

## EU digital radio rules in spotlight at Brussels Motor Show

**18 January 2019, Brussels, Belgium:** Policy makers, broadcasters and car makers are gathering at the Brussels Motor Show this evening to raise awareness of new EU rules requiring all new car radios to be capable of receiving digital terrestrial radio within two years.

The European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) entered into force on 20 December 2018. EU Member States have two years from this date to transpose the code into national legislation.

The EECC states that “any car radio receiver integrated in a new vehicle available for sale or rent in the EU will be required to include a receiver capable of receiving and reproducing radio services provided via digital terrestrial radio broadcasting”. The decision is driven by a pan-European industry trend away from the previously prevailing FM standard and towards digital radio.

**Speaking ahead of the Brussels Motor Show, WorldDAB President Patrick Hannon commented:** “Within two years, all new car radios in the EU will be able to receive digital terrestrial radio. This requirement applies equally to countries with established DAB+ markets, such as Germany, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands and those at an earlier stage of development, such as Poland, Sweden and the Czech Republic. Motorists across Europe will be able to receive the benefits of digital terrestrial radio – greater choice, clearer audio and enhanced data services. In times of emergency, when mobile networks are most likely to become overloaded, motorists will still be able to receive reliable safety and security information.”

“We are very pleased and proud to have actively campaigned for this”, **said Noel Curran, Director General of the EBU.** “Having all radios in passenger cars capable of digital terrestrial radio reception opens up new opportunities for broadcasters to develop ever more innovative services and for audiences to enjoy an enriched and better quality offer when they are on the move.”

“This is a positive move for the auto industry which will drive the evolution of broadcast radio, by far the most used entertainment function in the car. We value the customer benefits offered by digital radio such as clear audio, more stations and album art” **said Martin Koch, Head of Development Multimedia at Audi AG.** “For years, Audi has been offering digital radio in all models and we are continuously working on further developing the radio experience. In the latest Audi models with MMI touch we introduced Hybrid Radio, switching seamlessly to the online radio stream when you are driving out of the reception area of your radio station. For us, DAB+ and Hybrid Radio is the perfect match for a great radio listening experience wherever you go.”

In Europe, the most widely adopted form of digital terrestrial radio is DAB / DAB+. DAB+ coverage is expanding rapidly across the continent with services on air in most European markets. There continues to be particular focus given on extending and improving coverage on major automotive routes.

Similar digital radio developments are taking place in other non-EU markets - in particular, in Norway where national FM services were switched off in 2017 and in Switzerland, which is planning a digital switchover between 2020 and 2024. In these markets, respectively 98% and 85% of new cars now come with DAB+ as standard.

In the UK, 91% of new cars already have DAB as standard, which means that this market is already close to reaching the EEC requirements. Italy has put legislation in place to ensure that all new cars have a digital radio receiver by 2020, and will therefore comply with the EEC before the required legislative date. France has also just triggered a receiver law requiring all new car radios released 18 months from now to include DAB+ radio capabilities.

In addition to its focus on car, the EEC also gives EU member states the opportunity to introduce measures requiring consumer radios to be able to receive digital transmissions. Italy is the first country to introduce such a rule for consumer radios along with the French law triggered in December last year, which requires all new consumer radios sold 12 months from now to have DAB+. Other markets, including Germany, UK and the Netherlands are currently considering similar laws.

**-ENDS-**

### **About WorldDAB**

WorldDAB is the global industry association responsible for defining and promoting DAB digital radio. By bringing together radio industry professionals, WorldDAB provides knowledge and expertise that helps countries successfully adopt and implement broadcast digital radio.

Our 1250+ experts from over 100 member organisations cover 30 countries across the globe and include public and commercial broadcasters, regulators, network providers and manufacturers of receivers, chips, professional equipment and automobiles.

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