

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **European Governments call for accelerated roll out of DAB in-cars** *With 56% of EU population now covered by DAB, demand grows for in-car access*

**11 May 2016, Brussels, Belgium:** Government Ministries, car manufacturers and the radio industry today gathered in Brussels to push for further adoption of DAB digital radio in the car.

At WorldDAB's 'Drive to Digital - Europe' event, produced in association with the Netherlands EU Presidency, government officials from Germany, the UK and the Netherlands were joined by the French media regulator and senior representatives from the broadcast and automotive industries as they called for a European vision for DAB digital radio.

At the event, it was revealed that 56% of European citizens are now able to receive DAB / DAB+ services, with progress most advanced in countries with national DAB coverage – Germany, UK, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway and Denmark.

These seven markets collectively account for 60% of all European new car sales. With France and Belgium now taking their first significant steps in the roll-out of digital radio, established DAB markets are expected to soon account for nearly 80% of new car sales in Europe.

**Patrick Hannon, President of WorldDAB,** said: "DAB is establishing itself as the core future platform for radio in Europe with DAB services now available to 291 million people across the continent. For motorists, the only way to receive all available free-to-air radio services in Europe is through radios with both analogue and DAB/DAB+ capability.

"In the UK 80% of new cars come with DAB radio as standard – with Norway and Switzerland following closely behind. With cross-border travel increasingly common and the first countries setting dates for the switch off of analogue services, it's time for FM / DAB / DAB+ to be fitted as standard across Europe. A clear statement of support from European Institutions would accelerate this process."

Speakers at the Drive to Digital event included senior officials from Ministries in three leading digital radio markets: Ian O'Neill from the DCMS in the UK, Frank Krüger from the BMVI in Germany and Jos de Groot from the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, along with Francois-Xavier Bergot from French regulator the CSA.

**Jos de Groot, Director Telecommunication Market, Ministry of Economic Affairs in The Netherlands:** "The DAB networks in The Netherlands are of excellent quality and there is momentum for DAB+. That's why I am calling to the car industry to make DAB standard in every car, ensuring they will be ready for the future."

**Frank Krüger, Director, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, (BMVI), Germany:** "In our view DAB is of great benefit to society: low transmission costs allow a wider range of programmes and services, limited spectrum is used more efficiently and the quality of broadcast

signals is improved by digital transmission. Furthermore, broadcasting vital, high quality traffic information via DAB can make a decisive contribution to increasing transport efficiency and reducing the number of traffic fatalities.”

**Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy, United Kingdom:** “UK Government is committed to rolling out DAB digital radio, and Britain is leading the way with around 80% of new cars already featuring DAB. A wider variety of stations and better reception are just some of the benefits of having DAB digital radio and we’d like to see it adopted as widely as possible. Rollout across Europe is an important next step and will require close collaboration between government and industry, which is why events like today’s are so important.”

**François-Xavier Bergot, Deputy Head of Radio Directorate, Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel (CSA), France:** “When the CSA decided on the new schedule for DAB+ rollout, one of its aims was to give perspectives to players including the automotive industry, as listening in the car is a key factor for the success of DAB+.”

Speakers from Audi and Fiat also explained the reasons they are now fitting DAB in more models across Europe.

Robbert Van Den Heuvel, Communication Manager at Fiat Chrysler said: “Fiat Chrysler Automobiles was one of the first to implement DAB+ in its cars, as part of our commitment to offer innovative products with a high standard of quality. We are working closely with both suppliers and broadcasters to further develop the technology and see it as a key part of the entertainment systems for our cars.”

Helen Boaden, Director of Radio at The BBC and President of the European Digital Radio Alliance and Mike Hawes, CEO of the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders (SMMT) both made clear their support for measures which would accelerate the roll-out of digital radio in cars.

Helen Boaden, Director of BBC Radio and President of the newly formed European Digital Radio Alliance, said: “We created the Alliance because we recognise that broadcasters need to work together across Europe to make sure listeners get the best from digital radio technology. Nowhere is that more important than in the motor car where radio is both essential entertainment and a vital source of information for millions of people on the move every day. We want both the car industry and regulators to understand the Alliance’s commitment to making DAB the preferred choice of consumers across the European market.”

Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said, “With increasing numbers of DAB-enabled vehicle models on the market, and new car registrations at record levels, more car owners than ever before are now able to tune into digital radio while they drive. While vehicle manufacturers have already shown they are committed to the digital revolution, the setting of a confirmed switch to digital date by government would considerably accelerate conversion of existing vehicles in use. This remains a sizeable job and, consequently, a significant opportunity for the aftermarket.”

**Notes to editors**

\* The 56% coverage figure was calculated based on coverage figures available from <http://www.worlddab.org/country-information>, for all countries currently in the European Union as of April 2016 including Norway and Switzerland.

Presentations and content from the event will be available, please contact WorldDAB for access.

### **About WorldDAB**

WorldDAB is the global industry forum for digital radio promoting DAB / DAB+, the digital radio broadcasting standards of choice in Europe and much of Asia Pacific. Its global membership includes public and commercial broadcasters, network providers, receiver manufacturers, chip manufacturers, and car manufacturers. Members collaborate to deliver advice and tailored solutions on all aspects of the switch from analogue to digital radio.

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