

Norway makes history with radio's first digital switchover

- *First region switches off FM today – final region in December 2017*
- *Switzerland and South Tyrol next in line*

11 January 2017, Bodø, Norway: Norway today becomes the first country in the world to start digital switchover (DSO) from FM to DAB+. National FM networks will be switched off region by region - starting in Nordland and progressing across the whole country throughout 2017. The final regions, Troms and Finnmark, will complete the process in December.

“Today’s digital switchover is a hugely important milestone for the radio industry,” said Patrick Hannon, President, WorldDAB. “The DAB platform is far more efficient than FM – offering both greater choice and clearer sound. With the start of the switch-over process, Norway is sending a clear signal across the world that the future of radio is digital.”

Ole Jørgen Torvmark, CEO of Digital Radio Norway, said: ““This is a historical day for radio. We want to see radio continue its development on digital platforms, following the FM-technology that lifted radio from its beginning on AM. The Norwegian broadcasters show the digital possibilities today by launching five new radio stations, giving the listeners 30 national channels in total. The world’s first digital switchover is made possible through collaboration across Government, broadcasters and supply chain. Throughout 2017, the focus will be to help all listeners with the transition.”

Other international markets are following Norway’s lead. Switzerland is planning for switch-over to begin in 2020 and a major promotional campaign to raise awareness starts this year. The North-Italian region of South Tyrol will start its FM switch-off in 2017.

In the UK, the government has stated it will review the next steps for digital radio when its criteria for coverage and listening are met – expected to be achieved by the end of 2017. Germany and Denmark have both recently announced second national multiplexes, the Netherlands continues to make good progress, France has announced continued geographic expansion, Slovenia launched national services in 2016 and Belgium has announced plans for a federal DAB+ launch across Flanders and Wallonia in 2018. Outside of Europe, Australia continues to lead the way.

“A commitment to digital switchover has significant benefits for broadcasters, manufacturers and listeners,” says Patrick Hannon. “It provides certainty on the future and allows broadcasters and radio manufacturers to plan and invest accordingly. For listeners, this greater investment and innovation in radio means more choice - today in Bodø consumers have access to 25 national stations on DAB+, compared to just five on FM.”

The Norwegian switchover applies to national radio stations and commercial local radio stations broadcasting in larger cities. Community radio stations and smaller local stations will continue to broadcast on FM for five more years after national switch off, at which point licences will be reviewed.

Notes to editors:

Images, video and material from Bodø can be found at <http://radio.no/press/>

The latest information on DAB around the world can be downloaded from <https://www.worlddab.org/country-information>

Full information on DAB in Norway, including the history and latest coverage and receiver statistics, can be found at <https://www.worlddab.org/country-information/norway>

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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 1000+ experts from 90+ member organisations cover 27 countries across the globe and include public and commercial broadcasters, regulators, network providers and manufacturers of receivers, chips, professional equipment and automobiles.

Together, we are shaping the future of radio, delivering advice and tailored solutions on all aspects of the switch from analogue to digital.

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