

New study shows: Switzerland's radio listening is increasingly digital

Zurich, 27 August 2015

The Digital Migration (DigiMig) working group presented a new research project on digital radio listening today at the Swiss Radio Day. It examines the extent of digital listening among the radio audience in Switzerland. The conference heard the findings of the research project's pilot study.

Analogue FM radio transmission is to make way for DAB+ digital radio in Switzerland from 2020 onwards. The *Digitale Radionutzung* (Digital Radio Consumption) research that was presented today is running in parallel with the switchover: over the next few years, market researchers will conduct a survey on digital radio consumption twice a year. The survey provides information on the extent of digital listening among the radio audience in Switzerland.

Initial findings

The DigiMig working group today presented the findings of its pilot study. According to the research, 45% of all radio listening in Switzerland is now digital. In other words, 45 out of every 100 minutes of radio programming reaches listeners via digital channels. DAB+ accounts for just over half of this.

Further findings from the pilot study include:

- The two means of digital reception – DAB+ and the internet – are almost equally popular.
- Digital radio listening is lowest in Italian-speaking Switzerland. The figures for German and French-speaking Switzerland are equal.
- Young people listen to more digital radio than older age groups, mainly as a result of much higher internet radio listening among the young.
- More than a quarter of radio listening at home and at work is now via DAB+.
- Analogue channels dominate in-car listening.

"Digital radio consumption" refers to radio listening by means of a DAB+ receiver, internet radio, and via a computer, tablet, smartphone or TV set.

GfK Switzerland conducted the study on behalf of the DigiMig working group. The market researchers surveyed around 2,400 individuals from the various language regions of Switzerland, by telephone and online.

The Digital Migration working group

In the spring of 2013, the radio industry joined forces with OFCOM to form the Digital Migration (DigiMig) working group. In addition to OFCOM, it comprises representatives of the VSP association of Swiss private radio stations, the RRR association which represents regional radio stations in French-speaking Switzerland, the Unikom union of non-commercial local radio stations, Swiss public broadcaster SRG SSR, the automotive industry, and other sectors.

The working group's report is intended to serve the authorities and the radio broadcasters themselves as a basis for defining the Swiss radio sector of the future. It puts into practice the digital radio broadcasting strategy which the Federal Council drew up as long ago as 2006. This stated that, as the last analogue element of an otherwise digitised radio world, FM had reached its capacity limits. Its technical potential has been exhausted, and there have been no unoccupied, usable FM frequencies available in Switzerland for many years. All SRG radio stations and more than half of those that are privately owned are already broadcast via DAB+ in parallel with FM. Some stations are exclusively digital.

Further reading

(available at www.bakom.admin.ch/themen/radio_tv/01214/02292/04666/index.html?lang=en)

- Summary of final report: 15 measures for digital migration
- Final report of the Digital Migration working group

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