monthly report on radio use

Bern, 4 February 2022 – Digital radio reception via DAB+ and the internet now accounts for three quarters of all radio listening. FM use continues to decline, while both DAB+ and online radio are gaining in popularity. Radio reception via DAB+ and the internet are now equally popular, each accounting for around a third of radio use. The radio industry has decided to switch off FM in favour of DAB+ digital broadcasting by the end of 2024.

In autumn 2021, radio listeners used digital platforms for an average of 75 out of 100 minutes of radio every day. Digital radio use has jumped 26 percentage points over the last six years, from 49% in autumn 2015 to 75% last autumn. Meanwhile, FM use has halved over the same period, dropping from 51% to 25%. Listening to the radio online is becoming increasingly popular and – accounting for 37 of 100 minutes of radio listening – is practically neck and neck with DAB+ use (38 minutes).

### Online listening popular in French and Italian-speaking regions

Digital radio reception is most advanced in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, where some 77% of radio use is either via DAB+ or the internet (69% in French-speaking Switzerland, 68% in Italian-speaking Switzerland). In both the French and Italian-speaking regions, the internet is the most popular platform, accounting for slightly over a third of all radio use. FM and DAB+ are on a par with each other there, representing just under a third each.

### Digital radio used by all age groups

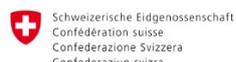
Digital radio now accounts for at least around 70% of use in each age group. Digital migration is most advanced among the 15 to 34 year olds, who represent 85% of use; among this cohort, the internet is the most popular platform, with 51% of radio use. Digital radio accounts for 69% of radio use among listeners aged 55 and over. DAB+ is the most popular platform for this age group, at 41%.

### Online radio listening at home catching up

Most radio listening takes place at home – 64% of all radio use. Internet platforms (39% of total home use) have now overtaken DAB+ (37%). Some 19% of radio listening takes place at work: 41% via DAB+, 38% on the internet and 21% on FM. Digital platforms thus now account for 79% of all radio listening at the workplace. Radio listening in the car accounts for 12%. Digitalisation has also advanced in cars, where the highest proportion of radio use is via DAB+ (47%). Together with the 12% for internet listening, a total of 59% of radio use in the car is now digital.

### Three quarters of the population using digital radio signal

Three quarters of the population (74%) listen to digital radio (DAB+ or internet/TV) in at least one place. Of these, 41% listen exclusively on digital platforms and a third (33%) say they use both digital and analogue radio. According to the latest survey, 14% of the population still listens exclusively to FM radio.



Swiss Confederation

Bundesamt für Kommunikation BAKOM  
Office fédéral de la communication OFCOM  
Ufficio federale delle comunicazioni UFCOM  
Uffizi federal da comunicaziun UFCOM  
Federal Office of Communications OFCOM



.....

### ***5 million threshold exceeded***

According to the GfK survey, sales of DAB+ radios declined slightly in the first half of 2021 to around 290,000 units, probably as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. However, a total of 5.7 million radios have been sold since 2000. The fact that practically all new cars are now equipped with a DAB+ radio as standard bodes well for the future of the digital migration. OFCOM will publish the latest figures in the first quarter of 2022.

#### ***Digital Migration working group (AG DigiMig)***

In spring 2013, the radio industry together with the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) formed the Digital Migration working group (AG 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 six-monthly survey of radio usage by distribution channel in Switzerland on behalf of the Digital Migration working group.

#### ***FM transmitters to be switched off at the end of 2024***

Swiss radio broadcasters have decided to cease FM broadcasting on 31 December 2024. The Federal Council has left it up to the radio industry to organise the digital switchover autonomously within a time frame of several years. OFCOM has adopted the switch-off plan decided by the industry as a binding obligation and will not renew the FM radio licences after they expire on 31 December 2024.

#### ***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 the radio usage figures (ARARO of 4 February 2022) is available on OFCOM's website at:

<https://www.bakom.admin.ch/bakom/en/homepage/electronic-media/technology/digital-transmission.html>

### ***Enquiries***

- Jessica Allemann Brancher, Researcher, AG DigiMig,  
+41 58 136 12 53
- Nik Kühne, Project Manager a.i., AG DigiMig,  
+41 58 136 12 93