

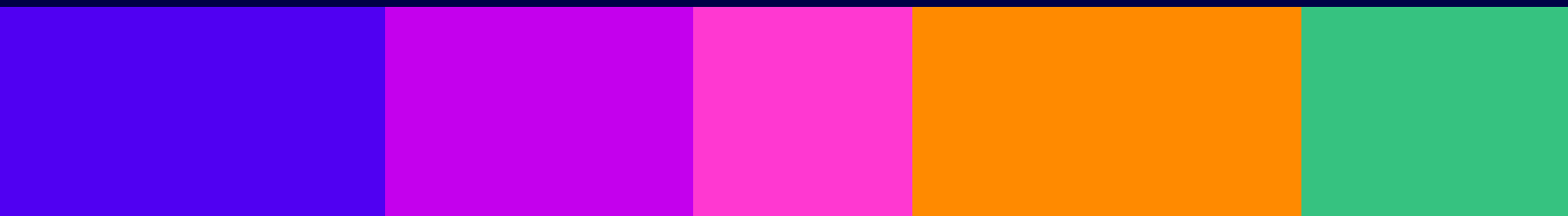


Media Nations

UK 2024



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Overview

Ofcom's annual Media Nations report is a research report for industry, policymakers, academics and consumers. Our main objectives are to capture evolving consumer behaviours and key trends in the media sector, and to set out how audiences are served in the UK. We draw on a range of relevant evidence, and adopt a cross-platform perspective, including TV, online video, radio and audio sectors.

As with previous editions, this report is accompanied by an [interactive report](#) containing an extensive range of data. We also publish separate reports for [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) covering specific themes and issues relevant to those nations.

Ofcom's Media Nations report addresses the requirement to undertake and make public our consumer research (as set out in Sections 14 and 15 of the Communications Act 2003). It also meets the requirements on Ofcom under Section 358 of the Communications Act 2003 to publish an annual factual and statistical report on the TV and radio sector.

What we have found – in brief

The decline in broadcast TV's reach accelerated in 2023, although for every age group the amount of viewing declined at a slower rate than in the previous year

- Broadcast TV's weekly reach fell from 79% in 2022 to 75% in 2023, marking a second consecutive year of record decline. For the first time, less than half (48%) of 16-24-year-olds tuned into broadcast TV in an average week.
- While the long-term decline in viewing of broadcast TV also continued, down 6% year on year, it was slower than the 12% fall the previous year. All age groups contributed to this trend – for example, children's viewing fell by 6% in 2023 compared to a 20% fall in 2022, while 65-74s' viewing fell by 5% in 2023 and 21% in 2022.

Overall viewing of TV and video increased in 2023, driven by online platforms, including video-sharing platforms such as YouTube, and broadcasters' own services such as iPlayer and ITVX

- The average amount of time spent watching TV and video content at home in 2023 was 4 hours 31 minutes per person per day, up by 2% since 2022.
- Daily viewing to broadcaster video-on-demand (BVOD) services rose by 29% to 20 minutes per person, and viewing to video-sharing platforms (VSPs) increased by 12% to 49 minutes.
- Netflix remained the most-watched subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) service, averaging 21 minutes per person per day in 2023.
- The TV set remained the most-used device for watching video, accounting for 84% of total in-home video viewing in 2023. TVs are rapidly growing in importance for YouTube, accounting for 34% of YouTube's viewing inside UK homes in 2023, up from 29% the previous year.

Revenues for commercial broadcasters fell in 2023 amid an economic downturn, almost completely offsetting the continued growth of online video revenue

- Total commercial TV and online revenue was marginally up in 2023, rising by 0.5% to £15.6bn. The 20% increase in online video revenue – mainly driven by SVOD – to £5.4bn, was

almost cancelled out by the 7.5% decline across commercial broadcast and pay TV, down to £10.2bn.

- The greatest revenue decreases were among the commercial PSBs and digital multichannels, which suffered declines of 16% and 10% respectively, to fall just below 2020 levels.
- Overall advertising expenditure increased by 5.3% to £36.6bn, driven by growth for online, which rose by £2.6bn (10%). Social video – including services such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram – accounted for about £900m of this increase, up 20% since 2022.
- Within the challenging economic environment, linear TV advertising spend declined by 14% to £3.9bn. This meant that although BVoD revenues grew by 16% to £980m, total TV ad spend across linear and online fell by 8.9% to £4.9bn.

PSB first-run spend and output fell in 2023, after 2022's record highs, which were driven by lingering Covid impacts and the cyclic nature of major sports events

- PSBs' spend on first-run originations totalled £2.7bn in 2023, down 5.3% following a strong 2022, but still 8.1% higher than in 2019 (the last pre-pandemic year). First-run originated hours dipped by 2.9% to 31,770, but also remained above the 2019 level.
- The single biggest driver of this overall reduction was a significant drop in sports programming, following a 2022 that included the FIFA World Cup, the UEFA Women's Euros and the Winter Olympics. In other genres, such as entertainment and drama, there were signs of rising production costs sustained by high inflation, following previous years' Covid-driven increases.
- Audiences continue to be broadly satisfied with public service broadcasting, with *'trusted and accurate UK news'* considered one of the most important elements; 49% of people ranked this in their three most important attributes for PSBs to deliver to society overall.

The SVoD market has matured, with subscriber numbers plateauing, and ad-supported tiers positioned to drive future growth

- Take-up of SVoD services has levelled out at just over two-thirds (68%) of households, returning to the peak it achieved in early 2022, following a period of fluctuation between 65% and 68% over the past couple of years.
- The SVoD sector generated just under £4bn in subscription revenue in 2023 – up 22% year on year, driven by price rises – plus a relatively small amount (c.£50m) from advertising in a nascent period for SVoD advertising tiers.

There were mixed performances within commercial radio's overall growth, while consumer spend on recorded music continues to rise

- Commercial radio revenue continued to grow in 2023, up 2% overall to £667m, despite declines in local and national spot advertising revenues (down by 4% and 3% respectively). Digital audio ad spend rose 12% overall to £176m, mainly driven by a 23% rise in podcast advertising.
- Consumer expenditure on recorded music also continued to rise, up 10% to exceed £2.2bn. Spend on physical formats maintained its share versus subscriptions, both growing by 10% to reach £314m and nearly £1.9bn respectively, with Spotify, Amazon and YouTube raising their prices in 2023.

- Many commercial stations have switched from broadcasting in standard DAB to DAB+ in the past year, including a selection of Bauer’s Absolute and Magic brand extensions as well as Global’s Classic FM. The move means that more Bauer stations are now available UK-wide, while Global have used DAB+ to free up capacity for new stations Smooth Relax and the pop-up station Capital (Taylor’s Version).

While listening continues to shift online, record numbers of listeners tune into radio weekly, and average listening time is up year on year

- Live radio continues to be the most popular form of audio, with just under 50 million people aged 15+ (88.6%) tuning in for an average of 20.5 hours each week.
- Commercial stations have further extended their market share, accounting for 54.2% of radio listening in Q1 2024 versus 43.4% for the BBC, and their reach remains high, with 70.4% of people aged 15+ listening on a weekly basis.
- Online listening continues to grow steadily, overtaking AM/FM for the first time in Q1 2024 to account for 28% of all live radio hours, mostly through smart speakers. But DAB remains the most popular platform for radio listening, accounting for 42.6% of hours and up by 2.8 percentage points in the past year.

Reach of music streaming and podcasts is increasing gradually, with signs of potential growth among those aged 55 and over

- Music streaming services now reach half of all people aged 15+ on a weekly basis, but reach has stabilised among under-55s, with growth over the past couple of years only coming from those aged 55+. Over a fifth (22%) of weekly audio listening is to streamed music, versus 61% for any radio content. Spotify Premium has the largest share of time spent music streaming (58%).
- A fifth of people aged 15+ listen to at least one podcast per week, with reach highest among 25-34-year-olds (27.9%). While over-54s remain less likely than average to listen to podcasts, their reach has steadily increased over the past five years. As of Q1 2024, just over one in ten adults aged 65+ listened to podcasts each week (11%).

Live radio listening via a radio set is still the most popular form of audio in cars, but smartphone connectivity and access to streaming services are also important

- About two-thirds of vehicle users (67%) connect their smartphone to the car. Besides using an FM/DAB radio, the next most common way to listen to audio is to use a mirroring system such as Apple CarPlay or Android Auto.
- The majority (77%) of regular vehicle users say they value being able to listen to the radio in vehicles, with little variance by age. However, it’s also clear that having access to streaming services in vehicles is particularly important to younger people; about two-thirds of 16-24-year-olds say these services are essential when travelling in vehicles (67%).

TV and video audience trends

Introduction

This section draws on data from research agencies measuring audience viewing, as well as Ofcom's own audience research and other third-party research. This is to provide evidence of and commentary on the continuing shifts in audiences' TV and video viewing habits and preferences.

Total video viewing

Where our data comes from

Our total video viewing analysis refers to audiovisual content watched inside the home only, whether on TV sets or other devices connected to a home's WiFi network. Data comes from Barb Audiences Ltd (Barb) – see the [Annex](#) for more detail about Barb's methodology. Unless otherwise stated, viewing figures in this chapter are reported for all UK individuals aged 4+.

In a change from last year's report, our total video viewing metric excludes viewing taking place outside the home, since Barb does not measure this. (Previously, we have used our own estimates for this using data from IPA TouchPoints). In order to make like-for-like comparisons with 2022 in this year's report, we have recalculated the 2022 figures using Barb's in-home viewing data alone. For context, previous estimates found that out-of-home viewing accounted for a very small proportion of total viewing, adding just under 2% to the total in-home figure.

Time spent watching online video services continues to grow at the expense of live broadcast TV

On average, individuals (aged 4+) spent 4 hours 31 minutes per day watching video content at home in 2023 – a six minute (2%) increase since 2022. Online platforms drove this growth, with daily viewing of broadcaster video-on-demand (BVoD) services up by 29% to 20 minutes per person, and viewing of video-sharing platforms (VSPs)¹ increasing by 12% to 49 minutes. But this growth in BVoD viewing was not enough to offset the 9% decline in live TV viewing. Measured broadcaster content (mainly live TV, recorded playback, and BVoD), although making up the majority of Barb-measured in-home video viewing, fell from 61% of the total in 2022 to 57% in 2023.²

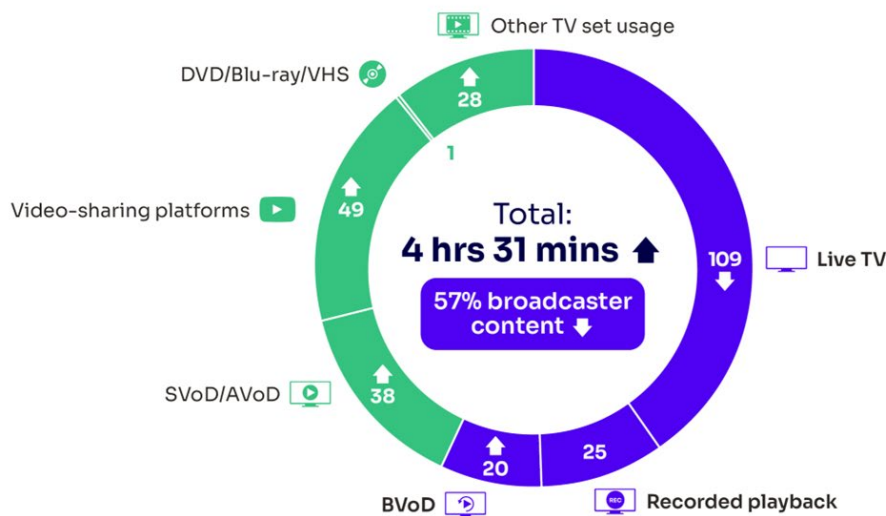
¹ Platforms which allow users to upload and share videos with the public are classed as VSPs, even if they are funded by subscriptions or advertising. These include YouTube, TikTok and Twitch.

² Broadcasters may also put content on third-party platforms, such as YouTube, or license content to others, such as Netflix. Only a small amount of viewing to broadcaster content on VSPs is attributed to the broadcaster; the vast majority is captured under the relevant VSP.

Subscription video-on-demand (SVoD) and advertising-supported video-on-demand (AVoD)³ services accounted for 14% of total in-home video viewing in 2023, in line with 2022, with more marginal growth of 6% year on year to reach 38 minutes per day. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Disney+ continued to account for the large majority (95%) of SVoD/AVoD viewing.

Meanwhile, the TV set remains the most-used device for watching video, accounting for 84% of total in-home video viewing in 2023. Notably, the proportion of time spent watching YouTube in-home via TV sets increased from 29% in 2022 to 34% in 2023, while the proportion for SVoD/AVoD rose from 81% to 85%.

Figure 1: Average daily minutes of in-home video viewing across all devices, all individuals: 2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network. Arrows indicate whether viewing time for that category changed since 2022. 'Broadcaster content' includes live TV, recorded playback and BVoD. 'Other TV set usage' includes viewing to some SVoD/AVoD/VSP that cannot be definitively measured, as well as some unmeasured broadcast channels, some EPG/menu browsing, viewing when the audio is muted, piracy, unmeasured box-sets/pay-per-view content, and non-video internet activity through a PC or other device connected to the TV. 'SVoD/AVoD' excludes viewing of NOW, which is captured within BVoD along with Sky Go/Sky TV On Demand (these two services stream the same content, so measured viewing cannot be separated).

Less than a fifth of 16-24-year-olds' viewing is now to broadcasters, versus 87% for over-64s

On average, younger people have always spent less time watching TV than older people, even before the rise of online video services (which skew younger) over the past couple of decades. However, there are a few notable insights to highlight from 2023:

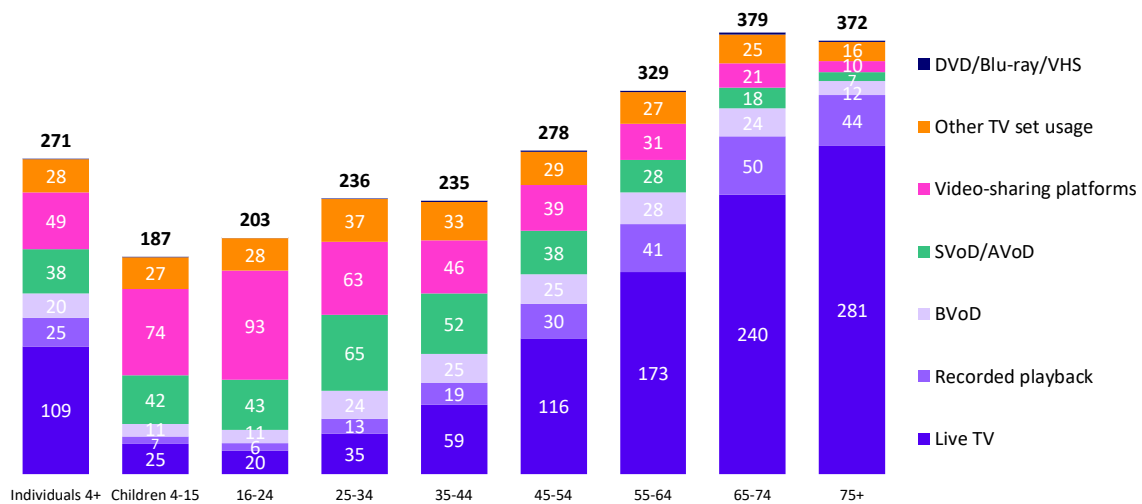
- VSPs skew most heavily to 16-24-year-olds, accounting for nearly half (46%) of their total in-home video time, at 1 hour 33 minutes per day, with children not far behind at 40%.

³ AVoD services, such as Pluto TV and Rakuten TV, typically provide free or low-cost access to content in exchange for showing adverts. Barb groups SVoD and AVoD services together because some SVoD services offer advertising-supported tiers, and viewing to these tiers cannot be separated from viewing to non-advertising tiers. Viewing of any content on SVoD/AVoD services, even if licensed from a broadcaster, is captured under 'SVoD/AVoD'.

Conversely, this figure is less than 10% among all groups aged over 54. In absolute terms, year-on-year growth remains strongest among younger age groups, but proportionally, growth was faster among over-64s.

- Adults aged 25-34 are the heaviest viewers of SVoD/AVoD services, at 1 hour 5 minutes per day, or 28% of their total in-home video time. However, the fastest growth was among 55-74-year-olds and children, both increasing by more than 10% year on year.
- Live TV still accounts for over three-quarters (76%) of over-74s’ video consumption, and more than three-fifths (63%) of 65-74s’, highlighting the enduring importance of linear TV to older audiences. Factoring in recorded playback and BVoD, broadcaster content as a whole made up 91% and 83% of video consumption for these two age groups respectively. At the other end of the spectrum, 16-24s spent just 19% of their video time with broadcasters, half of which – a mere 20 minutes a day – was live TV.

Figure 2: Average daily minutes of in-home video viewing, by age: 2023



Source: Barb as-viewed. See notes for Figure 1 for detail about the categories.

Broadcast TV viewing

Broadcast TV viewing continued its long-term decline in 2023, with declines seen across most age groups

On average, individuals (aged 4+) spent 6% less time watching broadcast TV⁴ in 2023 than in 2022, continuing the long-term downward trajectory since the early 2010s.

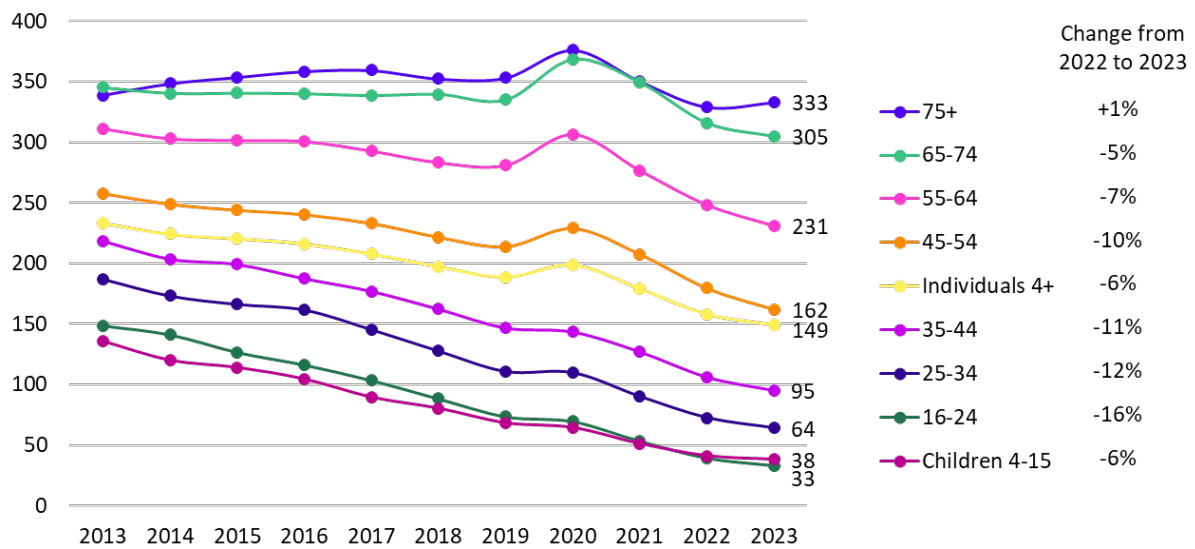
However, the rate of decline slowed for every age group, compared to steep declines in 2022 (which were partly due to inflated viewing levels in 2021, caused by pandemic-related lockdowns). For example, among 16-24s there was a 16% decrease in 2023, versus a 26% decline in 2022. Similarly, there was a 6% decline among children in 2023, compared to 20% the year before. At the other end of the age spectrum, 65-74s had a 5% decline in 2023, versus 21% in 2022, while viewers aged 75+

⁴ ‘Broadcast TV’ refers to viewing of scheduled TV channels watched on the TV set in the home. This includes viewing of content watched live (at the time it was broadcast on the channel) as well as catch-up viewing watched within 28-days of when it was first broadcast (either via a video/digital recorder or an online catch-up service).

were the only age group to increase their broadcast TV viewing, up 1% compared to a decline of 6% in 2022.

These age group trends over the past year continue to reflect the longer-term story, with the steepest viewing declines (proportionally) coming from the youngest audiences. Since 2013, daily broadcast TV viewing by 16-24s has fallen by 78%, from 2 hours 29 minutes to 33 minutes in 2023. Similarly, the drop among children aged 4-15 was 72%, from 2 hours 16 minutes to 38 minutes. As a result, broadcast TV is developing an ever-ageing profile, reflected by the fact that 22% of all broadcast TV viewing in 2023 was by viewers aged 75+, up from 10% in 2013.

Figure 3: Average daily minutes of broadcast TV viewing, by age: 2013-2023



Source: Barb 28-day consolidated, TV sets only.

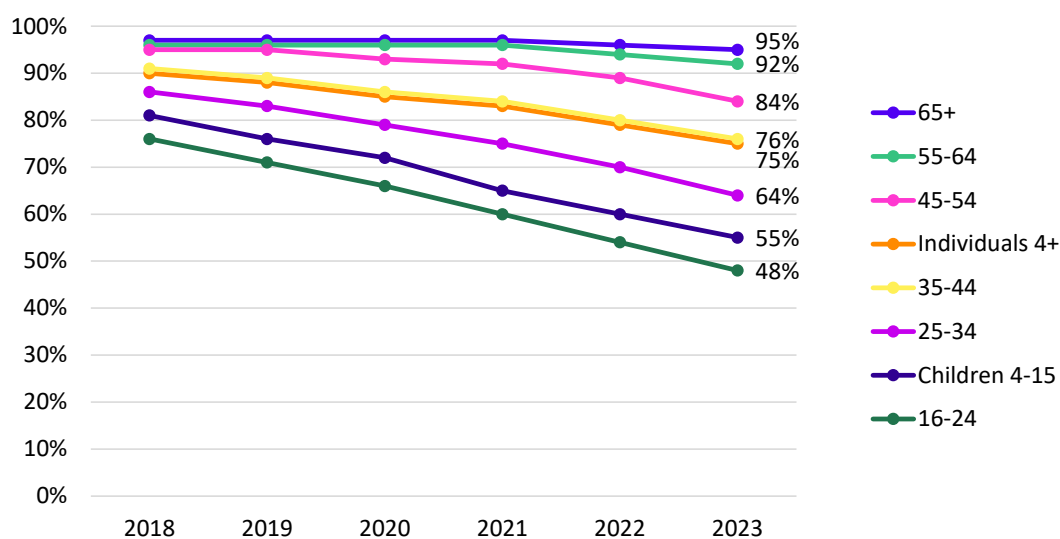
For the first time, a quarter of individuals and half of 16-24-year-olds do not watch broadcast TV on a weekly basis

Despite the slightly slower rate of decline for broadcast TV viewing compared to 2022, 2023 produced a second consecutive year of record decline in weekly reach⁵ among all individuals (down by 3.8 percentage points from 2022 to 2023, versus 3.4 percentage points from 2021 to 2022).

Younger audiences still continue to drive these declines, with the fastest drop among 16-24s – from 76% in 2018 to 48% in 2023, with three consecutive years of six-percentage-point decreases. The drop-off among children has been nearly as fast, from 81% to 55% over the same timeframe. Notably, 2023 saw an acceleration in the decline of broadcast TV’s weekly reach among 45-54-year-olds, falling from 89% to 84% in a single year. Meanwhile, there has been relatively little change among older audiences – for those aged 65+, weekly reach remains above 95%.

⁵ ‘Weekly reach’ is defined as the percentage of all individuals 4+ watching 15 consecutive minutes or more in an average week.

Figure 4: Average weekly reach of broadcast TV, by age: 2018-2023



Source: Barb 28-day consolidated, individuals 4+, TV sets only. Weekly reach is defined as the percentage of all individuals 4+ watching 15 consecutive minutes or more in an average week.

BVoD is a growing proportion of total viewing to broadcasters' content

Viewing to BVoD services, such as BBC iPlayer or ITVX, grew by 29% in 2023 to 20 minutes per person per day. This raised the proportion of total broadcaster viewing coming from BVoD services to 13%, up from 10% in 2022. While BVoD viewing increased for all age groups, the largest year-on-year increases were among older audiences; for example, 55-64s and over-74s increased theirs by 32% and 43% respectively (to 28 and 24 minutes per day). In contrast, younger audiences had the slowest growth in BVoD viewing, up by 9% among 16-24s (to 12 minutes per day).

The rapid growth in total BVoD viewing in 2023 was not enough to compensate for the large decline in viewing of broadcasters' linear channels, which nevertheless continues to account for a large majority (87%) of total viewing of broadcaster content.

That said, these proportions vary by broadcaster. Viewing to Sky⁶ and the BBC skews more towards the broadcasters' BVoD services (accounting for 20% and 18% of total viewing respectively), whereas Channel 5 remains predominantly linear-based, with 95% of all its viewing going to its broadcast linear channels and 5% to its BVoD service, My5.

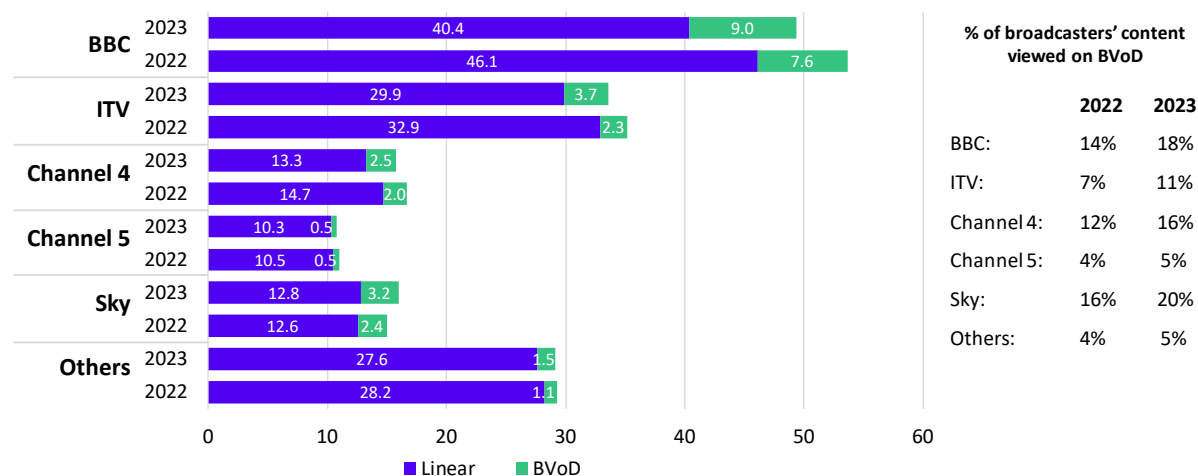
Besides the overarching shift in audience behaviour, from linear broadcasts to digital platforms, some of the uptake of BVoD services may have been due to broadcasters developing their online strategies. For example, ITV relaunched and rebranded its BVoD service from ITV Hub to ITVX in December 2022, providing access to an expanded catalogue, including exclusive original content. Daily average viewing time to ITV's BVoD service increased by 57% year on year to nearly four minutes per person per day in 2023, while the proportion of total viewing to ITV via BVoD rose from 7% to 11%.

⁶ Includes viewing to Sky's SVoD service, NOW, because Barb's measurement is unable to separate this from Sky Go/Sky TV On Demand.

Notably, for each of the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky, the BVoD share of their total viewing increased by four percentage points year on year, although ITV’s growth was proportionally the highest, given its lower base in 2022.

See the [TV and video industry trends](#) section for further detail on BVoD strategies and recent industry developments in this sector.

Figure 5: Average daily minutes viewed of linear* and BVoD, by broadcaster: 2022-2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home’s WiFi network, individuals 4+. *Linear refers to viewing across all the broadcast channels owned by each broadcaster (whether watched live or on catch-up). BVoD includes all content watched via the on-demand services owned by each broadcaster including non-linear programming. Sky’s BVoD figure includes viewing to Sky’s SVoD service, NOW, because Barb’s measurement is unable to separate this from Sky Go/Sky TV On Demand.

News was the genre with the largest year-on-year viewing decline on PSB services in 2023

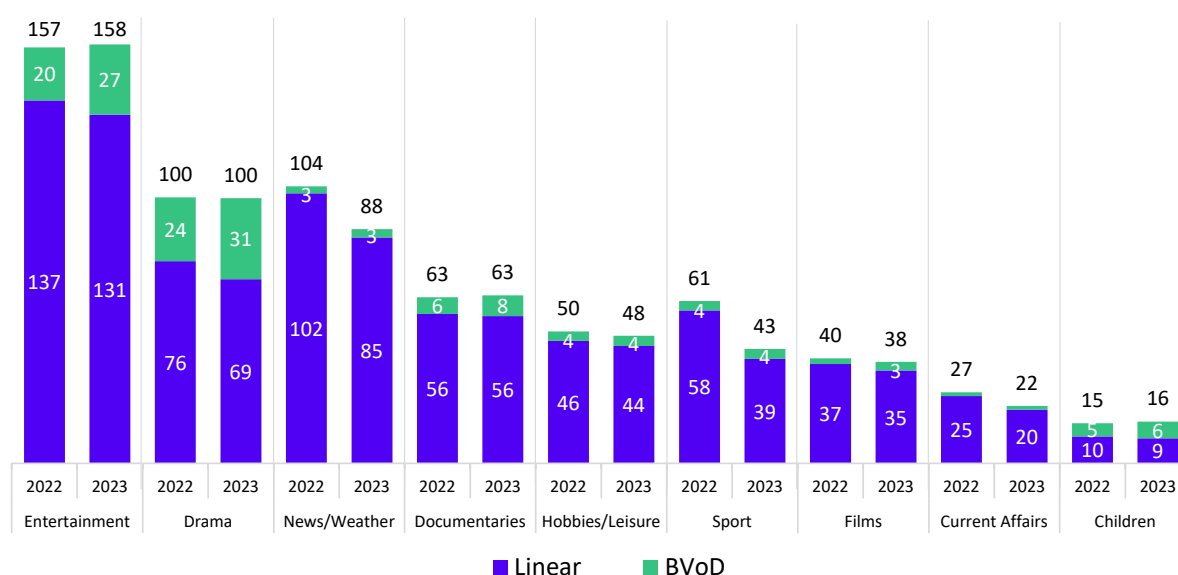
Barb data highlights how viewing to certain genres is shifting from linear TV channels to BVoD services. For example, from 2022 to 2023, the total amount of entertainment, drama and documentary programming watched across the PSBs’ linear TV channels and BVoD services remained unchanged, with declines on linear channels completely offset by growth on BVoD services.

News was the genre with the largest year-on-year viewing decline (excluding sport, which, as usual, was affected heavily by the timing of major sporting events). News viewing on PSB services decreased by 16 hours per individual, with all the decline attributable to linear channels, while BVoD viewing remained flat. Similarly, current affairs programming declined by five hours per individual to 20 hours on average.⁷ This trend may be driven by a combination of factors, including an [increase in the use of social media platforms for news](#) (which includes PSBs’ social media channels, such as on TikTok or YouTube)⁸, and a decrease in the overall level of interest in news, as noted in our [Adults’ Media Lives Wave 19 report](#).

⁷ Barb as-viewed, individuals 4+, on TV sets and other devices using the home’s WiFi network.

⁸ Ofcom’s News Consumption Survey 2024.

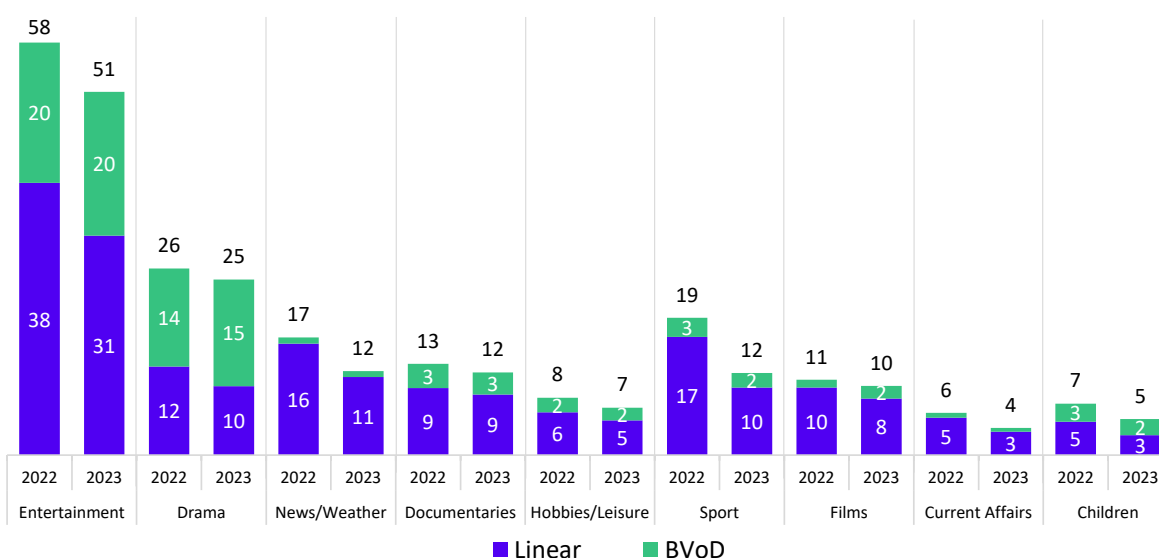
Figure 6: Average PSB hours viewed per person, by genre, individuals 4+: 2022-2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home’s WiFi network, individuals 4+. ‘PSB’ refers to all BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 channels as well as S4C. ‘Linear’ refers to viewing across all the broadcast channels owned by each PSB (whether watched live or on catch-up). ‘BVoD’ includes all content watched via the on-demand services owned by each broadcaster including non-linear programming. Year-on-year changes in viewing of sport are dependent on the sporting events in each year.

The equivalent picture for 16-24s shows how the split between viewing via linear channels and BVoD services might evolve for different genres. Notably, BVoD services account for the majority (61%) of this age group’s viewing of drama content across all PSB services, compared to 31% for all individuals. The proportion is also relatively high for entertainment programming, at 40%, versus 17% for all individuals.

Figure 7: Average PSB hours viewed per person, by genre, 16-24s: 2022-2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home’s WiFi network, 16-24s. ‘PSB’ refers to all BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 channels as well as S4C. ‘Linear’ refers to viewing across all the broadcast channels owned by each PSB (whether watched live or on catch-up). ‘BVoD’ includes all content watched via the on-demand services owned by each broadcaster including non-linear programming. Year-on-year changes in viewing of sport are dependent on the sporting events in each year.

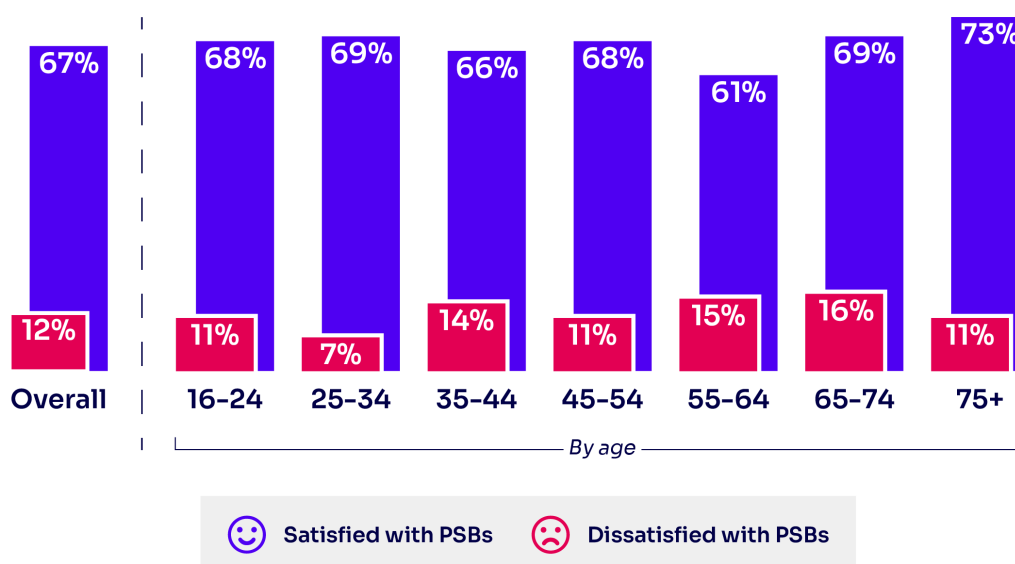
Audience attitudes and sentiments towards PSBs and BVoD services

Overall, audiences continue to say they are satisfied with public service broadcasting

When asked to think about PSB channels overall, about seven in ten (67%) PSB viewers⁹ said they were satisfied with them, in line with previous years. In 2023, there was a slight increase in those saying they were dissatisfied with PSBs (up from 10% to 12%), returning to the 2021 level (12%).¹⁰

When looking at demographic differences, there were similar trends as in previous years, with people aged 75+ (73%), women (71%), and those in socio-economic group ABC1 (70%) more likely to be satisfied with PSBs overall.

Figure 8: Satisfaction with PSBs overall and by age: 2023



Source: Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023. Question 28: And now, if you think about ALL the public service broadcaster channels combined, how satisfied are you that combined, they provide the different elements asked about in the previous question? Base: All who have watched PSB channel/service in last six months: UK total (2,841), 16-24 (281), 25-34 (439), 35-44 (445), 45-54 (462), 55-64 (510), 65-74 (397), 75+ (307).

Across the individual PSB channels, Channel 4 (77%) continued to have the highest levels of satisfaction among its viewers in the past six months, followed by BBC One (75%), ITV (73%) and Channel 5 (67%) – all broadly consistent with previous years.¹¹

⁹ 'PSB viewers' are defined as those who have watched a PSB channel/service in the past six months.

¹⁰ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

¹¹ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

Public service broadcasters continue to deliver a wide range of programming made for UK audiences

Overall, PSB viewers continued to say that PSBs deliver ‘well’¹² across a range of attributes, all remaining in line with previous years. Among viewers who had used a PSB service in the past six months, some of the attributes in which PSBs were seen to deliver ‘well’ included ‘programmes made for UK audiences’ (68%), ‘a wide range of different types of programmes, such as drama, comedy, entertainment or sport’ (68%) and programmes that ‘appeal to a wide range of audiences’ (64%): findings largely consistent with previous years.

After increases in 2022 in viewers’ positive perceptions of the delivery of some PSB attributes by Channel 4 and Channel 5 TV channels, in 2023 many of these statements returned to their 2021 levels; for example, for Channel 4 TV channels ‘appeal[ing] to a wide range of different audiences’ (2021 54%; 2022 58%; 2023 54%). Likewise, for Channel 5 TV channels ‘programmes that are different in their approach to other providers’ (2021 41%; 2022 44%; 2023 40%).

Figure 9: Proportion of PSB viewers who rated the delivery of different attributes of PSBs ‘well’ (NET 7-10): 2023

	BBC	itv	4	5
Programmes made for UK audiences	67%	60%	57%	49%
A wide range of different types of programmes, such as drama, comedy, sport or entertainment	64%	60%	54%	43%
Programmes that help me to understand what is going on in the world today	63%	52%	50%	40%
Broadcast events that bring the nation together for a shared viewing experience	62%	51%	40%	32%
Trusted and accurate UK news	60%	54%	51%	39%

Source: Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023. Question 24. Thinking about each broadcaster individually on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means extremely badly and 10 means extremely well, how well or badly does it provide...? Base: All who have watched... in last six months: BBC TV channels (2,657), ITV/ITV Cymru Wales/STV/UTV and ITV channels (2,595), Channel 4 TV channels (2,581), Channel 5 TV channels (2,228). Please note, this is a selection of attributes, rather than the top-rated attributes for each PSB.

There were also decreases in how ‘well’ viewers said that ITV TV channels delivered PSB attributes, with most statements returning to 2021 levels; for example, ‘programmes that help me to understand what is going on in the world today’ (2021 54%; 2022 57%; 2023 52%). For some

¹² The Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker uses questions asking respondents to say how ‘well’ or ‘badly’ different elements are being provided, using a 1-10 scale where 1 means extremely badly and 10 means extremely well. When referring to ‘well’ throughout this report, this is NET of scores 7 to 10.

statements, the declines went below the 2021 levels, such as ‘programmes made for UK audiences’ (2021 65%; 2022 66%; 2023 60%) and ‘appeal[ing] to a wide range of different audiences’ (2021 58%; 2022 59%; 2023 54%) We will continue to monitor this.

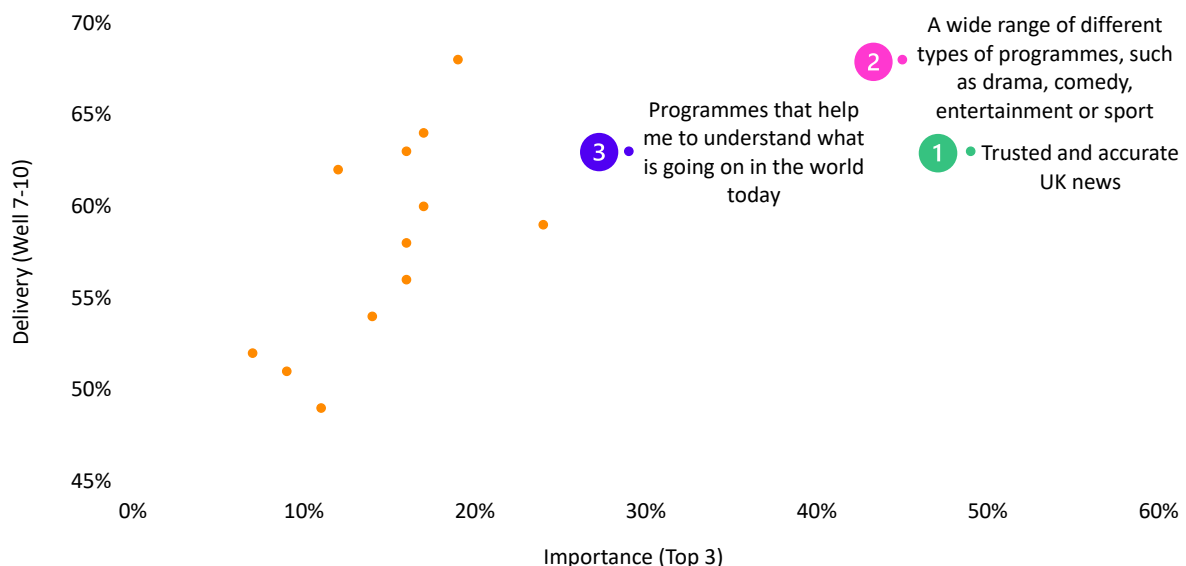
Trusted and accurate UK news is considered one of the most important elements of PSB

In 2023, the Public Service Media (PSM) Tracker asked respondents¹³ to consider what were the three most important attributes for PSBs to deliver to society overall. Around half (49%) ranked ‘trusted and accurate UK news’ in their top three, followed by ‘a wide range of different types of programmes, such as drama, comedy, entertainment or sport’ (45%) and ‘programmes that help me to understand what is going on in the world today’ (29%). These findings are broadly similar to the MaxDiff¹⁴ approach conducted in 2021, when ‘trusted and accurate UK news’ was also seen as the most important element of PSB.

Although for younger audiences ‘trusted and accurate UK news’ was still an important attribute, a lower proportion placed it in their top three, with 38% of 16-34s doing so, compared to 46% of 35-54s and 60% of those aged 55+.

We found the three most important areas according to audiences were generally seen to be delivered ‘well’ by PSBs overall, as shown in Figure 10 below. Please see our [interactive report](#) for further details including importance scores and ratings of various attributes.

Figure 10: Scatter graph showing rating ‘well’ (7 to 10) of delivery of attributes and importance (in top 3) of delivery concept: 2023



Source: Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023. Question 26. Thinking about each broadcaster individually on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means extremely badly and 10 means extremely well, how well or badly does it provide...? Base: All who watched PSB channel/service in last six months (2,841). And Question 27. We now want you to think what you feel is most important for ‘public service broadcasters’ – in other words, the BBC, ITV, [ITV in Wales/ STV in Scotland/ UTV in Northern Ireland], Channel 4, Channel 5, and S4C to deliver for

¹³ This question was asked of all respondents who completed the survey online, excluding those who completed it over the phone.

¹⁴ MaxDiff was used in 2021 and asked respondents to select the ‘most important’ and ‘least important’ options in each of a series of 16 randomly-generated sets of five options. By using a ‘trade-off’ approach, it determined relative importance scores for each attribute, adding up to 100 overall.

society overall, so everyone in the UK. Thinking about the below list of statements, please rank what you feel are the top three most important attributes. Base: All respondents who completed the survey online, excluding those who completed by telephone (3,027).





BVoD continues to be most commonly used as a catch-up service

A majority of UK audiences (71%) said it was important that PSBs provided catch-up, on-demand or streaming services, although this was a decrease since 2022 (74%). Men (69%) and 16-24s (63%) were less likely to say this was important.

When asked about levels of satisfaction with different BVoD services, 80% of viewers of BBC iPlayer in the past six months said they were satisfied, followed by 70% of viewers of Channel 4's streaming service (including Channel 4+), 68% of ITVX or ITVX Premium viewers, and 62% of My5 viewers.

Overall, each of the PSB VoD services were perceived as delivering 'well' across the key attributes. Some of the highest-performing statements across BVoD services included 'provides services that are easy to find my way around', 'a wide range of different types of programmes', 'programmes made for UK audiences' and 'easy to find something I want to watch'. However, there were some differences between services.

Figure 11: Proportion of BVoD viewers who rated the delivery of different attributes of BVoD services 'well' (NET 7-10): 2023

				
Provides services that are easy to find my way around	72%	60%	62%	60%
A wide range of different types of programmes, such as drama, comedy, sport or entertainment	72%	62%	63%	57%
Programmes made for UK audiences	72%	63%	63%	60%
Easy to find something I want to watch	70%	59%	61%	60%
Appeals to a wide range of different audiences	68%	60%	64%	60%

Source: Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023. Question 35. Thinking about each broadcaster TV catch-up, on-demand or streaming service individually on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means extremely badly and 10 means extremely well, how well or badly does it provide...? Base: All who have watched ... in last six months: BBC iPlayer (2,248), ITVX or ITVX Premium (1,697), Channel 4 or Channel 4+ streaming service (1,723), My5 (1,164). Please note, this is a selection of attributes, rather than the top-rated attributes for each BVoD service.

After increases in viewers' positive perceptions of the delivery of attributes among BBC iPlayer and ITVX¹⁵ in 2022, in 2023 many of these statements returned to levels seen in 2021. For example, for ITVX and ITVX Premium, there was a decline in those saying it *'provides services that are easy to find my way around'* 'well' (2021 62%; 2022 66%; 2023 60%), and for *'a wide range of different types of programmes, such as drama, comedy, entertainment or sport'* (2021 64%; 2022 67%; 2023 62%). The same was true for BBC iPlayer and *'programmes that I can watch and talk about with people that I know'* (2021 63%; 2022 67%; 2023 64%).

Across all PSB VoD services, among those who had not watched them in the past six months, the main reasons given for not using the services continued to be: preferring to watch other services; not being interested in the content available on them; and not having access to the service. For example, for BBC iPlayer, 22% said *'I prefer to watch other services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ etc'*, 18% said they were *'not interested in the programmes available'*, and 14% said *'I don't have access to this service'*.¹⁶

Most-watched programmes

New Year's Eve fireworks, Happy Valley and the Coronation were the most-watched TV events of 2023

The list of most-watched programmes in 2023 was topped by BBC One's *New Year's Eve Fireworks* with an average 12.1 million viewers.¹⁷ This was closely followed by the final episode of the BBC One drama *Happy Valley* (also 12.1 million viewers) and *The Coronation of The King and Queen Camilla*¹⁸ on BBC One (12 million viewers). Entertainment shows occupied the next three slots, each averaging about 10 million viewers. These were the *Eurovision Song Contest*, the series finale of *Strictly Come Dancing* (both on BBC One), and the launch episode of ITV1's *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*

The most-watched event of 2024 so far was the UEFA Euro 2024 men's football final between England and Spain on 14 July (which Spain won 2-1). BBC One's coverage averaged 11.4 million viewers and ITV1's coverage averaged 3.7 million viewers (both figures being for that day only). This combined total of 15.1 million viewers is significantly higher than any programme in 2023, even though it still excludes the large number of people watching outside the home, and illustrates the importance of live television for bringing people together for major national events. However, it is significantly below the combined same-day audience of 21.9 million viewers for the England men's team's last appearance in a European final (at Euro 2020, on 11 July 2021).¹⁹

¹⁵ At the time of the PSM Tracker's 2022 fieldwork, ITV's BVoD service was named ITV Hub, with an ad-free version called ITV Hub Premium. These were rebranded to ITVX and ITVX Premium in December 2022 and so were updated in the 2023 fieldwork.

¹⁶ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

¹⁷ Audience figures in this section are for individual channels only, not an aggregate figure if multiple channels covered the same event. Barb, 28-day consolidated, including +1 channels where appropriate. Individuals 4+, on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network, in-home only.

¹⁸ The second transmission, between 10:18 and 13:03 that day.

¹⁹ Barb, live and viewing on same day as live (VOSDAL), on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network. The Euro 2020 final averaged 17.8m viewers on BBC One and 4.2m viewers on ITV1 on the same day. As is the standard way of reporting programme audience figures, these figures are averages taken across the full duration of a programme. In the case of these football matches, they include the broadcasters' time spent airing the pre-match build-up and post-match analysis.

Figure 12: Top ten most-watched programmes, highest performing episode per title: 2023

Rank	Title	Genre	Channel	Date broadcast	Average audience (millions)
1	New Year's Eve Fireworks	Entertainment	BBC One	31/12/2023	12.1
2	Happy Valley S3 Ep 6	Drama	BBC One	05/02/2023	12.1
3	The Coronation of The King and Queen Camilla (afternoon)	Current affairs	BBC One	06/05/2023	12.0
4	Eurovision Song Contest	Entertainment	BBC One	13/05/2023	10.1
5	Strictly Come Dancing S21 Ep 25	Entertainment	BBC One	16/12/2023	9.9
6	I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here! S23 Ep 1	Entertainment	ITV1	19/11/2023	9.9
7	Beyond Paradise S1 Ep 1	Drama	BBC One	24/02/2023	9.0
8	Death in Paradise S12 Ep 2	Drama	BBC One	13/01/2023	8.7
9	Glastonbury	Music	BBC One	25/06/2023	8.4
10	Call the Midwife Holiday Special	Drama	BBC One	25/12/2023	8.4

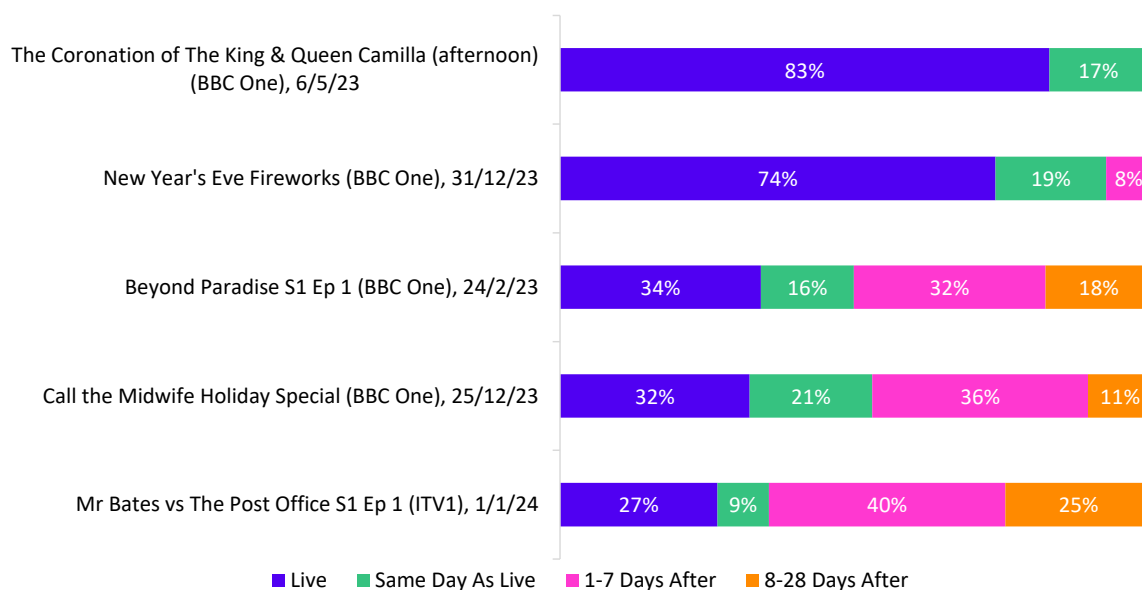
Source: Barb 28-day consolidated including catch-up and on demand, on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network, individuals 4+. Highest-performing episode of each title only, so does not include the second most-watched episode of *Happy Valley* (29 January on BBC One), for example. Includes +1 channels where applicable.

Catch-up viewing plays different roles depending on the type of programme; audiences typically choose to watch live events at (or close to) the time they are broadcast, while less urgency is placed on drama. Illustrating this, the aforementioned major events, such as the most-watched segment of the Coronation and the *New Year's Eve Fireworks* on BBC One, were mostly viewed live (accounting for 83% and 74% of all viewing within 28 days respectively), with much of the remaining viewing taking place on the same day (17% and 19% respectively).²⁰

In contrast, about a third (32%) of viewers of Christmas Day's *Call the Midwife* watched it live at 8:15pm, with 21% watching it later the same day and a third (36%) watching it between one and seven days after transmission. Likewise, the first episode of ITV1's drama *Mr Bates vs The Post Office*, one of the most-watched programmes so far in 2024, generated about 35% of its eventual 11.6 million audience on the same day as transmission, compared to 40% between one and seven days afterwards and 25% in the subsequent three weeks.

²⁰ Barb defines the viewing day from 06:00 to 05:59 the following morning.

Figure 13: Percentage of 28-day viewing audience who watched live, on same day as live, 1 to 7 days, or 8 to 28 days after transmission, selected programmes



Source: Barb, on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network, individuals 4+, live, viewing on same day as live (VOSDAL), 7-day consolidated, 28-day consolidated, including catch-up and on demand. Includes +1 channel for ITV1. Barb defines the viewing day from 06:00 to 05:59 the following morning.

On SVoD platforms, films top the most-watched list and account for over a quarter of viewing, while drama remains the largest genre with about two-fifths of viewing

In contrast to broadcast TV, films dominated the list of most-viewed programmes on SVoD services in 2023. Netflix's *Chicken Run: Dawn of The Nugget* and Disney+'s *Elemental* topped the list, averaging 7.5 million and 6.5 million viewers respectively (within 28 days of their release to be comparable to how we generally refer to broadcast TV programme audiences). Netflix accounted for eight of the top ten SVoD titles; Amazon Prime Video's highest-performing programme was the first episode of the returning series *Clarkson's Farm*, averaging 5.6 million viewers.²¹ This list also reveals the cut-through of British content for UK audiences despite competing with thousands of hours of American content also available on these global platforms: six of these top ten titles feature Britain or British talent.

For context, when comparing these top-performing SVoD titles to the most-watched programmes on broadcast TV, nine of them feature in a combined list of the top 100 programmes, with the highest at number 19. It should be noted that content available on VoD services can still accumulate viewing long after its release. For example, *Elemental* accumulated the equivalent of another 828,000 complete views on Disney+ in the period from 12 October 2023 (the 28th day after its release) and the end of 2023.²²

²¹ Barb, as-viewed, viewing within 28 days of release, individuals 4+, via TV sets only.

²² Barb, as-viewed, individuals 4+, via TV sets only.

Figure 14: Top ten most-watched SVoD programmes, highest performing episode per title: 2023

SVoD rank	Overall rank	Title	Genre	Service	Start date	Average audience (millions)
1	19	Chicken Run: Dawn of the Nugget (2023)	Film	Netflix	15/12/2023	7.5
2	35	Elemental (2023)	Film	Disney+	13/09/2023	6.5
3	48	Beckham S1 Ep 1	Documentary	Netflix	04/10/2023	5.8
4	50	Leave the World Behind (2023)	Film	Netflix	08/12/2023	5.8
5	52	Clarkson's Farm S2 Ep 1	Documentary	Amazon Prime Video	10/02/2023	5.6
6	72	Luther: The Fallen Sun (2023)	Film	Netflix	10/03/2023	4.8
7	89	The Night Agent S1 Ep 3	Drama	Netflix	23/03/2023	4.4
8	94	Bodies (2023) S1 Ep 1	Drama	Netflix	19/10/2023	4.3
9	97	Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical (2022)	Film	Netflix	25/06/2023	4.3
10	111	Extraction 2 (2023)	Film	Netflix	16/06/2023	3.7

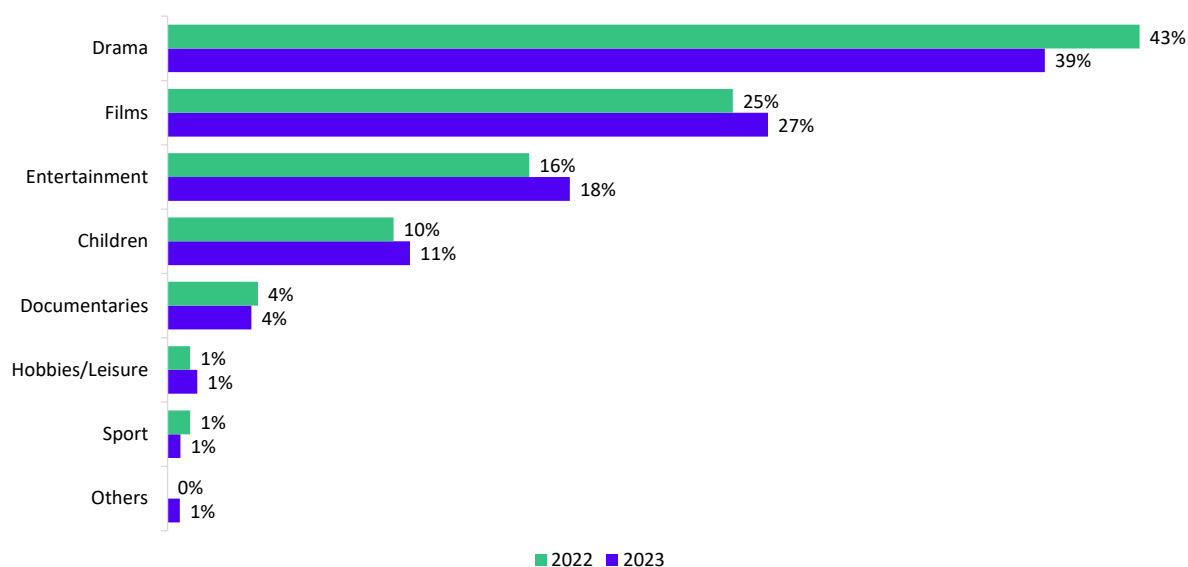
Source: Barb, as-viewed, viewing within 28 days of release, via TV sets only, individuals 4+. Highest-performing episode of each title only, so does not include the second most-watched episode of Clarkson's Farm (S2 Ep 2) on Amazon Prime Video, for example.

Over the past two years, there has been a slight shift in the proportion of viewing on TV sets attributable to SVoD/AVoD programming away from dramas (down from 43% in 2022 to 39% in 2023) and towards films, entertainment, and children's programming (collectively up by five percentage points over the same period). These genre breakdowns should be used as indicative because not all viewing to these services is attributable to specific programmes or genres. In 2022, 69% of SVoD/AVoD viewing was attributable in this way, and in 2023 this was 75%.²³

In 2023, sitcoms (under entertainment) were the top subgenre in terms of viewing, led by Netflix's *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* S8 and *Wellmania* S1, while crime and legal dramas came second (e.g. Netflix's *Bodies* S1 and Amazon Prime Video's *Reacher* S2). These two subgenres each accounted for 9% of all viewing attributable to SVoD/AVoD programming in 2023, which was slightly down on the 11% posted by each of the top two subgenres in 2022: crime and legal dramas, and sci-fi and fantasy dramas.

²³ Barb, as-viewed, individuals 4+, via TV sets only, SVoD/AVoD programme viewing by CCIDS genre and subgenre. Services included in this analysis are Netflix, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Paramount+ and Apple TV+.

Figure 15: Percentage of SVoD/AVoD programme-attributable TV viewing by genre: 2022-2023



Source: *Barb as-viewed, via TV sets only, individuals 4+, SVoD/AVoD programme viewing by CCIDS genre. Services included in this analysis are Netflix, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Paramount+ and Apple TV+.*

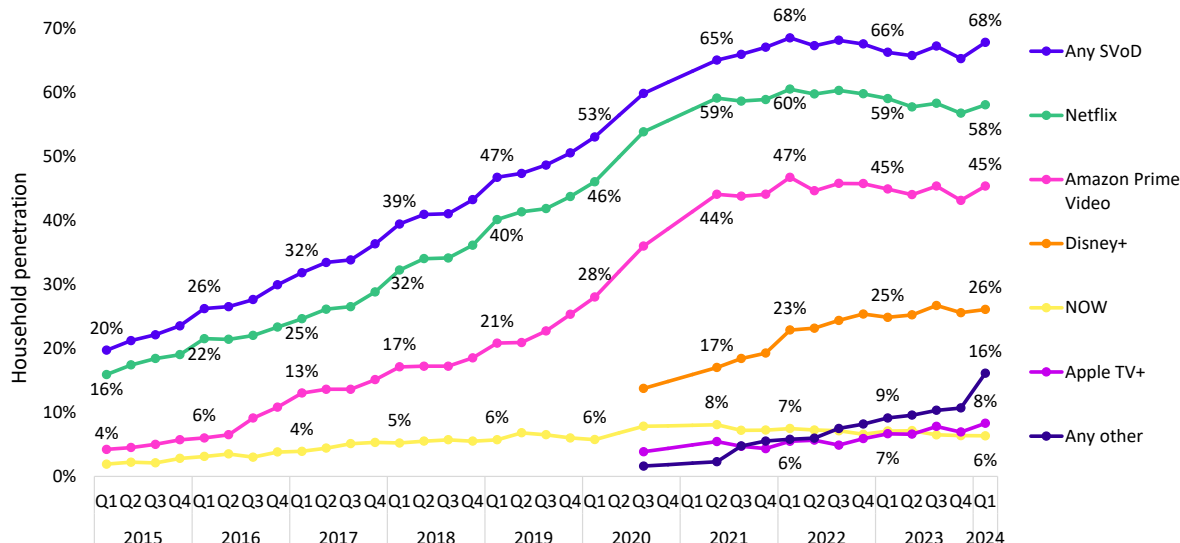
Subscription video-on-demand services

Take-up of the major SVoD services plateaued in 2023

The proportion of UK households receiving SVoD services in Q1 2024 returned close to its peak level achieved two years before, at just over two-thirds (68%), following a period of decline throughout most of 2022 and 2023. Over the past year, take-up has not significantly changed for any of the top three services, varying by one percentage point or less since Q1 2023. Netflix remained the SVoD provider with the most subscribers, at 58% of households, and 2.1 million of Netflix’s 16.7 million UK households were estimated to be on Netflix’s advertising-supported tier.

The proportion of UK households receiving ‘any other’ SVoD service in Q1 2024 – besides the five providers shown in Figure 16 – was 16%. This increase, from nearly 11% in the previous quarter, was partly a consequence of [changes to the Barb Establishment Survey questionnaire](#) to better capture passive subscriptions (such as those bundled with Sky’s packages, which do not require a separate subscription). This resulted in the household penetration of Discovery+ more than doubling, from 4% in Q4 2023 to 11% in Q1 2024 – equivalent to 1.9 million households and moving ahead of Apple TV+. This change was also partly responsible for the growth of Paramount+, from 6% to 9% – an increase of 996,000 households. The average number of SVoD subscriptions per UK household taking at least one service remained level with the previous two years, at just over two per household.

Figure 16: SVoD penetration of UK households, by provider: Q1 2015 to Q1 2024



Source: Barb Establishment Survey. Includes paid-for subscriptions and free trials. No data for Q2 2020, Q4 2020, and Q1 2021 due to the suspension of fieldwork due to the Covid-19 pandemic. 'Any other' includes Hayu, Discovery+, Paramount+ and BritBox.

Reasons for subscribing/unsubscribing to SVoD services

In Ofcom’s VoD Survey, the main reasons adults and teens gave for why their household took out a subscription to Netflix included ‘watching content not available elsewhere’ (35%), ‘to watch something different to what is on broadcast TV’ (30%), ‘to watch a specific programme/series’ (30%), and to ‘watch multiple episodes in a row/boxsets’ (30%). For Amazon Prime, the main reason was to ‘get free delivery from Amazon’ (47%). For Disney+ the main reasons were to ‘watch specific content’ (32%) and ‘content not available elsewhere’ (27%).

Some viewers reported unsubscribing from SVoD services in the three months before the research took place for the VoD Survey (Amazon Prime: 6%, Netflix: 5%, Disney+: 5%). Of those who had unsubscribed from these services, the most common reasons related to cost. For Netflix, it was ‘too expensive’ for 32%, and the ‘the service increased its price’ for 28%. For Amazon Prime, the top reasons for unsubscribing were that they ‘didn’t use it enough to justify the expense’ (38%), and because ‘they had subscribed because of a promotional offer which ended’ (31%). For Disney+ it was primarily ‘didn’t use it enough to justify the expense’ (30%), and ‘too expensive’ (28%).

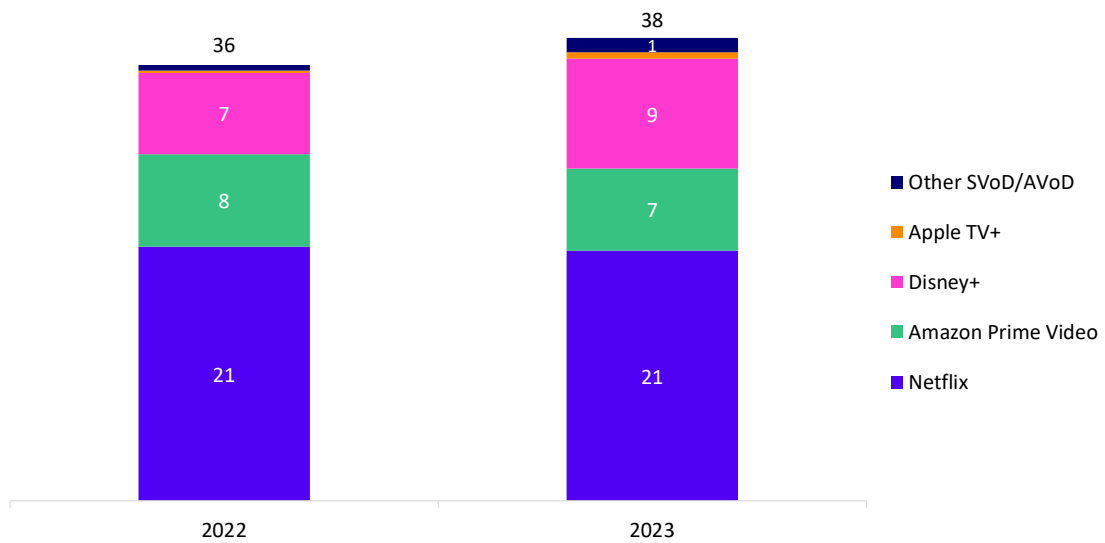
The proportion of households who reported to have downgraded their household Netflix subscription in the past year was 11% at the beginning of 2024. This was an increase from 8% reported at the beginning of 2023 but lower than the proportion of those who claimed to have upgraded (14%).²⁴

Netflix accounts for over half of all SVoD viewing

Netflix remains the most-watched SVoD service, averaging 21 minutes per person per day in 2023 and accounting for over half of total SVoD/AVoD viewing time for all age groups. Disney+, while in third place in terms of household penetration of these services, ranked second in terms of daily viewing (9 minutes), slightly ahead of Amazon Prime Video (7 minutes).

²⁴ Ofcom VoD Survey 2024 (online sample).

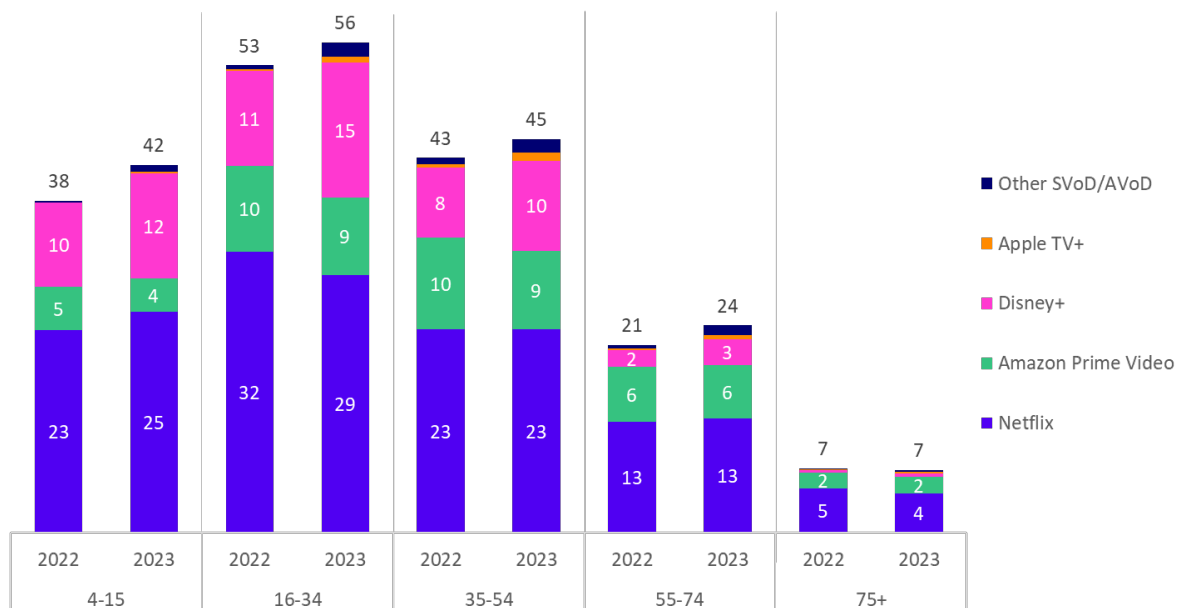
Figure 17: Average daily minutes of SVoD/AVoD viewing, individuals 4+: 2022-2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network, individuals 4+. 'Other SVoD/AVoD' does not include NOW because Barb's measurement is unable to separate this from Sky Go/Sky On-Demand.

Viewers aged 16-34 continue to watch the most SVoD content, compared to other age groups, averaging 56 minutes per day across 2023. This was a slight increase on the 2022 figure, with the growth coming primarily from Disney+ (11 minutes to 15 minutes), which more than offset a decrease in time spent on Netflix (32 minutes to 29 minutes). Unsurprisingly, by virtue of its brand and the content on its platform, Disney+ skews younger, accounting for 29% of children's SVoD/AVoD viewing time, but only 6% for over-74s. Conversely, Amazon Prime Video bucks this trend (26% among over-74s, decreasing to 9% for children).

Figure 18: Average daily minutes of SVoD/AVoD viewing, by age: 2022-2023



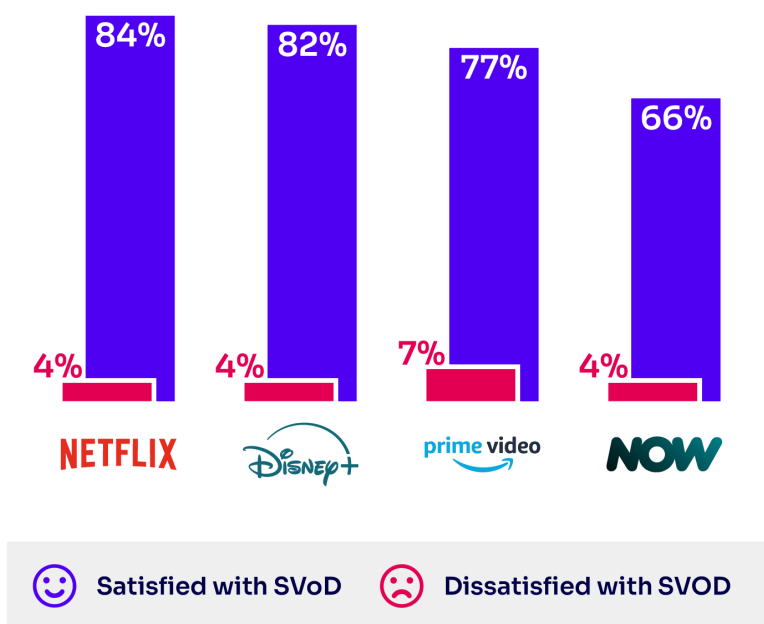
Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network. 'Other SVoD/AVoD' does not include NOW because Barb's measurement is unable to separate this from Sky Go/Sky On-Demand.

Overall, audiences continue to say they are satisfied with SVoD services

About four in five viewers of Netflix (84%) and Disney+ (82%) in the past six months said they were satisfied with these services²⁵. Although a majority continue to be satisfied with Amazon Prime Video (77%), this has declined since 2022 (80%). Slightly lower proportions of viewers say they are satisfied with NOW (66%).

When looking at demographic differences, those aged 35-54 are more likely to be satisfied with Netflix (89%) and Amazon Prime Video (81%) compared to the UK total, and viewers aged 55+ are less likely to be satisfied with Disney+ (74%) compared to the total.

Figure 19: Satisfaction with SVoD services: 2023



Source: Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023. Question 39. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with these TV catch-up, on-demand or streaming services? Base: All who have watched ... in past six months: Netflix (2,098), Disney+ (1,295), Amazon Prime Video (1,834), NOW (631).

While audiences overall are satisfied with individual SVoD services' provision, some viewers express dissatisfaction with elements of the current VoD landscape. Ofcom's VoD survey found that nearly half of adults and teens (46%) agreed with the statement: 'there are too many video-on-demand services' and 42% agreed with 'I find the amount of content available on video-on-demand services overwhelming'. Nearly a quarter (24%) agreed that they 'spend too much money subscribing to video-on-demand services'.

While some audiences are unsubscribing, most (68%) said 'they would miss video-on-demand services if they were no longer available'. Audiences' reluctance to give up these services, despite the cost, may explain the plateauing of subscriptions to SVoD services, reported earlier.²⁶

²⁵ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

²⁶ Ofcom VoD Survey 2024 (online sample).

For many adults and teens, SVoD is their first choice of service if they don't have anything specific in mind to watch

Ofcom's 2024 VoD survey found that when UK adults and teens want to watch something, but do not have anything specific in mind, 39% of them claim to go to an SVoD service first, while 33% go to TV channels first; both in line with 2023. Comparing individual services, 27% say they go to Netflix first, and 14% to YouTube first. Six per cent claim to visit BBC iPlayer first.

This varies considerably by age. Only 8% of 13-24s say they go to TV channels first, with their most popular choice being Netflix (38%), followed by YouTube (26%). The proportion who go to TV channels first is higher for older age groups, with 72% of over-74s claiming to go to them first. For this older group, BBC iPlayer and Netflix are similar (at 9% and 8% respectively), both more popular than YouTube, which only 1% of this age group claim to go to first.

'Having specific shows to watch regularly on the platform', and 'browsing/scrolling until something catches [their] eye', were the most common options picked by adults and teens in choosing what to watch on traditional TV channels (41% and 40% respectively). For Netflix it was 'browsing/scrolling until something catches [their] eye' (56%), followed by 'recommendations from friends or family' (47%). For BBC iPlayer, it was about 'catching up on shows they had missed' (54%) or 'watching specific programmes on the platform' (35%). More than half of adults and teens (53%) agreed with the statement: 'video-on-demand services are the main way I watch programmes and films'.²⁷

SVoD services are seen to appeal to a wide range of audiences and provide services that are easy to use

Overall, viewers of SVoD services said that they delivered 'well' in providing programmes which appeal to a wide range of audiences, as well as being easy to use. For example, Netflix was seen to deliver 'well' on *'provides services that are easy to find my way around'* (80%) and *'appeal[ing] to a wide range of different audiences'* (78%), although the latter has decreased since 2022 (82%). Netflix was also seen to deliver 'well' on *'easy to find something I want to watch'* (77%), also lower than in 2022 (81%).²⁸ And our VoD survey found that Netflix scored highest for *'exclusive content only available through that platform'* (81%).²⁹

For Amazon Prime, the top-rated statements were similar to those for Netflix, but there were some changes in 2023.³⁰ For example, Amazon Prime viewers felt it did 'well' on *'appeal[ing] to a wide range of different audiences'* (73%), although this was lower than in 2021 (77%). *'Provides services that are easy to find my way around'* (70%) has also declined since 2022 (74%) but remains in line with 2021 (72%). NOW has also seen several shifts in the statements we monitor; only Disney+ has remained stable year on year across most of the statements.

²⁷ Ofcom VoD Survey 2024 (online sample).

²⁸ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

²⁹ Ofcom VoD Survey 2024 (online sample).

³⁰ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

Figure 20: Satisfaction with SVoD services: 2023

	NETFLIX	Disney+	prime video	NOW
Provides services that are easy to find my way around	80%	78%	70%	61%
Appeals to a wide range of different audiences	78%	74%	73%	64%
Easy to find something I want to watch	77%	73%	69%	59%
Programmes that I can watch and talk about with people I know	75%	70%	66%	60%
Programmes I was not previously aware of	74%	70%	67%	59%

Source: Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023. Question 38. Thinking about each broadcaster TV catch-up, on-demand or streaming service individually on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means extremely badly and 10 means extremely well, how well or badly does it provide...? Base: All who have watched ... in past six months: Netflix (2,098), Disney+ (1,295), Amazon Prime Video (1,834), NOW (631).

YouTube

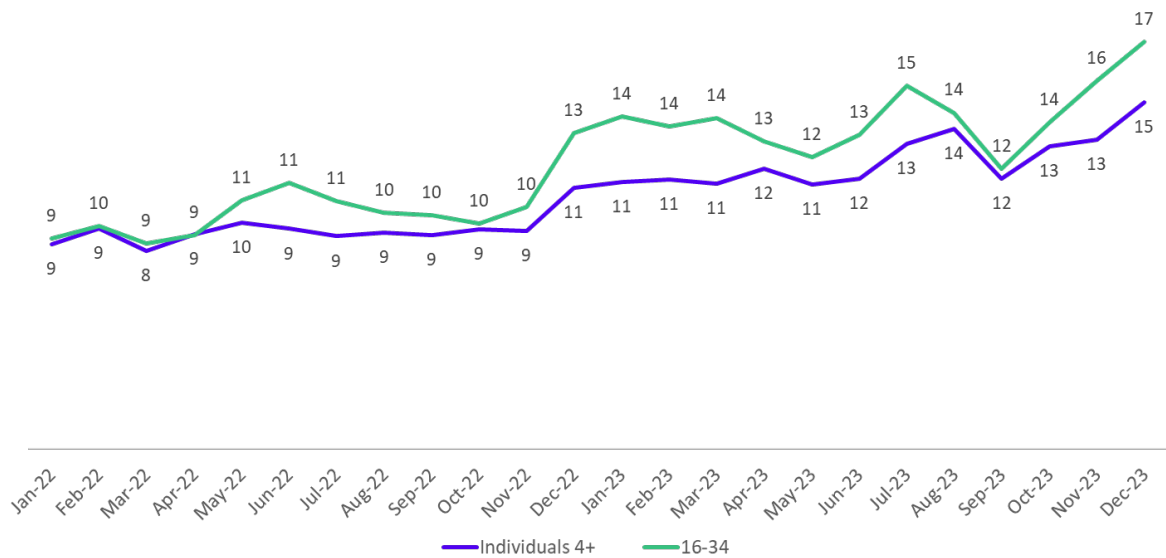
The TV screen is increasingly important for YouTube, outpacing growth on other devices in the home

Total in-home use³¹ of YouTube grew from an average of 31 minutes per individual per day at the beginning of 2022 to 38 minutes by December 2023, up by 20%. Over this period the average time spent viewing YouTube on a TV set increased by 70%, from 9 minutes to 15 minutes per day, while for 16-34s the increase was even greater, at 93% (9 minutes to 17 minutes).

Across the whole of 2023, among all individuals, 34% of in-home YouTube viewing was via a TV set, up from 29% in 2022. Meanwhile, 16-34s spend a higher proportion of time watching YouTube on other devices (computers, tablets, or smartphones), with the TV set rising from 23% to 29% over the same timeframe. Children aged 4-15 are the age group skewing most towards the TV set for their YouTube consumption, at 45% in 2023, up from 36% in 2022.

³¹ Barb as-viewed data captures YouTube consumption via the home's WiFi network; any viewing outside the home or viewing via mobile networks is not included.

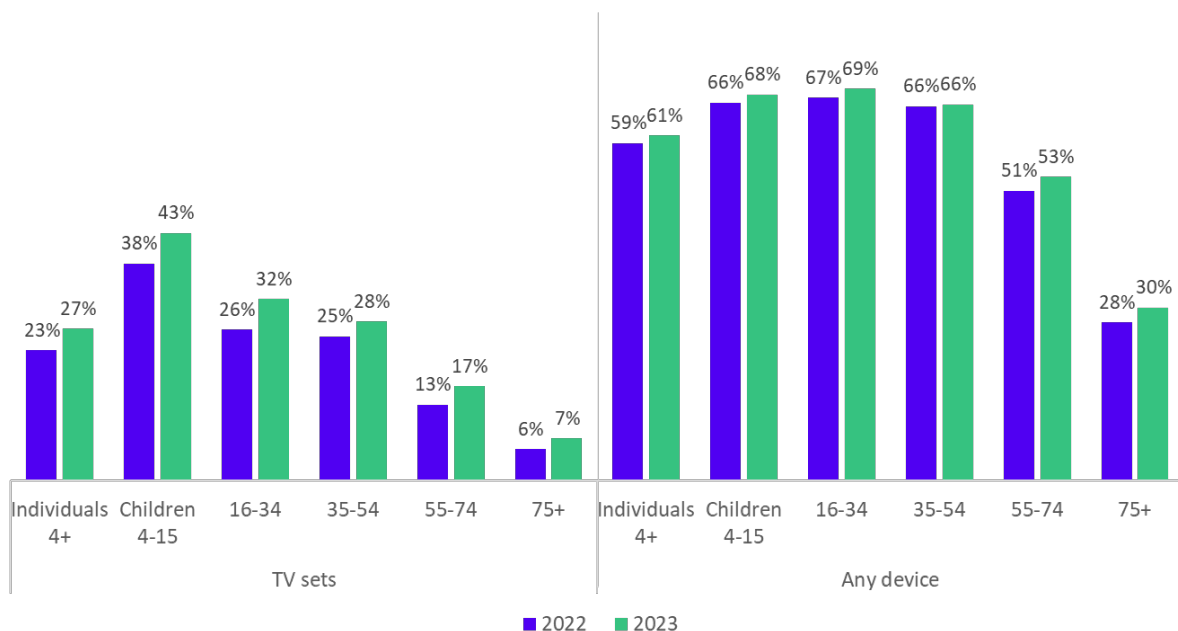
Figure 21: Average daily minutes of YouTube viewing on TV sets: 2022-2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets only, individuals 4+ and 16-34s.

Over a quarter of UK individuals viewed YouTube on a TV set on average per week in 2023 (up by four percentage points on 2022). Children aged 4-15 were the most likely to do this; 43% were doing so, and more than half (57%) of children who viewed YouTube in-home on any device had also used a TV to view it. Use of the TV set to view YouTube was also common among 16-34s and 35-54s, with almost four in ten of those who watched YouTube on any device having also watched it on a TV set.

Figure 22: Weekly in-home reach of YouTube on TV sets, and any device, by age group: 2022-2023



Source: Barb as-viewed on TV sets and other devices using the home's WiFi network.

Short videos are the most popular type of content to watch on YouTube

According to Ofcom's VoD Survey, the popularity of YouTube is driven by the free service, with a small minority reporting using the paid service, YouTube Premium.³² Videos up to 15 minutes long (excluding *YouTube Shorts*) were the most popular form of content on YouTube (62%), followed by YouTube Shorts (47%) which has grown in popularity since 2023 (36%). People also reported using YouTube more frequently than the other on-demand services featured in our survey: 36% of users claimed to use YouTube several times a day, rising to 53% for those who used YouTube Premium, whereas 13% of adults and teens claimed to have used Netflix several times a day, versus 6% for BBC iPlayer.³³

Most audiences say they are satisfied with YouTube

According to Ofcom's PSM Tracker, about seven in ten (72%) viewers in the past six months were satisfied with YouTube (including YouTube Premium), although this has declined slightly since 2022 (75%).³⁴ There was a particular decline in satisfaction among 45-54s (2022 80%; 2023 72%) and those in socio-economic group C2DE (2022 79%; 2023 74%).

Among its viewers, three-quarters (75%) said that YouTube provided content that *'appeals to a wide range of audiences'* well, although this has fallen since 2022 (79%). YouTube was also seen to provide *'easy to find something I want to watch'* (69%) and *'provides services that are easy to find my way around'* (69%) well, but agreement with both statements has decreased since 2022 (73% in 2022 for both). About two-thirds (67%) of YouTube viewers said it provided *'programmes that are relevant to me'*.³⁵

³² Only 11% of all YouTube users claimed to have used the paid service in the previous three months.

³³ Ofcom VoD Survey 2024 (online sample).

³⁴ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

³⁵ Ofcom Public Service Media Tracker 2023.

TV and video industry trends

Introduction

As the economic downturn took hold in 2023, it resulted in difficult trading conditions for broadcasters reliant on TV advertising, in particular. Providers of online video services have been more resilient, although the extent to which they can maintain revenue growth across subscription and advertising is uncertain, with the SVoD market maturing and the economics of streaming under pressure.

This section quantifies the revenue generated across different sectors of the TV and online video market, and examines some of the underlying industry trends, across advertising, broadcasting (PSB in particular) and online video.

How we present financial data

Financial data quoted in this report is primarily presented in nominal terms, meaning that historical data has not been adjusted to account for inflation.

For those who wish to see how inflation has historically affected the value of the industry, our [interactive report](#) enables financial data to be viewed in either nominal or 'real' (CPI-adjusted) terms, with users easily able to switch between the two.

Industry revenues

Overall market growth was marginal in 2023, as an increase in online video revenue was cancelled out by broadcast TV's decline

The extent of the difficulties faced by broadcasters in 2023 was evidenced by a 7.5% year-on-year decline in combined revenues for commercial PSBs, digital multichannels and pay-TV platform operators, falling by £824m to £10.2bn. To put this performance in historical context, sector revenues were lower (marginally) than those generated in 2020 – the year most heavily impacted by Covid-19 disruption – and the lowest since 2012.

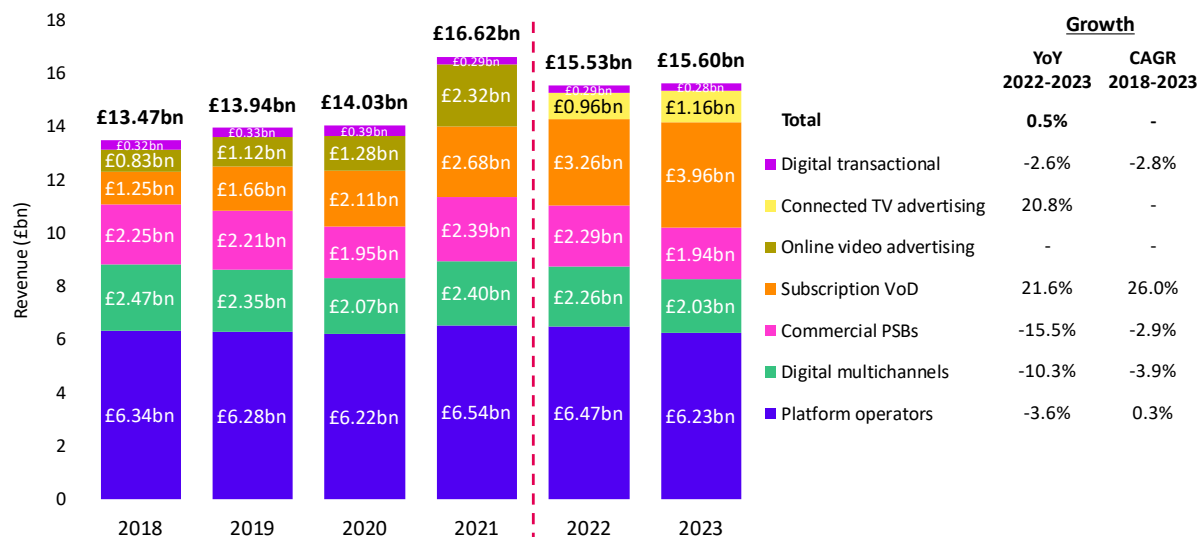
The challenging macro-economic environment significantly coloured the performance of the commercial PSBs, as well as many digital multichannels (which rely primarily on income from advertising). Revenue collectively generated by ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 fell by 15.5% to £1.9bn, with digital multichannels also suffering a double-digit decline in revenue (-10.3%), to £2bn. In both cases, revenue was just below 2020 levels, and much lower when adjusted for inflation (-17.3% in real terms for the commercial PSBs). Meanwhile, pay-TV platform operators, such as Sky, Virgin Media and EE (BT) saw their collective revenue decline by 3.6% to £6.2bn, as continued subscriber declines failed to offset price rises.

As in 2022, SVoD was the primary driver of overall audiovisual market growth in 2023, generating about £700m more than in the previous year, just under £4bn in total, with this increase largely

driven by price rises, as take-up reached at least a temporary plateau. Connected TV advertising, meanwhile, generated £1.2bn, up from £962m in 2022.³⁶

Assessing the net impact of these sectors' respective performances, the increase in online video revenue was mostly cancelled out by the declines for broadcast and pay TV, resulting in overall industry revenues increasing marginally (+0.5%) compared to 2022. However, there was a notable shift in the overall revenue mix, with SVoD, connected TV advertising and online transactional video increasing their combined market share from 29% to 35%.

Figure 23: Commercial TV broadcast and online revenue: 2018-2023



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters (broadcast data), Ampere Analysis and IAB UK PwC Digital Adspend Study (online data). Figures are presented in nominal terms and replace previous Ofcom revenue data for the TV and online video industry, owing to restatements and improvements in methodologies. Values for 'platform operators' include Ofcom's estimates of pay-TV revenues. This does not include NOW, which is within subscription VoD. Platform operators' data before 2019 is not comparable to subsequent years, owing to a change in methodology in Sky reporting, coinciding with its change in ownership to Comcast. 'Digital multichannels' includes non-PSB channels and commercial PSB portfolio channels. 'Commercial PSB channels' comprises the following: ITV, STV, ITV Breakfast, Channel 4, Channel 5 and S4C. Before 2022, online video advertising does not include 'outstream' video advertising delivered on non-video services; from 2022, we began including connected TV video advertising, as defined by the IAB UK. Connected TV video ad spend is spend accrued on TVs that are connected to the internet and can access web-based content, either through in-built capabilities or through peripheral devices like streaming sticks and games consoles. Totals may not equal the sum of the components due to rounding.

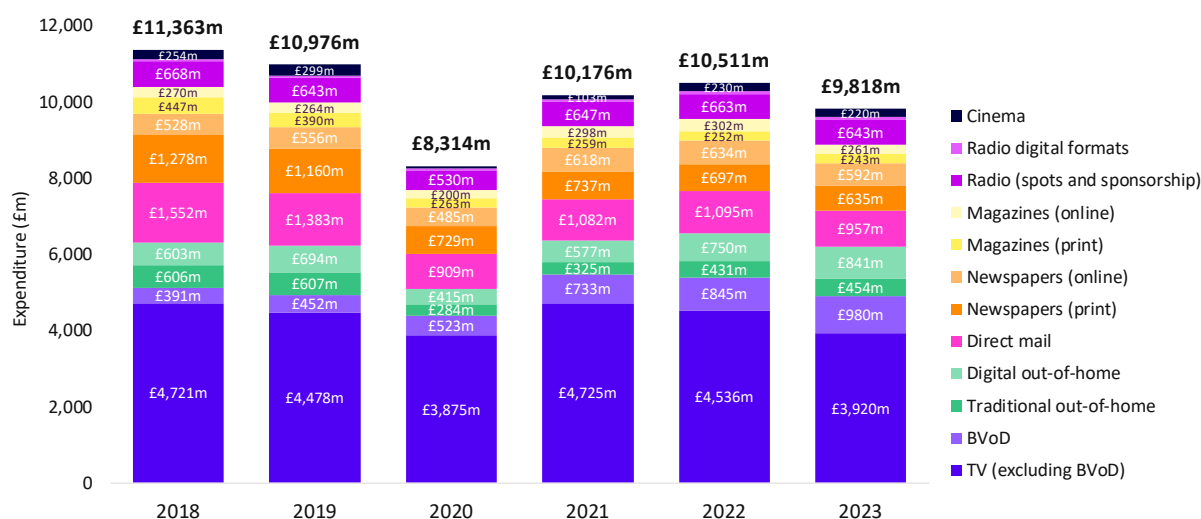
³⁶ Since 2022, instead of reporting total online video advertising in our industry revenue figures, we are including only the most 'TV-like' online video advertising, which is 'connected TV video advertising', as defined by the IAB UK. Connected TV video ad spend is spend accrued on TVs that are connected to the internet and can access web-based content, either through in-built capabilities or through peripheral devices like streaming sticks and games consoles.

Advertising market trends

Online formats drove growth in 2023, to offset declines for most other media

Similar to the trends seen in the audiovisual market, recent trends in the overall UK advertising market have been characterised by significant growth for online and declines for most other media. Overall advertising expenditure increased by 5.3% in 2023, to £36.6bn, driven by 10.1% growth for online. The £2.6bn increase in spend for online compares to a collective decrease of £806m across the six sectors which declined: TV and BVoD (-£481m), direct mail (-£138m), newspapers (-£103m), magazines (-£51m), radio (-£25m), and cinema (-£10m). Other than online, out-of-home was the only other medium to achieve growth in spend in 2023 (+£114m).

Figure 24: UK advertising expenditure, by traditional media*: 2018-2023



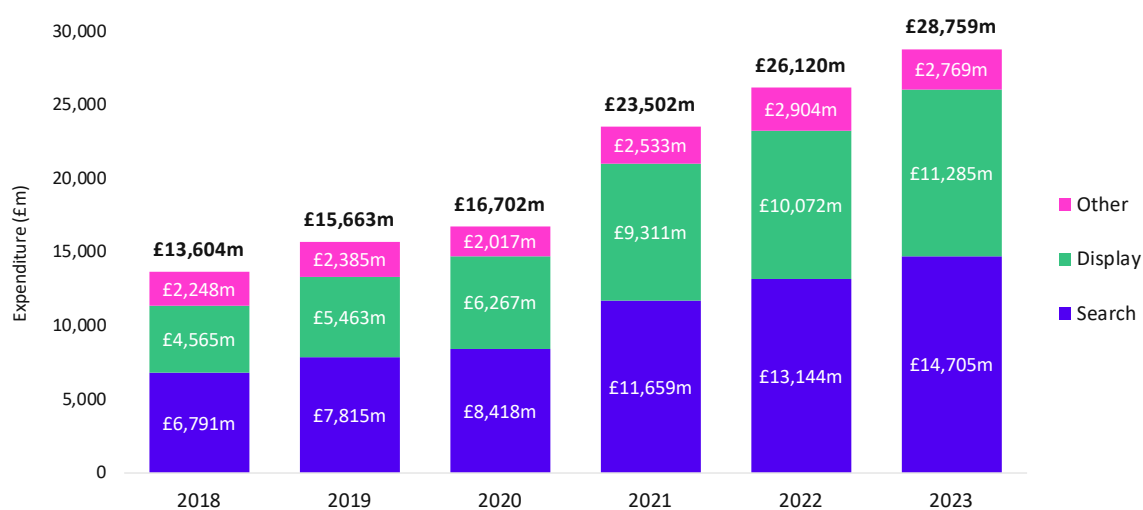
Source: AA/WARC Advertising Expenditure report. Figures are presented in nominal terms. *Traditional media categories include online elements, as indicated in the chart legend.

Of the £11.3bn that online display advertising generated in 2023, social video – including services such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram – represented £5.4bn, increasing by 19.7% from £4.5bn in 2022. Only some of this spend competes for TV budgets, with a significant proportion of online video advertising revenues coming from smaller advertisers who do not usually buy TV advertising spots.

Social video is poised to compete more directly with TV and BVoD on connected TV,³⁷ with YouTube in particular seeing a significant proportion of its viewing take place via the TV set, as discussed in the previous chapter. Although connected TV advertising grew by 21% in 2023 to £1.2bn, a survey of marketers conducted by ad-tech provider Teads revealed some [hesitancy to invest in this format](#), which suggests unrealised potential.

³⁷ As defined by the IAB, 'connected TV advertising' refers to spend accrued on TVs that are connected to the internet and can access web-based content, either through in-built capabilities or through peripheral devices like streaming sticks and games consoles.

Figure 25: UK online advertising expenditure, by format: 2018-2023



Source: 'Online' is total internet as defined by IAB UK, including online elements of traditional media (such as TV, radio and news). Digital out-of-home has been excluded from the total as published by IAB UK.

TV advertising budgets were constrained in the economic downturn, but a better 2024 is in prospect

A difficult year for the TV advertising market, set against the backdrop of the challenging economic environment, saw linear ad spend fall by 13.6% and total TV ad spend (linear plus BVoD) by 8.9%. Growth for BVoD, with revenues up 15.9% to £980m, therefore failed to offset linear declines, as total TV ad spend fell to £4.9bn. Improved trading conditions in 2024, aided by higher levels of consumer confidence and inflation now slowing, could see the market return to growth. The Advertising Association / WARC is [forecasting](#) a 3.9% increase in total TV ad spend in 2024, driven by a projected c.14% increase in BVoD spend.

With advertising now a key part of most of the major SVoD providers' respective growth strategies (see the online video market developments section of this chapter, below), its revenue-generating potential for the likes of Netflix, Amazon and Disney – and the level of threat it poses to BVoD revenue – will start to become clearer in 2024, following a relatively slow start for SVoD ad tiers.

Netflix experienced some notable teething problems with the implementation of its advertising strategy, including [apparent frustrations with its initial ad-tech partner Microsoft](#), in part resulting in unsold ad inventory and the lowering of CPT (cost per thousand) prices for advertisers. However, a restructuring of its tiered offering, in particular the [phased removal of its cheapest ad-free plan](#), has helped build a larger audience for advertisers wanting to reach Netflix users, with the company reporting that the ad-tier now delivers higher average revenue per subscription than the higher-priced ad-free Standard plan. To further boost the potential of its advertising tier, Netflix [announced](#) in May 2024 that it would be expanding the number of programmatic partners for advertisers beyond Microsoft,³⁸ before launching its own in-house ad-tech platform by the end of 2025.

In the UK, Netflix has also further integrated itself into the TV advertising ecosystem, [joining audience measurement body Barb](#) in 2022 and then, in February 2024, [joining commercial TV marketing body Thinkbox](#) as an associate member, along with several other streamers.

³⁸ New partners announced for summer 2024 included The Trade Desk, Google's Display & Video 360, and Magnite.

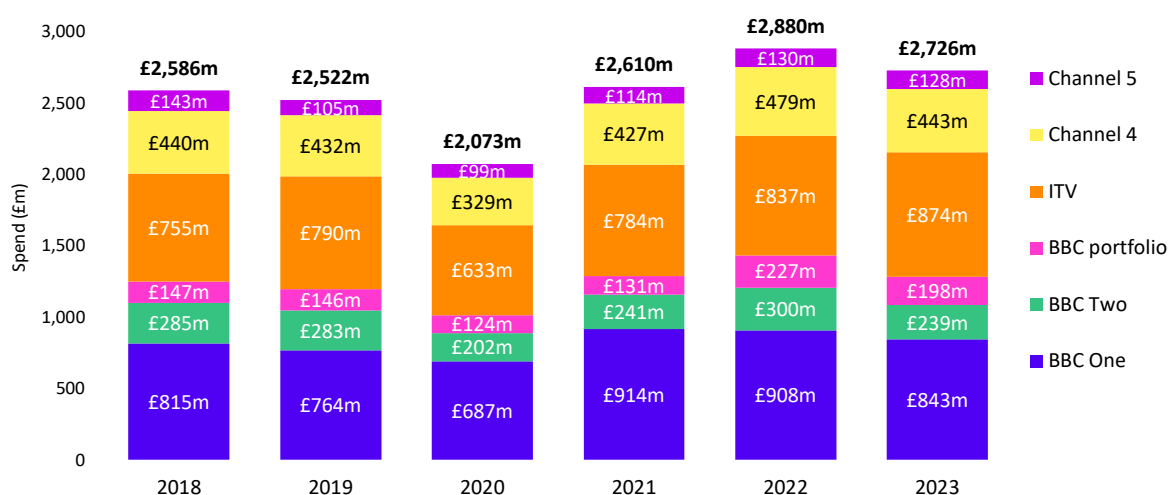
Broadcasters' output and spend

Notable highs in PSBs' provision of first-run content in 2022 were not maintained in 2023

Following three years in which Covid-19 had at least some level of impact on broadcasters' schedules, in 2023 the effects of the pandemic did not play any significant factor. However, a notable reduction in both spend and the number of hours of first-run PSB originations in the year – largely driven by sport but with most genres following the trend – should be contextualised by noting that 2022's highs were in part inflated by lingering Covid impacts. These included programme airing being delayed longer than planned, and Covid-related production protocol costs driving up programming spend.

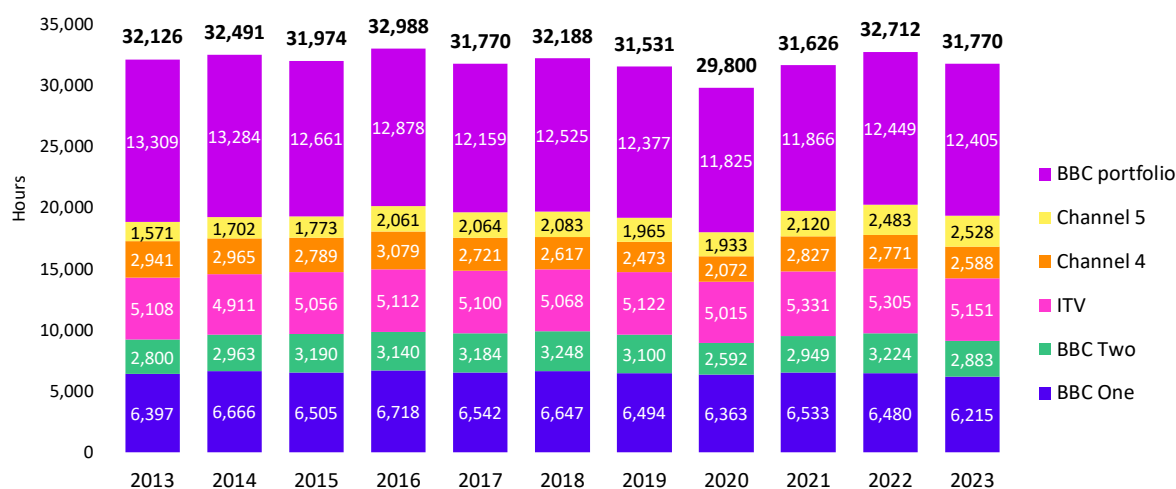
PSB first-run originated spend declined by 5.3% in 2023 to £2.7bn, with ITV the only channel (other than CBeebies) to increase its spend, by 4.4%. First-run originated hours, meanwhile, reduced by 2.9% to 31,770, with Channel 5 and some of the BBC portfolio channels (BBC News, BBC Parliament and CBeebies) bucking the trend, Channel 5 increasing its output by 1.8%.

Figure 26: PSB first-run UK-originated spend, by channel: 2018-2023



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters. Figures are presented in nominal terms.

Figure 27: PSB first-run UK-originated hours, by channel: 2013-2023



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters. Figures exclude BBC ALBA and programming for the nations and regions.

Reduced investment in, and output of, sports and entertainment programming were the main drivers of first-run declines

The single biggest driver of the overall reduction in PSB first-run spend and output in 2023 was a significant drop for sports; spend on the genre fell 17.1% to £509m, with 891 fewer hours produced (2,476 in total). These declines followed a 2022 that included the FIFA World Cup, the UEFA Women’s Euros and the Winter Olympics, compared to 2023’s major events: the FIFA Women’s World Cup and Rugby World Cup.

The pattern of cyclicity in major sporting events – which has historically seen even-numbered years feature the most high-profile (and expensive) events – was therefore somewhat re-established in 2023. But the emerging popularity of women’s football tournaments, which typically take place in odd-numbered years (the 2022 Women’s Euros was rescheduled from 2021), has the potential to change this pattern. A return to growth in PSB sports investment and output is expected in 2024, a year featuring both UEFA Euro 2024 and the Paris Olympic Games.

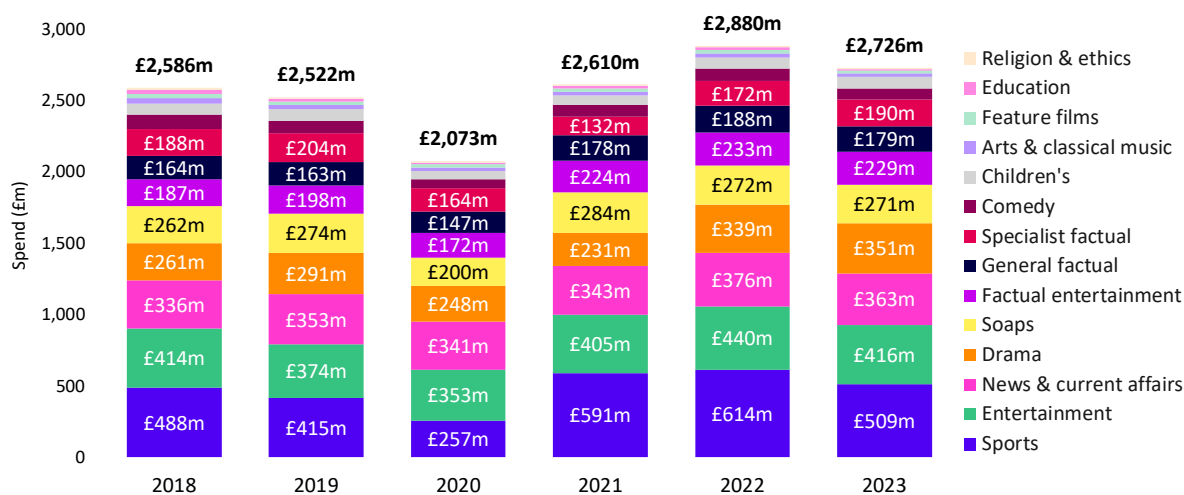
In addition to sport, entertainment was another genre for which first-run hours and spend notably declined. Excluding 2020, hours were at their lowest level,³⁹ falling by 252, or 12.6%, in 2023 to 1,752. Spend declined by a smaller margin of 5.4%, to £416m, meaning that the cost per hour of first-run entertainment continued to rise. This is a sign of rising production costs that have been sustained by high inflation, impacting the cost of crews, travel/fuel, etc., following previous years’ Covid-driven increases. Another genre reflecting this trend was drama; here, spend increased by 3.4%, to £351m, but hours declined by 2.9% to 395.

While first-run output declined for most genres in 2023, there was an increase for news and current affairs, where hours rose by 261 hours (or 1.4%) to 19,374. This was primarily driven by an increase in output on the BBC portfolio channels (including BBC News and BBC Parliament). Meanwhile, ITV (-5.5%) and Channel 4 (-11.3%), reduced their output following a year in which the news agenda had been driven by high-profile events including the death of Queen Elizabeth II and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Nevertheless, ITV’s 2023 first-run news and current affairs hours were still at their

³⁹ For the period monitored: 2010-2023.

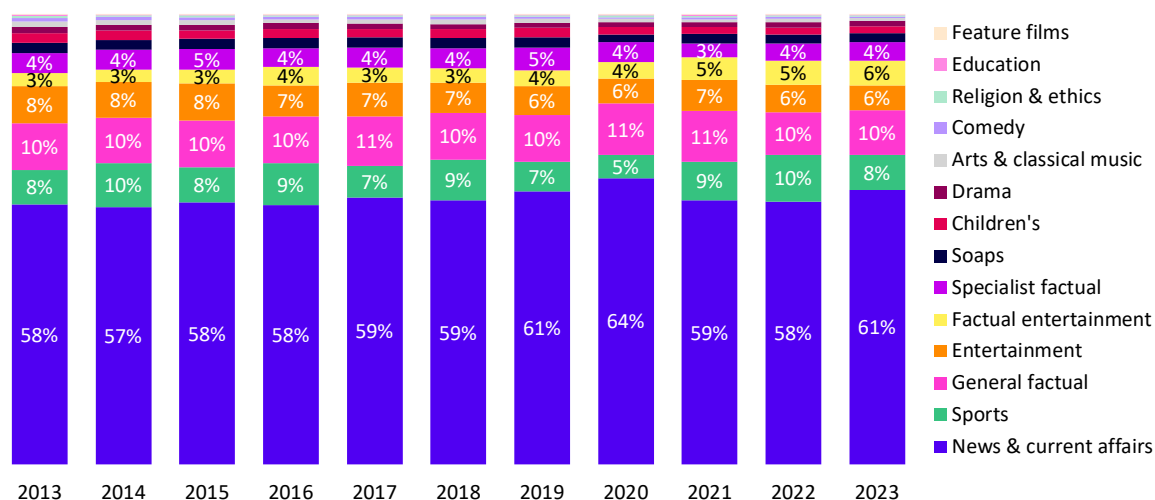
highest level (apart from 2022) since 2011. Despite the overall increase in PSB first-run hours for the genre, there was a 3.5% reduction in spend, which declined by £13m to £363m.

Figure 28: PSB first-run UK-originated spend, by genre: 2018-2023



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters. Figures are presented in nominal terms.

Figure 29: Genre mix of PSB first-run UK-originated hours: 2013-2023



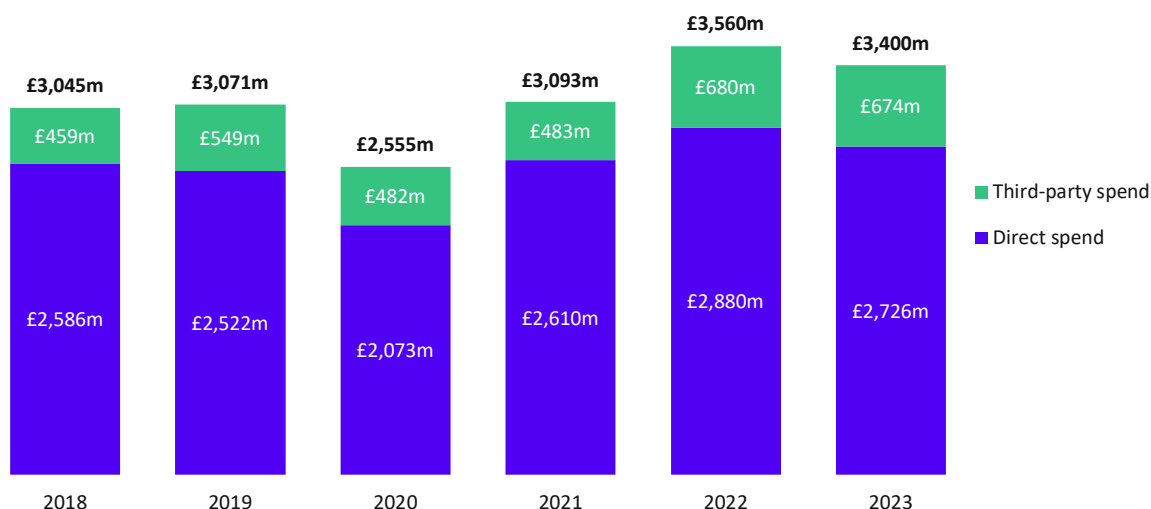
Source: Ofcom/broadcasters. Figures exclude BBC ALBA and programming for the nations and regions.

Third-party spend remained high, with drama the main focus

Having reached its highest annual total in 2022, third-party spend on PSB first-run UK-originated content declined marginally (-0.9%) in 2023, to £674m. These contributions, which come from sources such as co-productions with other commissioners, government high-end TV tax credit, deficit financing and advances from independent producers, represented 20% of total PSB origination spend, its highest-ever proportion, up from 9% in 2014.

Drama increased its share of third-party spend to 74% in 2023, up from 69% a year earlier, reflecting both increased investment (+£33m) but also reduced spend on most other genres, including children's, film, entertainment and contemporary music, comedy and factual – the collective decline in spend across these genres was £39m.

Figure 30: PSB spend on first-run originations, by direct spend and third-party contributions: 2018-2023

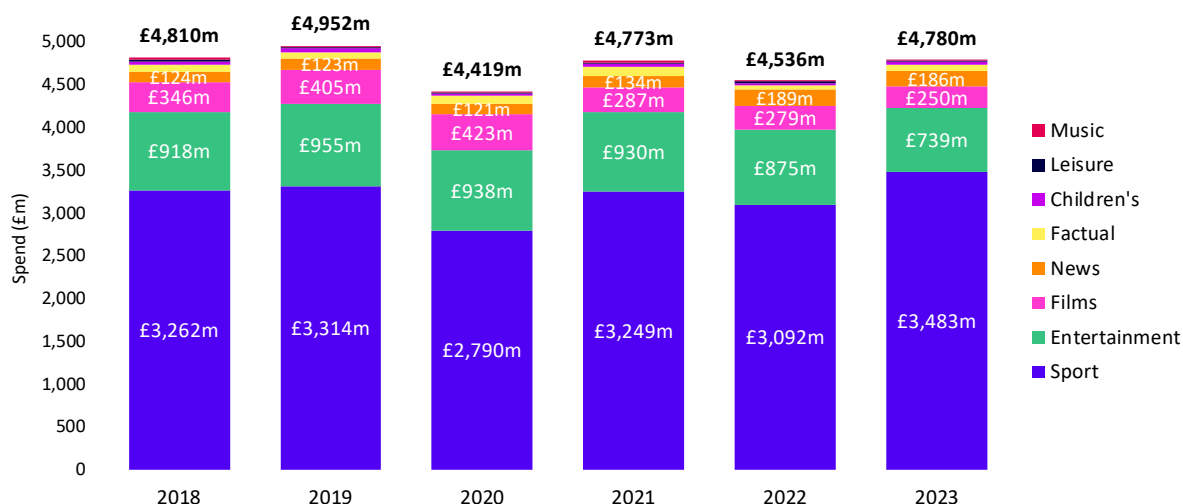


Source: Ofcom/broadcasters. Third-party spend includes funding from sources such as co-productions, high-end TV tax credit, and distributor advances. Figures are presented in nominal terms. Spend figures exclude BBC ALBA and programming for the nations and regions.

A return to growth in multichannel programming spend was driven by increased investment in sport

In contrast to the PSBs' collective reduction in spend on sports programming in 2023, for multichannel broadcasters sport was the main driver of a 5.4% increase in spend across key genres (see Figure 31 below), which rose to £4.8bn. Sports spend increased by £391m (12.6%) to £3.5bn, and increased its share of spend among the key genres to an all-time high of 73%, compared to 59% in 2013. The increase for sport offset a notable decline in multichannel spend on entertainment programming, which fell by £136m (-15.5%) to £739m.

Figure 31: Multichannel programming spend for selected key genres: 2018-2023



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters. Figures are presented in nominal terms.

Traditional pay TV continues to come under pressure from the rise of SVoD services. By Q1 2024, pay-TV households had fallen to 11.2 million, down from a peak of 14.9 million in 2016. The rate of

decline has accelerated in recent years; the drop of 2.5 million since Q1 2020 was close to double that recorded over the preceding four years (1.3 million).⁴⁰

Carriage and aggregation of SVoD services have become critical to pay TV, the appeal of which has waned, partly due to its diminishing options for differentiating on content. This began with the emergence of new market entrants Netflix and Amazon, which invested significantly in their own original film and TV productions and made them available to consumers at relatively low cost and on a more flexible basis than equivalent programming on pay-TV channels, attracting large customer bases. Then, partly in response to this, the Hollywood studios – historically the key suppliers of primetime US scripted series and blockbuster movies for pay-TV channels – began shifting their strategies away from content deals with third-party distributors in favour of going direct-to-consumer with their own SVoD services (e.g. Disney+ and Paramount+).

This has increased the importance of premium sport as a lynchpin for pay TV. Underlining this, in December 2023, [Sky and TNT Sports secured all of the live rights to Premier League football for the four seasons to 2028-29](#), with Sky capturing four of the five packages available, or at least 215 games per season, up from 128 currently. It will spend £1.28bn per season, to TNT Sports' £325m, with the total value of the Premier League's live domestic rights increasing by 3.4% per season to £1.6bn, although the number of matches sold has risen by more than a third. The new deal broadly maintains the status quo of traditional sports broadcasters preserving their hold on Premier League rights, with the notable exit of Amazon – although it should be noted that [Amazon will begin airing live UEFA Champions League matches in the UK](#) for the first time from the start of the 2024-25 season.

Production sector trends

Producer revenues from UK and international sources shrank in 2023 amid difficult trading conditions

In line with revenue contractions in parts of the UK broadcasting sector, total TV producer revenues declined in 2023, falling 10.2% from their 2022 high to £3.4bn, according to data from producers' association Pact. Pact's data represents revenues to those producers not wholly owned by PSBs, which make up a significant portion of the supply side of the TV production market. The Pact Census collects financial information from participating producers via a survey, which is stated to represent about 80%-90% of total industry revenue.

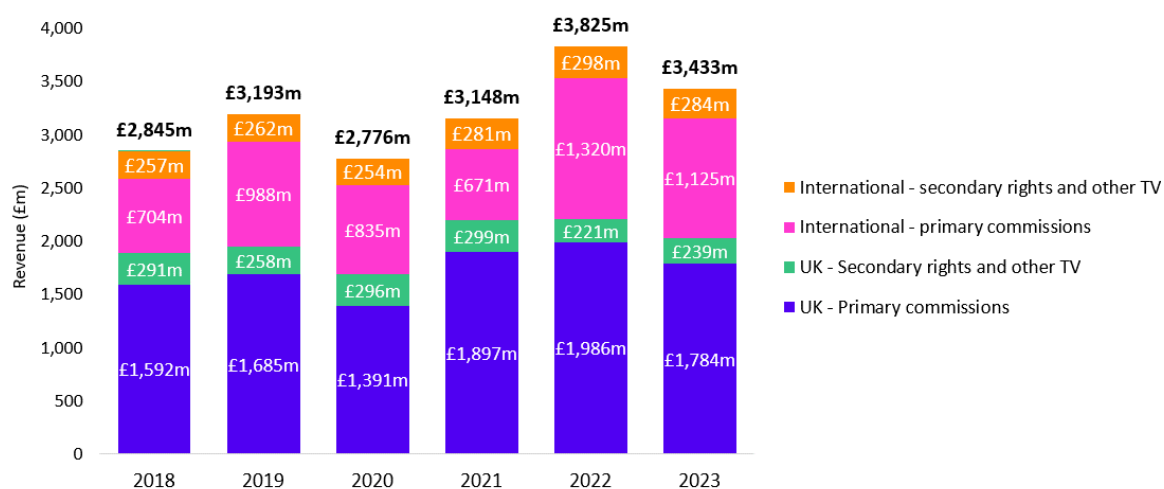
Reductions were seen across most revenue sources, including the largest two, UK and international primary commissions, which declined by 10.2% and 14.7% respectively and by approximately £200m each. A combination of factors contributed to the 2023 trend: UK revenues and international co-production appetites were affected by inflationary pressures and the contraction in the TV advertising market, while international productions were restricted further by the impact of the writers' and actors' strikes in Hollywood.

However, as with other sectors, 2023 also represented a market correction following the two-year post-Covid bounce-back. Despite the notable annual decline – which, in addition to the factors outlined above, was also in part a result of the wider economic downturn – the production sector is still 7.5% larger than it was in 2019, with its major revenue sources having increased since then.

Revenue from international sources continues to be important to UK producers, increasing to 41% of total production sector revenues in 2023, up slightly from 39% in 2019.

⁴⁰ Barb Establishment Survey.

Figure 32: Total producer TV-related revenues, by income source: 2018-2023



Source: *Pact Census*.

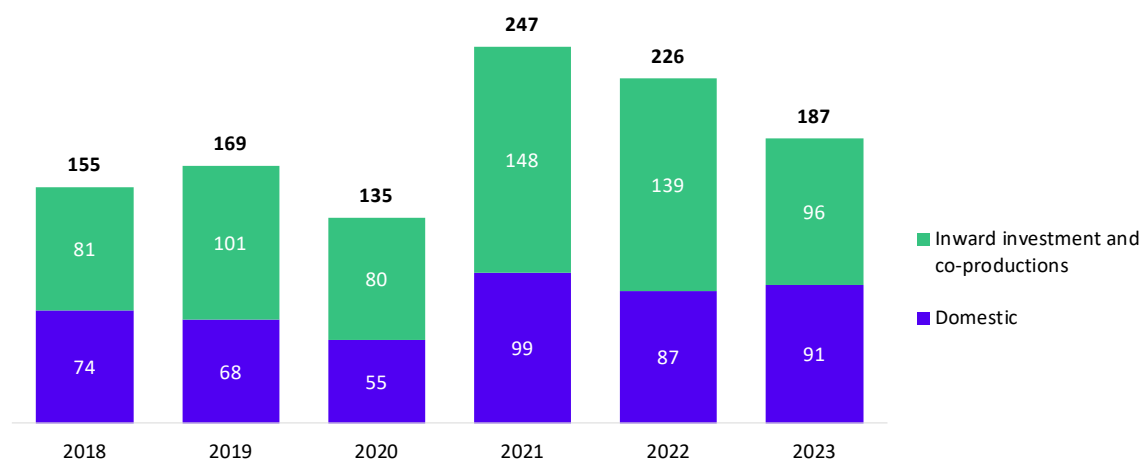
High-end TV productions declined for the second year in a row but remain higher than pre-pandemic

The number of high-end TV productions⁴¹ fell in 2023, with the drop driven by a decline in inward (i.e. foreign) investment. There were 187 productions in the year, down 17% from 226 in 2022 and falling further from the historic high of 247 in 2021. However, a production backlog in the wake of the pandemic at least partially inflated output during the period. Comparing the 2023 figure with 2019 (169), the total number of high-end TV programmes increased by 18, or 11%.

Inward investment in high-end TV declined from 139 productions in 2022 to 96 in 2023, disrupted by the Hollywood strikes. Inward investment productions included HBO fantasy drama *House Of The Dragon* and season 2 of Apple TV+ sci-fi *Silo*. Meanwhile, domestic productions increased from 87 in 2022 to 91 in 2023, and included programmes such as period drama *Call The Midwife* (season 13) and thriller *Trigger Point* (season 2).

⁴¹ The BFI defines ‘high-end TV’ as a drama, comedy or documentary programme, with episodes over 30 minutes in length and a budget over £1m per episode.

Figure 33: Number of high-end TV programmes produced in the UK: 2018-2023



Source: BFI. Production numbers reflect programming starting principal photography during 2023 and are updated in each successive BFI report to reflect new films, changed budgets, postponements and cancellations. Data for 2019-2023 was published in 2024. Data for 2018 was published in 2023.

Production sector dynamics, including future opportunities and challenges for the industry, are further examined in an [Ofcom-commissioned report produced by Oliver & Ohlbaum Associates](#), which was published in August 2023.

Online video market developments

Subscription video-on-demand

The SVoD market has matured, with the pure subscription proposition reaching a plateau, and ad-supported tiers positioned to drive future growth

As discussed in the previous chapter, quarterly fluctuations in overall take-up of SVoD since 2022 – with reach ranging between 65% and 68% – indicate that the market has matured, with the rate of stacking holding steady at 2.3 subscriptions per SVoD home throughout 2023.

The next phase of market growth is set to come from advertising-supported SVoD subscriptions. Netflix launched its ad tier in the UK in late 2022, followed by Disney+ a year later, with both these new offerings introduced at a lower price point of £4.99 a month. The other major provider of the big three, Amazon, introduced advertising (for TV and film content, having already served ads against live sports) on Prime Video in February 2024, although its strategy is to charge customers an add-on fee of £2.99 a month to go ad-free (as opposed to lowering the price for those who opt to see ads). Apple TV+ is the only global SVoD provider not to introduce an ad tier; Paramount+ has also not yet launched one in the UK, but has [announced a roll-out](#) for the second half of 2024.

Lowering the price of SVoD is in part intended to reduce churn – with some customers spinning down as opposed to dropping a service altogether – as well as to increase the appeal of SVoD to households yet to try it. If successful, this will drive further growth in SVoD household penetration.

By Q1 2024, Netflix’s ad tier had been taken up by 2.1 million homes, representing 13% of Netflix’s 16.7 million subscribing households.⁴² The scale of ad-tier take-up within the SVoD subscription mix

⁴² Barb Establishment Survey.

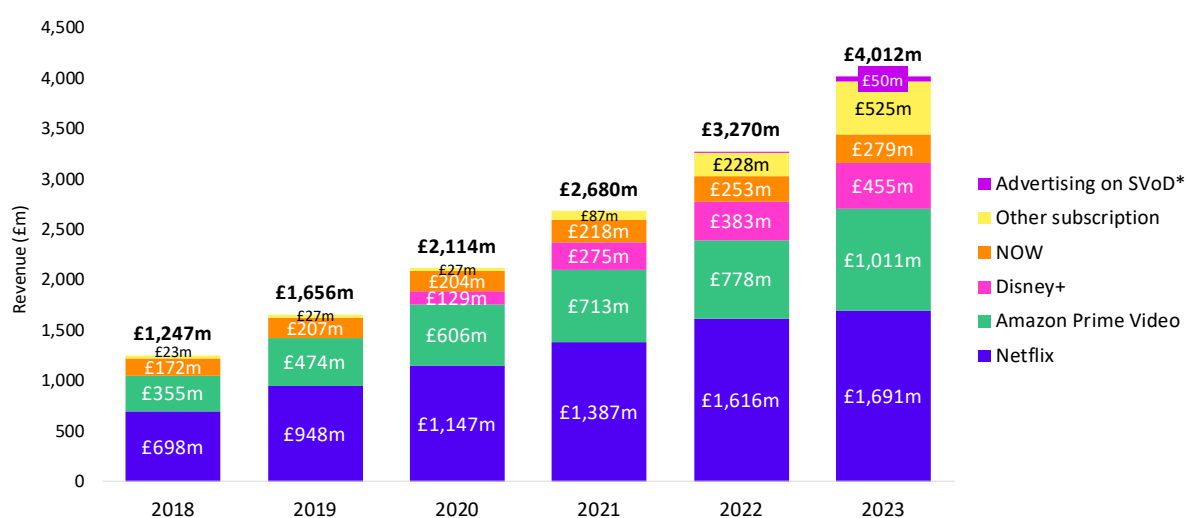
over the long term is difficult to project at this stage. If it is substantial, ad-supported SVoD could pose significant competition to commercial BVoD in the VoD advertising market.

The introduction of advertising is one of the strategic responses from SVoD providers facing up to the challenging economics of streaming

A maturing SVoD market has brought profitability into sharp focus for all the key players, following an initial growth phase during which attracting subscribers and securing market share came at the expense of maximising value.

The introduction of advertising has been one response, as has continued price rises, including for Netflix, Apple TV+ and NOW (its Boost ad-free add-on) in 2023. Price rises were indeed one of the key revenue drivers in the year. SVoD services collectively generated just under £4bn in subscription revenue in 2023, up 22% year on year, plus about £50m from advertising on their services;⁴³ a relatively small amount, but generated in a nascent period for SVoD ad tiers.

Figure 34: UK SVoD revenue, by service: 2018-2023



Source: Ampere Analysis. *Advertising on SVoD includes Netflix, Discovery+ and Disney+ only. Figures are presented in nominal terms. Amazon Prime Video revenue is estimated based on users of the service – revenue is not ascribed to Amazon Prime customers who do not claim to use Prime Video (e.g. subscribe only for the unlimited express shipping).

Netflix’s crackdown on account-sharing is also likely to have contributed to revenue growth, although this is difficult to measure. Following the implementation of this strategy in the UK in May 2023, there was no significant change in the number of households accessing Netflix, but this lack of movement could be masking the successful conversion of previously non-paying users into either ‘extra members’ or new subscribers within Netflix’s user base.

Disney is following Netflix’s lead on paid sharing, [rolling out its own similar strategy in 2024](#), having tested it in Canada in 2023. Other SVoD providers could follow, although the value or effectiveness of smaller players doing so is less certain.

Another revenue stream (which has re-emerged) is content licensing, as studios such as Disney and NBCUniversal shift away from maintaining exclusivity over all their original titles. For example, the number of TV seasons cross-licensed between Netflix and Warner Bros. Discovery’s streaming

⁴³ On Netflix, Discovery+ and Disney+ only.

services Max (not yet available in the UK) and Discovery+ [more than tripled in 2023](#), while Amazon Prime Video's catalogue's overlap with studios' streaming services also grew significantly.

While maximising revenues is a key focus for SVoD providers, so too is better managing costs. While the 2023 actors' and writers' strikes in Hollywood were responsible for some unplanned cost savings among the major streamers and studios, most – with the exceptions of Amazon and Apple – had already been on track for reduced or flat content investment in the year. Disney, Warner Bros. Discovery and Paramount have all pulled back on production outside the US, and all three have also withdrawn content from their streaming libraries, writing off the value of these assets via impairment charges.⁴⁴

[Netflix expects to spend up to \\$17bn](#) (£13.5bn) on original and licensed programming in 2024, which is more than it spent in the Hollywood-strike-impacted 2023 (\$13bn, compared to an expected \$17bn) but about the same amount as in 2021 and 2022. The company said that its annual [spend on UK productions](#) averaged \$1.5bn (£1.2bn) between 2020 and 2023, significantly higher than its original target of \$1bn a year for the market, set in 2020, although production cost inflation is likely to be a factor in this.⁴⁵

[Netflix's strategic pivot has restored market confidence following the company's 2022 wobble, but questions remain over its long-term growth prospects](#)

The shock of two consecutive quarters of decline in Netflix's global subscriber base, in the first half of 2022, saw the company's share price drop by 76% compared to its November 2021 peak. The strategic pivot Netflix has executed in response – in particular, introducing advertising and clamping down on account sharing – has seen it recover this value, with the share price returning to its previous peak by July 2024.

But clamping down on paid sharing represents a one-time benefit (playing out over two to four quarters in 2023 and 2024), as opposed to sustained growth. Netflix signalled that its global customer base was likely to have reached a plateau when the company [announced](#) in April 2024 that, from 2025, it will no longer report subscriber numbers or average revenue per subscription in its quarterly earnings releases, a move intended to shift ongoing evaluation of its performance towards overall revenue growth and viewing/engagement metrics. Further price rises, which [Netflix has hinted at](#), could be a revenue driver again in 2024, but customer tolerance for continued increases may be tested. Other strategic focuses will therefore be important if the company is to continue to grow.

A new area of content investment for Netflix is live events. The initial focus has been one-offs in the comedy, reality TV, entertainment and sports (celebrity golf and a tennis exhibition match) genres, but in January 2024 Netflix [agreed a major deal with professional wrestling organisation WWE](#). This ten-year deal, which includes the global rights to weekly live broadcasts and (outside the US) other special events, starts in January 2025, with Netflix paying a reported \$5bn in total (\$500m a year). This is not necessarily a signal that Netflix is now ready to invest significantly in sports rights more broadly, as the nature of the WWE deal – being global as opposed to local, having a year-round

⁴⁴ In corporate accounting, an impairment charge is a type of cost/loss reported by a company that represents a reduction in the market value of an asset compared to previous expectations.

⁴⁵ As this self-reported figure is an average across several years, Netflix's spend in 2023 is unclear. Netflix's method for calculating this figure is also unclear, meaning that it may not fully align with the supply-side data reported by Pact and sourced from its survey of producers – see the section of this chapter on production sector trends, above, for more information.

‘season’, and including a significant archive catalogue – gives it an appeal that cannot be replicated by many other sports properties.

Netflix’s expansion into gaming remains a long-term strategy. The company is reportedly looking at [new monetisation options](#) for its offering (all its mobile games are currently available to all subscribers at no extra cost), such as introducing advertising, in-app purchases or charging additional fees for console-quality titles that are reportedly in development.

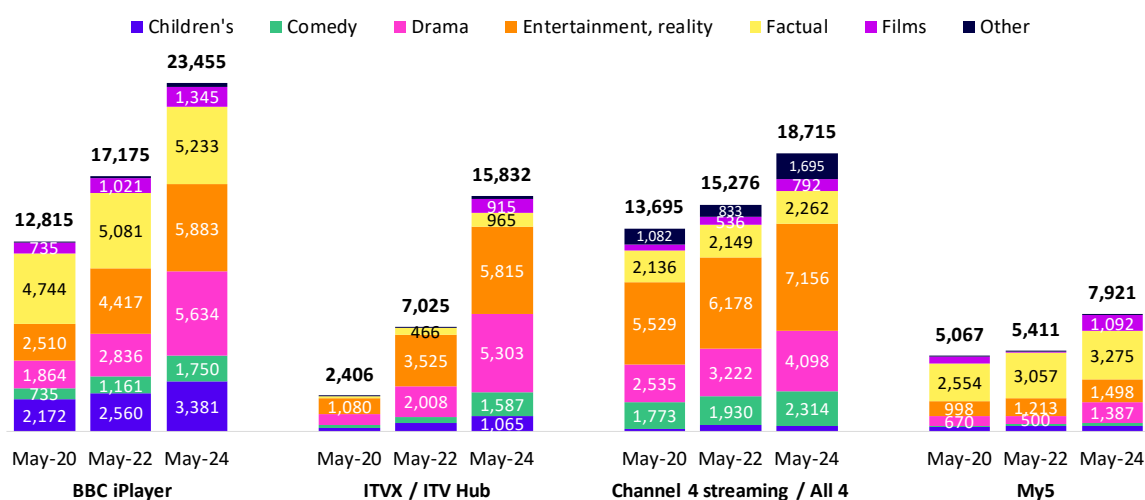
Broadcaster video-on-demand, and free advertising-supported streaming TV

Commercial broadcasters are adapting to the streaming age as they seek financial sustainability, but face significant challenges

Reorienting their respective offerings around VoD continues to be a key focus for broadcasters, to varying degrees. This has seen them expand their catalogues, experiment with ‘windows’ (when a series, and how much of it, becomes available on-demand compared to linear broadcast), and [refine the streaming user experience](#), among other initiatives. The PSBs will also hope to benefit from new availability and prominence rules – part of the Media Act that was passed in May 2024 and [to be implemented by Ofcom](#) – designed to ensure online PSB services are both available on popular TV platforms and capable of being easily found and discovered by audiences.

The amount of content available on BVoD has increased significantly over the past two years. Cumulative catalogue hours available across BBC iPlayer, ITVX, Channel 4 streaming and My5 totalled 65,923 in May 2024, up by 47% compared to May 2022. The ITVX revamp has been a key driver of this; the initial launch of the new service in December 2022 resulted in the addition of close to 2,300 hours compared to ITV Hub, and in the 17 months that followed, a further 4,051 hours were added (15,832 in total by May 2024). The hours added post-launch have mainly come in the drama and entertainment/reality genres, which together accounted for two-thirds of additions. Growth in BBC iPlayer catalogue hours over the past two years has also been significant and – like ITVX – has been driven by an expansion of drama and entertainment/reality programming.

Figure 35: PSB BVoD services’ content hours, by genre: 2020-2024



Source: Ampere Analysis. ITVX catalogue hours are free-to-view only.

As examined in the previous chapter, ITVX had a relatively strong viewing performance in 2023, outperforming the other PSB BVoD services in terms of growth (albeit from a lower base than BBC

iPlayer and Channel 4's streaming service). While this is supporting [growth in digital advertising revenue](#), the extent to which ITVX can drive future growth in total advertising revenue for ITV is uncertain. Total ITV viewing continues to decline (-4.7% in 2023), with audiences in all the main age demographics decreasing their linear ITV viewing to a greater extent than they are increasing their viewing of ITVX. The largest increases in ITVX viewing time (in absolute terms) came from 45-64-year-olds, as opposed to younger audiences (who are most valuable to advertisers as they watch little broadcast TV and could represent potential new viewers for ITV services).

ITV's digital strategy is aided by the broadcaster's proprietary, self-serve addressable (targeted) advertising platform [Planet V](#), which allows agencies and advertisers to plan and book tailored campaigns for advertising on ITVX. It is the UK's second-largest such platform after Google, and has been a digital ad revenue growth driver for ITV – reaching the [milestone of £1bn in bookings](#) in June 2024 – as the broadcaster seeks to compete for online ad spend. ITV is also seeking new partnership opportunities with the [launch of BE Studios](#) in November 2023, through which ITV will produce advertiser-funded branded content and seek to increase the value of its existing client base.

In January 2024, Channel 4 unveiled a new five-year strategy, [Fast Forward](#), through which the broadcaster aims to become a '*digital-first public service streamer*' by 2030. Central to the strategy is a streaming-first approach to commissioning, as well as revenue diversification to reduce Channel 4's reliance on advertising, including potential intellectual property ownership (which will be permitted for the first time once the Media Act comes into force) and e-commerce (shoppable TV). Fast Forward also relies on significantly reducing operational costs, which Channel 4 is seeking to achieve by vacating and selling its London offices (Horseferry Road), reducing its headcount by 18% (including about 200 redundancies), and closing small linear channels – it shut down the Box music channels in July 2024.

Channel 5 has been slower than the other commercial PSBs to embrace a streaming-first strategy, having continued to prioritise linear revenue. However, parent company Paramount has said it will [consolidate and bolster its UK streaming offering in 2024](#) by merging the My5 BVoD service with free advertising-supported streaming TV (FAST) service Pluto TV.

In addition to developing their respective BVoD strategies, the PSBs are collaborating via the joint venture [Everyone TV](#) (formerly Digital UK) in a bid to future-proof their broader free-to-air offerings, doing so via a [new streaming service called Freely](#). Launched in April 2024, Freely is seen as a long-term replacement for the Freeview platform, which relies on the distribution of broadcast channels via digital terrestrial TV. Freely allows users to stream live TV channels, as well as access BVoD libraries, on the smart TVs on which it is available. Achieving scale will take time; Freely will be accessible on new models of smart TV sets from manufacturer partners carrying the service, but will not be added to older sets, i.e. via software/firmware updates. Smart TV partners include Hisense and Vestel (both from launch), [Toshiba, Sharp and Panasonic](#).

[Broadcasters and content owners continue to expand into FAST, but user bases remain small and services are commercially unproven in the UK](#)

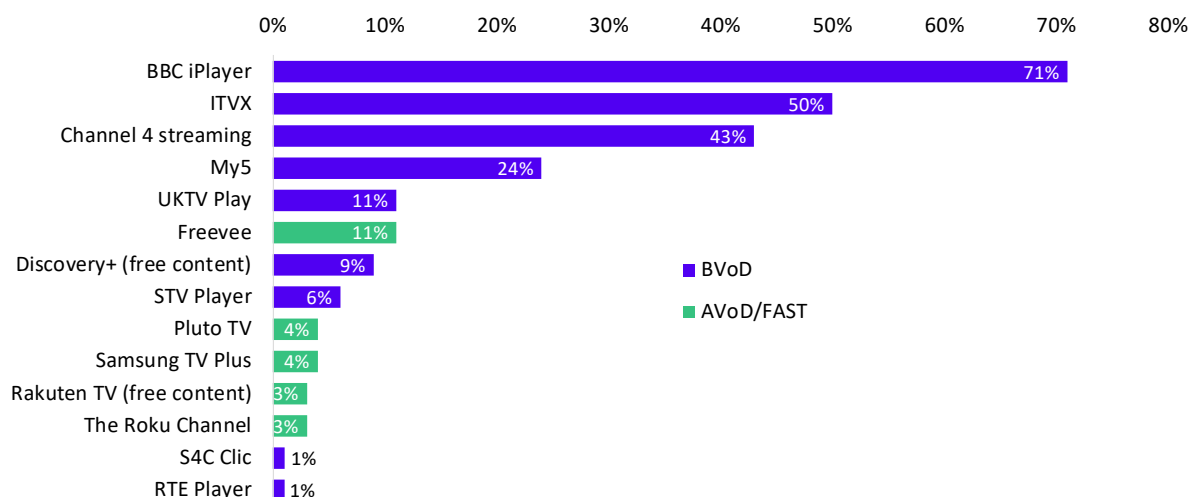
Free advertising-supported streaming TV (FAST) content offerings continue to expand, with the number of unique FAST channels available in the UK rising to about 650 by early 2024, operated by close to 200 individual channel owners, according to [FAST4EU Consortium tracking](#). These channels are primarily niche offerings that are either themed (e.g. Real Crime, Mystery TV, World War TV, etc.) or dedicated to a single programme (e.g. *Hell's Kitchen*, *Paternity Court*, *Baywatch*, etc.).

Most FAST platforms, which can include ad-supported video-on-demand (AVoD) libraries and/or online linear channels, are distinct from BVoD in that they are not broadcaster-branded, with services operating in the UK including Amazon's Freevee, Paramount's Pluto TV and Samsung TV

Plus. It should be noted, though, that ITVX does host some FAST channels (live linear streams) on its platform.⁴⁶ Another new player entered the UK market in July 2024: [Fox Corporation launched Tubi](#), a service which has been in operation in the US since 2014 and has a large AVoD catalogue (but no FAST channels in the UK, at least at launch).

The level of audience demand for FAST remains uncertain. Consumer-survey-based reach data indicates that FAST service user bases are still small – most of the AVoD/FAST services asked about in Ofcom’s VoD Survey (conducted in early 2024) had claimed usage by only 3%-4% of adults and teens in the past three months. The exception was Amazon’s Freevee, which 11% claimed to have used, probably benefiting from its prominence on the Amazon Prime Video user interface. Barb’s measurement of viewing time for AVoD/FAST services is not yet comprehensive, but for the services that it does measure – Pluto TV, Samsung TV Plus and Rakuten TV – cumulative daily viewing averaged 10 seconds per person per day in 2023 (ITVX, for comparison, was close to four minutes), or 1 hour 3 minutes per person across the whole year.

Figure 36: Reach (claimed use) of selected BVoD and AVoD/FAST services used to watch programmes, films or other video content: 2024



Source: Ofcom VoD Survey 2024. Combined online and CATI, adults/teens aged 13+. Figures for ITVX, STV Player and Channel 4 streaming exclude users of paid tiers. Services used in the past three months (fieldwork February – March 2024).

In addition to there being no clear evidence of significant audience demand for FAST, these services are commercially unproven. FAST channel revenue data submitted to Ofcom (by FAST channel operators with a broadcast licence) indicates that the advertising income being received at a channel level is materially insignificant in the context of the wider TV and VoD advertising market. Further, analyst estimates of the overall value of the global FAST market attribute the vast majority of revenues to the lucrative US market (where FAST is operating under very different market conditions and has therefore achieved some commercial success) and comparatively little to large European markets, including the UK. However, the prospect of potentially low returns does not appear to be deterring broadcasters and content owners from embracing FAST, given that launch and operational costs can be low.

⁴⁶ The BBC is also experimenting with [live linear streams on BBC iPlayer](#) (distinct from its live sports streaming), although these are not advertising-supported and therefore not technically ‘FAST’.

Radio and audio industry trends

Introduction

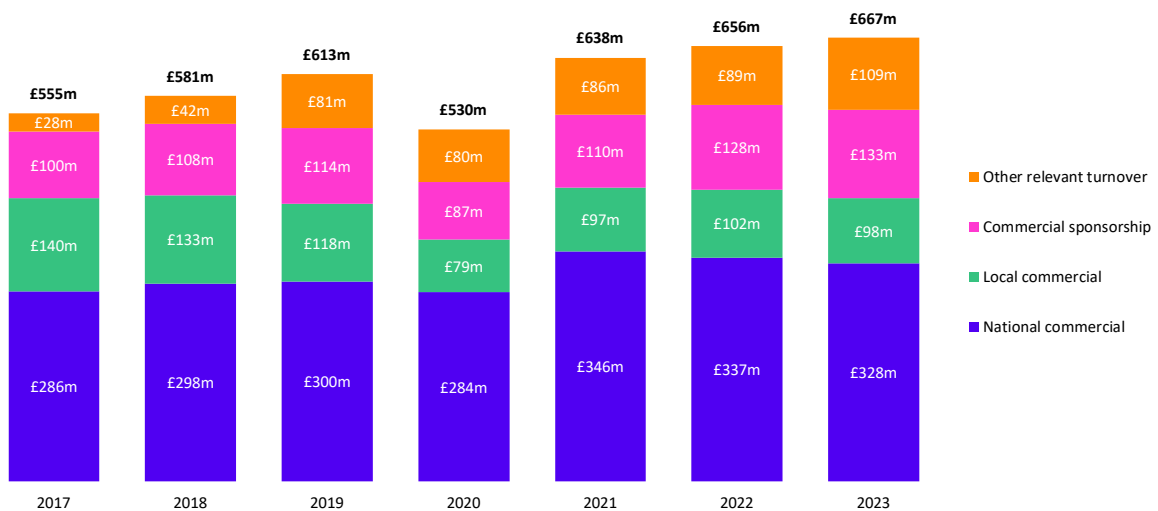
This section provides insight and commentary on key trends across the radio and audio sectors. It contains data on advertising, revenues and spend, and the availability of radio services, as well as notable developments across the audio market, including streaming and podcasts.

Revenues and spend

Despite overall revenue growth for commercial radio, local and national spot advertising declined between 2022 and 2023

Between 2022 and 2023, overall commercial radio revenues increased by 2%, driven by growth in other relevant turnover such as on-air competition revenues and commercial sponsorship. In contrast, both local and national spot advertising revenues declined by 4% and 3% respectively, as advertisers reduced their spend in response to declining business sentiment as a result of inflation and increases in interest rates.

Figure 37: Commercial radio revenues: 2017-2023



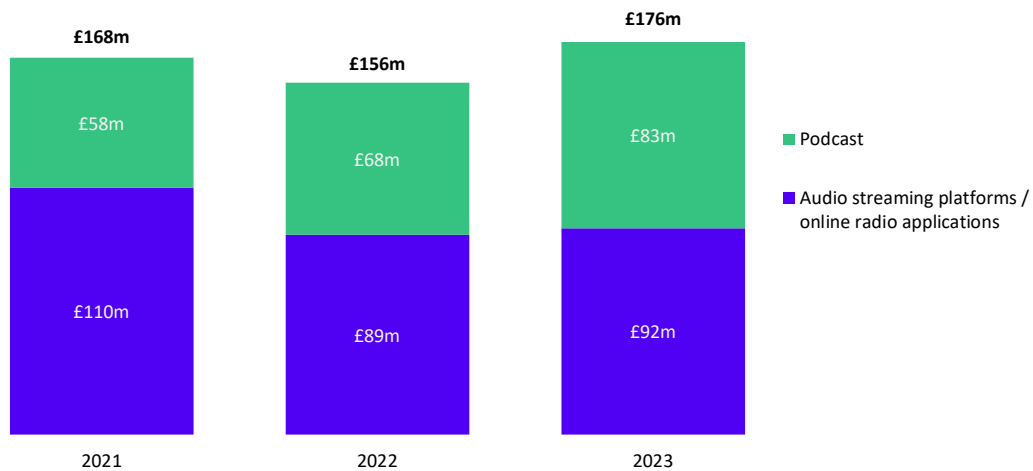
Source: Broadcaster returns. Figures in chart rounded to the nearest million.

Podcasts continue to increase their share of digital audio advertising expenditure

After declining between 2021 and 2022, digital audio advertising expenditure grew by 12% between 2022 and 2023, mainly driven by podcast advertising, which grew by 23% to reach £83m in 2023.

Industry stakeholders have told us that some advertisers are using digital audio advertising to substitute for more traditional radio advertising. However, we understand that digital audio advertising platforms are also capturing some digital advertising budgets, especially following the launch of self-service options. These allow advertisers to purchase directly from the platforms and run their adverts without the need for a media agency acting as an intermediary.

Figure 38: Digital audio advertising expenditure: 2021-2023



Source: IAB UK PwC Digital Adspend Study 2023. Note: data has been restated from prior years.

However, challenges, notably the lack of industry-wide measurement may be continuing to hold back some advertisers from investing in this medium. Other barriers sometimes mentioned by the sector include concerns about [brand safety](#) around advertising on podcasts, and levels of awareness of digital audio advertising products in agencies.

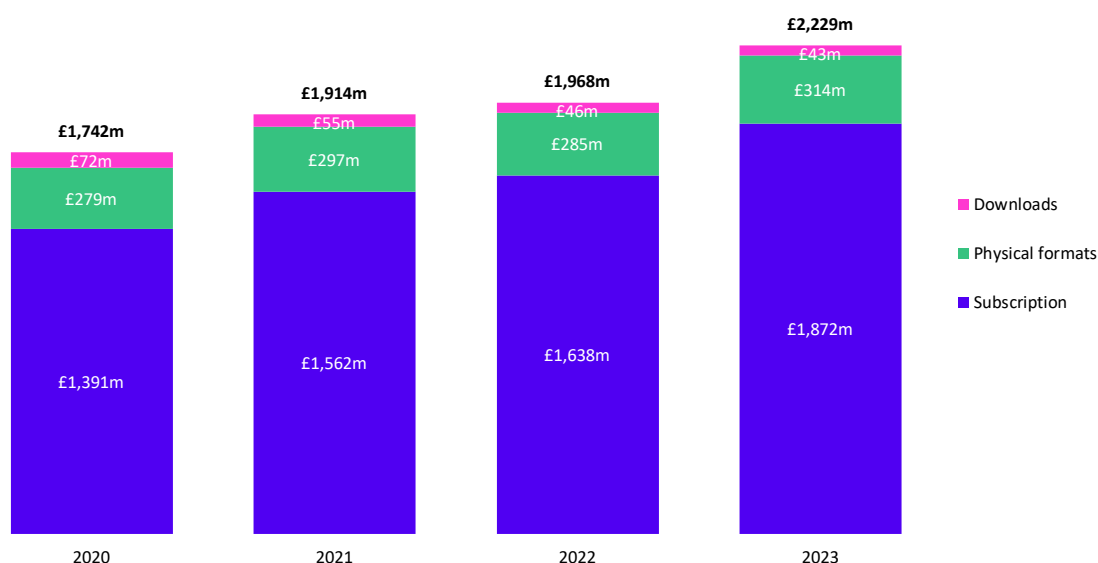
Consumer expenditure on physical formats increased between 2022 and 2023

Bucking the long-term shift in consumer expenditure on music, from physical to digital formats, expenditure on physical music formats by consumers grew by 10% between 2022 and 2023, driven by growth in expenditure on CDs (reflecting growth in the average price of a CD album) as well as continued growth in expenditure on vinyl formats. However, the number of cassettes sold in 2023 fell to 136,196 in 2023, down by 30% since 2022.⁴⁷

Despite year-on-year growth in physical formats, subscriptions continue to account for 84% of total consumer expenditure on recorded music. Expenditure on subscriptions grew by 10% to reach almost £1.9bn in 2023. Several music streaming services, including Spotify, Amazon and YouTube, increased their prices in 2023. Some services, including Spotify, have also announced price increases in 2024.

⁴⁷ Official Charts Company.

Figure 39: Consumer expenditure on recorded music: 2020-2023



Source: Official Charts Company and ERA estimates, [BPI 'All About The Music 2024'](#).

Streaming continues to account for two-thirds of total recorded music industry income

The recorded music industry generates its revenue from a range of sources, including royalty payments from consumer-facing streaming services. Payments from streaming services continued to account for two-thirds of the recorded music industry's total UK revenues in 2023, in line with previous years.⁴⁸ Recorded music industry revenues from streaming grew by 8% to £962m in 2023.⁴⁹ Over the same period, the total number of audio streams in the UK grew by 13% to reach 180bn.⁵⁰

Streaming services, including Spotify, have made changes to the way in which they pay royalties to rights-holders. [Announced in November 2023](#), and operational from April 2024, Spotify now requires that a track has been streamed at least 1,000 times in the previous 12 months for it to generate royalties. Uploaded tracks containing 'noise'⁵¹ are subject to additional requirements in order to receive royalty payments. Spotify argues that this change is designed to mitigate actors uploading large numbers of tracks which receive very few plays, and to prevent users from uploading artificially short noise tracks to inflate the number of streams these tracks get.

⁴⁸ BPI Surveys.

⁴⁹ BPI Surveys.

⁵⁰ Official Charts Company.

⁵¹ Some users listen to soundtracks containing noise such as white noise or background noises (rather than music) for purposes such as relaxation, or to aid concentration. In response to this, some individuals and organisations uploaded large numbers of very short noise tracks (which users would set on auto-repeat) to generate revenues, with payments being in part based on the number of times a track was played.

Figure 40: Music industry income from streaming: 2018-2023



Source: [BPI Surveys](#). Values are wholesale, do not include VAT and are net of returns (for physical formats).

Availability and distribution of radio services

The number of analogue radio services fell between 2023 and 2024

As in previous years, the number of services on AM medium wave (MW) has continued to decline, reflecting the shift in listening towards DAB and online, and the cost of maintaining relatively power-hungry AM transmission networks for declining audiences. Examples of this include Bauer’s closure of Greatest Hits Radio services on MW and Global’s closure of Gold AM, with the service in London closing in August 2023, and Manchester closing in April 2024, the same month in which the BBC ceased its MW Radio 4 broadcasts. Although the AM long wave (LW) service continues, the dedicated content previously broadcast on the Radio 4 AM LW service is now only available on the [BBC’s digital radio platforms and BBC Sounds](#). [Sunshine Radio closed](#) its AM service covering Ludlow and South Shropshire in January 2024.

The decline in the number of AM services has enabled Ofcom to make changes to the [Characteristics and Limits of Transmission](#) for AM radio services (531 kHz - 1602 kHz) code, increasing the maximum allowable audio bandwidth from 6KHz to 9KHz. This change will allow stations which continue to broadcast on AM MW to improve the sound quality of their broadcasts without causing interference to other AM MW services.

Figure 41: Analogue AM MW and FM radio services: March 2024

	AM MW	FM	Total
Local commercial	11	234	245
UK-wide commercial	1	1	2
BBC UK-wide networks	1	4	5
BBC nations’/local	9	46	46
Community	21	286	307

Source: BBC, Ofcom. Excludes R4 MW and LW.

The number of services on the two national DAB multiplexes grew between March 2023 and March 2024, enabled by the migration of certain services, previously broadcasting using DAB, to the more efficient DAB+ standard. The total number of commercially-licensed services on local DAB multiplexes fell by ten (a decline of 2%) over the same period. This may reflect some services moving to small-scale DAB multiplexes.

Figure 42: Number of DAB services: March 2024

	BBC UK-wide	UK Commercial: Digital One	UK Commercial: Sound Digital	Local commercial services
Number of multiplexes	1	1	1	58
Number of services	11	26	30	644

Source: Ofcom, BBC.

One in four UK homes can now receive small-scale DAB services

Since March 2023, licensing and build-out of small-scale DAB services has continued around the UK, increasing household coverage of small-scale DAB from 13.8% in March 2023 to 25.6% a year later. Applications for the fifth round of licensing, covering the South East England macro region,⁵² closed on 30 June 2023, and at the time of writing applications are being assessed.⁵³ The coverage of national and local DAB multiplexes has remained at March 2023 levels.⁵⁴

⁵² Covering 32 areas.

⁵³ Round 5 also included the readvertisement of licences for Alnwick & Morpeth, Isles of Scilly and Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taff, with licences for these areas being awarded in September 2023.

⁵⁴ Some additional relays for Sound Digital have been deployed to increase coverage in parts of the Cotswolds, but the incremental reach from these does not change the overall coverage figure for the multiplex.

Figure 43: DAB coverage: March 2024

		BBC	Commercial			Small-scale
			Digital One	Sound Digital	Local DAB	
UK	Homes	97.4%	91.7%	82.6%	92.0%	25.6%
	Major roads	87.4%	80.2%	72.6%	76.8%	NM
England	Homes	98.4%	94.8%	86.7%	93.4%	25.2%
	Major roads	94.5%	93.9%	89.8%	87.4%	NM
Northern Ireland	Homes	87.3%	85.4%	56.8%	87.5%	32.1%
	Major roads	79.3%	86.9%	55.0%	87.8%	NM
Scotland	Homes	95.3%	81.7%	69.0%	85.4%	32.1%
	Major roads	69.1%	45.5%	33.6%	45.6%	NM
Wales	Homes	92.2%	67.5%	56.9%	82.6%	17.6%
	Major roads	78.1%	53.3%	37.7%	60.9%	NM

Source: Arqiva, BBC, Ofcom. Note: Coverage of small-scale DAB is measured on a homes-only basis. 'NM' denotes levels are not measured.

Market developments

Radio sector

The Media Act aims to protect the long-term future of radio

The Media Act was passed on 24 May 2024 and brings with it changes to how media in the UK will be regulated. Of particular relevance to the radio sector are Parts 5 and 6 of the Act, which focus on updating the radio licensing framework for commercial radio, and securing the availability of UK radio on connected audio devices:

- Part 5 updates the regulatory framework for commercial radio. Commercial radio services in the UK are currently regulated under a licensing framework that is, in large part, more than 30 years old. This section reflects the conclusions of the Government's [2017 consultation on commercial radio deregulation](#) to remove outdated regulatory burdens on radio services, while protecting and strengthening the provision of local news.
- Part 6 introduces provisions to protect UK radio's availability on connected audio devices. Reflecting recommendations made in the [DCMS-commissioned Digital Radio & Audio Review](#), this section will ensure that UK radio stations are reliably provided in response to listeners' commands to designated voice-activated online platforms available via devices like smart speakers, and in vehicles. It will also ensure that stations are not charged by these platforms to make their live services available to listeners.

Switch to DAB+

In the past year, many commercial stations have made the switch from broadcasting in standard DAB to DAB+. ⁵⁵ From October 2023, Bauer's Absolute Radio Country, Absolute Classic Rock, Absolute 80s, Absolute Radio 90s, Kerrang! Radio, Magic brand extensions (Magic Chilled, Magic Soul, Magic and the Musicals and Mellow Magic), Planet Rock and Scala Radio all transitioned to DAB+, allowing some of these stations to broadcast on a UK-wide multiplex (rather than on local multiplexes) for the first time, and increasing their coverage. Global's Classic FM switched to DAB+ in January 2024.

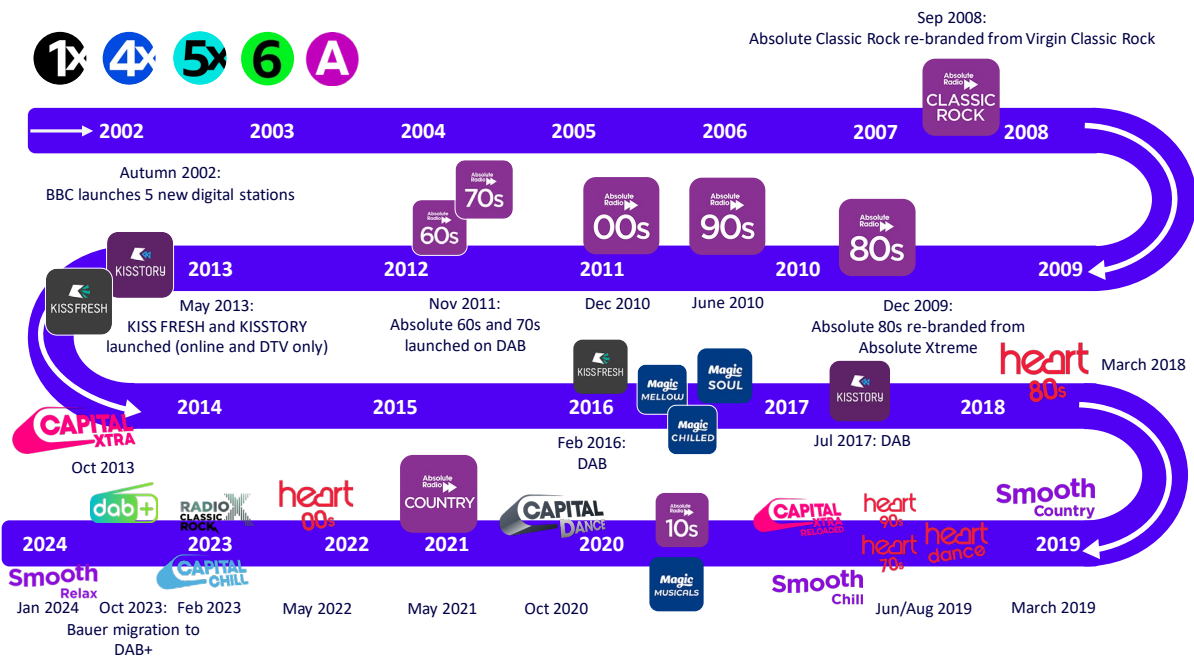
Commercial radio continues to build on established brands

The capacity freed up by Classic FM's move to DAB+ enabled Global to launch a new station on the same multiplex, Smooth Relax, which builds on the format of Smooth Radio's evening shows by playing a mix of relaxing music throughout the day. Smooth Relax joins sister stations Smooth Chill and Smooth Country in an established strategy of commercial radio adding network extensions focused on a specific genre of music, mood or decade. While these tend to be branded stations for existing network listeners, they add valuable hours and incremental reach to the overall parent brand.

The last couple of decades have seen huge growth in the number of brand extensions available across the UK, both online-only and on DAB/DAB+. Nine stations launched in 2019 alone, seven of which were from Global, and since then six more have been added to existing commercial networks.

Alongside brand extensions, 15 independent local radio stations in England and Wales, including Metro Radio and City Radio, were rebranded by Bauer as Hits Radio in April 2024.

Figure 44: Timeline of brand extension station launches and moves to DAB: 2002-2024



Global launches the pop-up station of Swifties' wildest dreams

Global launched Capital (Taylor's Version) to accompany the UK leg of Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, which started in Edinburgh on 7 June. The station is available on DAB+ and is the first UK-wide radio station dedicated to a single artist. While many pop-up stations pop back down again, the increased

⁵⁵ DAB+ is the latest technology for digital audio broadcasting. It is more efficient than standard DAB, allowing more services to be broadcast on the same multiplex with equivalent audio quality.

efficiencies of DAB+ give broadcasters more flexibility to try new things – with some services evolving and becoming permanent over time.⁵⁶

Launch of Bauer’s Rayo app and acquisition of Sharpstream

Over the past year, Bauer has continued to develop its digital services, with its [Rayo platform launching officially](#) on 24 June 2024. Rayo is Bauer’s cross-market brand for its online platform, offering live radio and on-demand content like BBC Sounds and Global Player, and in the UK also offers premium advertising-free content to paying subscribers.

In May 2024, [Bauer announced](#) that it had completed its acquisition of Sharpstream, a provider of a technology platform used by audio content providers (including by several of Bauer’s businesses) to stream live and on-demand audio content, including events.

Nation Player now carries services from multiple broadcasters

In July 2024, Nation Broadcasting launched its new Nation Player app for iOS and Android devices. It acts as a portal to Nation’s own services, and users can also access radio services and podcasts from third parties including Fun Kids, Channel 103 and Podcast Radio.

DAX ID

The changes in audience behaviour, including the wider range of devices they use to consume audio, and the demand from advertisers for greater transparency around the performance of their campaigns, have incentivised the development of tools that enable cross-platform advert attribution. One player in this space, Global, launched its DAX ID system in April 2024 to provide cross-device measurement of exposure to audio advertising. In contrast to Global’s previous tool, Listener ID, [DAX ID](#) does not rely on cookies and is designed to measure audio advertising impressions across a larger number of devices and contexts.

Podcasts

New podcasts and services continue to launch in the UK

Podcast publishers in the UK have continued to launch new podcasts and associated services. For example, Global launched *The Sports Agents* podcast in spring 2024, building on its existing brand, *The News Agents*. In May, the Telegraph launched a daily news podcast, *The Daily T*, bringing the Telegraph into line with other newspapers such as the Guardian, the Economist and the New York Times, which have launched daily news podcasts.

In April this year, Amazon’s Wondery launched its Wondery+ subscription service in the UK which includes early and ad-free access to certain podcasts, as well as some exclusive content.

Changes in podcast studios

Over the past few years several companies have left the podcast production market, often as part of broader group restructuring, with recent closures including Warner Music Group’s Interval Presents production house in early 2024. The past year has also seen the launch and exit of players in the UK podcast production market. In January 2024, Broccoli Productions announced that it would close, following the end of its joint venture with Sony Music Entertainment. In contrast, in April 2024, Steven Bartlett, presenter of *The Diary of a CEO* podcast, announced the launch of the Flight Studio podcast production and technology firm.

⁵⁶ For example, pop-up station Magic ABBA launched in 2016 as a commercial partnership with the musical ‘Mamma Mia!’. After the partnership ended it remained live as ‘Magic Soul Summer Soul’ before being rebranded and made available across the UK as ‘Magic Soul’.

Visualisation of audio (and vice versa)

The relationship between live and on-demand audio content and audio-visual content has continued to develop over the past year, as content creators seek new ways to distribute and monetise their content across different devices and for different ways of consumption. Modern digital content production processes allow for the fixed costs of certain types of content creation (speech-based content in a studio context, such as interviews and discussions) to be shared across both audio and AV media, often via online platforms which are seeking to expand both their audio and video content. The audio sector continues to be a source of creative ideas for film and television, a role it has been playing since the start of TV broadcasts.

Broadcasters continue to augment their audio content with video clips and upload shows to video-capable platforms

Improvements in technology and studio software now enable radio stations to video-enable their output more easily and in higher quality. Purpose-built studios are equipped with cameras which allow people to watch online as well as listen, delivering a more TV-like experience. For example, BBC radio programmes such as *The Media Show*, and Nicky Campbell's weekday morning show on BBC Radio 5 Live are available to watch on BBC iPlayer and the BBC News channel, while Global uploads videos from its shows to Global Player, and full episodes of LBC programmes to YouTube. Bauer has also invested in video-enabled studios in its new London offices. Crucially, programme recordings can also be clipped and edited to create content that is easily consumed and shared on social media, reaching an audience wider than those who only listen live, and encouraging them to listen to the show itself.

Discussion-based podcasts are being developed as video podcasts

The past year has continued to see [interest in video podcasts](#), from both audiences and producers. [Spotify reported a 70% increase in the number of video podcasts](#) available on its platform since 2023, and the number of global monthly active users consuming video podcasts is up by 40%. YouTube is one of the most commonly-used platforms to access podcasts; some of its most popular podcasts, such as the Joe Rogan Experience, have been filmed and posted on YouTube in order to drive distribution. Podcasts which are based on studio discussions, interviews or chat shows may have lower barriers to being produced as video podcasts, in comparison to drama or documentary podcasts. The distinction between video-first content and podcasts in this context may relate to whether the content can be enjoyed without the visual component.

Radio and audio continue to provide material for broadcast TV

From the early days of television, radio shows have been adapted for television – particularly comedy shows. Early examples include *The Goon Show* and *Hancock's Half Hour* while more recent TV adaptations include *The Day Today*, *Knowing Me, Knowing You* with Alan Partridge, *Second Thoughts*, and *That Mitchell and Webb Look*. Among the latest is Ken Bruce's *Popmaster* TV programme, which returned for a second series in May 2024, following its debut series on More4 in June 2023. TalkTV, which launched in April 2022 using TalkRadio as its radio simulcast, ceased TV broadcasts in April 2024 to become an online-only service, with TalkRadio continuing to be broadcast on DAB as well as being available online. GB News Radio continues to be broadcast as an audio simulcast of the GB News TV channel.

Podcasts continue to be used by TV broadcasters and VoD platforms as a way of augmenting and enhancing their core video content. Recent examples of this include ITV's *Love Island: The Morning After* podcast, with episodes released alongside the 2024 series of the TV show, and *The Traitors: Uncloaked*, a companion podcast to the second series of the BBC TV programme which was broadcast in early 2024. Notably, being developed with a visual element, this companion podcast

was also broadcast on BBC Two, as well as being available on demand on BBC iPlayer and BBC Sounds. The BBC's daily news podcast, *News* (temporarily subtitled *Electioncast* during the election period), is broadcast on the BBC News channel. Similarly, episodes of the political podcast, [The Rest is Politics, were shown on Channel 4](#) in the run-up to the 2024 UK General Election.

The relationship between podcasts and TV has also continued to evolve in other ways, with podcasts becoming a source of intellectual property (IP) for TV adaptations. For example, in January 2024 [ITV Studios acquired the TV adaptation rights to Global's Filthy Ritual](#) true crime podcast series. There are also examples of [TV series being used as a source of IP for podcasts](#), such as *Green Wing: Resuscitated*, a podcast update of the comedy programme broadcast on Channel 4 in the mid-2000s.

Spotify is continuing to add additional video content to its platform, supplementing its music, podcasts and audiobooks. In March 2024 it announced that [video-based online courses would be available](#) for purchase by users in the UK, and in June 2024 it also [concluded a deal](#) to carry video content from creator-backed streaming service Nebula. The decision to offer online courses is consistent with the use of podcasts 'to learn new things', and with the use of podcasts for professional development.⁵⁷

Community radio

Community radio stations provide opportunities to unite listeners in a specific geographic area or community of interest

What is community radio?

The community radio sector, established in 2005, offers not-for-profit stations that typically cover a small geographic area. They are designed in statute to provide tangible benefits to the communities they serve through the provision of social gain, both on- and off-air, outlined in the [Key Commitments](#) for all stations. The stations reflect a wide range of cultures and interests, providing a mix of locally-produced content including local news, information, interviews and discussions.⁵⁸

How big is the community radio sector?

According to our licensing data, there are currently 307 analogue community radio stations, with 254 in England, 29 in Scotland, 15 in Northern Ireland and nine in Wales. The recent roll-out of small-scale DAB multiplexes has allowed for the launch of new digital community stations, with 134 licences now awarded: 112 in England, 11 in Scotland, six in Northern Ireland and five in Wales. Of these, 68 are direct simulcasts of existing analogue stations, while 64 are new to the market.⁵⁹

A significant proportion of stations (56% for analogue, 39% for digital) broadly target and cater for the needs and interests of the general population in their specific coverage areas.

⁵⁷ 53% of monthly podcast listeners said they did this 'to learn something new' (Ofcom Audio Survey 2024). 39% of regular podcast listeners listen to professional development podcasts (Ofcom Podcast Survey 2024).

⁵⁸ With the exception of The Voice in Devon, community radio stations do not generally subscribe to RAJAR, the radio industry measurement of listening, so listening to these stations is simply captured under the 'other' category, making it impossible to use RAJAR to measure listening to this sector.

⁵⁹ 96 of these have now launched their services on a small-scale DAB multiplex. Note: these are live figures updated on a near-weekly basis. Data correct as of 11 July 2024.

Figure 45: Number of community radio stations serving target communities

	Analogue	Digital
Location-based	172	51
Religion	19	13
Minority ethnic groups	31	19
Age	33	11
Military	11	3
Health-focused	6	10
Educational-focused	4	2
Local culture/language (Ulster-Scots /Celtic)	2	2
Music genres	12	3
LGBTQ+	4	5
Blind community	1	4
Other underserved groups not catered for by other forms of media	12	9

Source: Ofcom. Main target communities for each station as indicated in their Key Commitments.

Each year we request information from our licensed radio stations to help us understand the relative health of the sectors. Currently, community radio stations are asked to provide details on their income and expenditure, number of volunteers, and the community their output aims to serve.⁶⁰ In 2023, the sector reported income of £13.8m, averaging about £48,000 per station. The majority of this income came from on-air commercials and grants. In addition to a small number of paid staff, there were over 20,000 volunteers in the sector in 2023, with an average of 130 volunteer hours each week per station. And the sector as a whole delivered training to over 7,000 volunteers in 2023, a demonstration of delivering social gain off-air through training and education in the community.

What are the challenges facing community radio?

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Ofcom has embarked on a series of stakeholder workshops which have included many representatives from the community radio sector. One of the biggest challenges we have heard about surrounds the ongoing sustainability of these stations, particularly as they are required to be not-for-profit. We are aware that, against the backdrop of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, stations are being squeezed by rises in rent and other expenses, magnified by the decrease in the availability of local government funding. While funding issues are outside Ofcom’s remit, the [Community Radio Fund](#)⁶¹ can offer support to help with the core costs of running an Ofcom-licensed community radio station, including funding for outreach. As a further challenge for community radio stations, the eligibility of digital community radio licensees to apply for the available funding has led to far greater competition to secure a grant through this process.

What is the impact of community radio?

Community radio stations have led, and influenced, a wide range of initiatives. Some involve a number of stations collaborating, such as the 2023 Earth Week, when community radio stations across the UK united to raise awareness of climate change. Other examples include providing opportunities for local young people to gain experience as presenters or producers, or supporting local music artists. Our engagement with stakeholders has also demonstrated that while a focus on

⁶⁰ The number of stations that report does not always match the number of licences, as stations are only asked to provide this data after their first year; some stations fail to submit; and sometimes data is unusable for various reasons.

⁶¹ The Community Radio Fund is administered by Ofcom on behalf of the DCMS, which provides the fund.

learning radio-related skills is vital for the radio station itself, many also develop initiatives to support members of their community without focusing on radio skills. These include workshops designed to support individuals to develop life skills, or to improve the emotional wellbeing and resilience of the community. Some stations have affiliations with local educational establishments and can offer accredited courses to help support learning ambitions.

Furthermore, many community stations provide training in other areas, such as learning social media skills, fundraising, marketing, technical engineering and general administration. These services report that the training they provide allows members of their communities to learn the skills necessary to boost their employment opportunities and provides volunteers with the experience and skills necessary to pursue a career in the media industry. Indeed, many services across the UK have alumni who have since moved on to paid roles in various media outlets, demonstrating the pathway that community radio stations can provide.

Radio and audio audience trends

Introduction

This section provides data and commentary on what people are listening to, and how. It starts by looking at listening across a range of audio types and devices, before focusing on consumer trends related to radio, music streaming, podcasts, voice assistants and in-car listening.

Audio listening

Where our data comes from

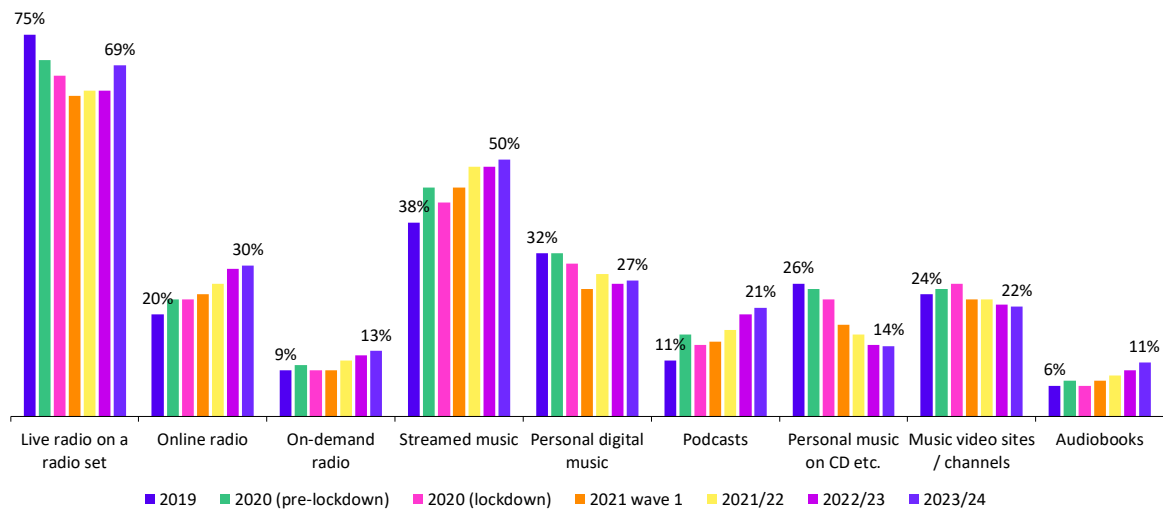
Our figures for reach and share of listening to different audio types come from IPA TouchPoints, and figures on live radio listening come from RAJAR. Both sources refer to adults as those aged 15+ so we have used this terminology here. See the [Annex](#) for more detail on data sources and methodology.

More than two-thirds of adults listen via a radio set each week, with streamed music the next most popular type of audio

While there is a clear trend towards online audio formats, which can be listened to on a range of devices, listening to live radio on a radio set continues to reach the majority of adults aged 15+ each week (69%). The next most popular type of audio is streamed music from services such as Spotify, Apple and Amazon, with half of us listening to these services at least once a week (50%), followed by online radio, which reaches three in ten (30%). The proportion of adults listening to podcasts each week has almost doubled in the past five years to one in five adults, although it remains comparatively low compared to live radio and music streaming.⁶² Listening to personal digital music stored or downloaded on devices has decreased from 32% to 27% in the past five years, while the reach of music on physical formats like CDs, vinyl, etc. has almost halved; from 28% to 14% in the same period, despite the 10% growth in consumer expenditure on physical music formats between 2022 and 2023, as highlighted above.

⁶² We typically use RAJAR figures for reach of podcasts, as discussed later in this report. In this instance the latest figure from IPA TouchPoints (21%) aligns with the latest available RAJAR figure (20.7%). We include the TouchPoints data in this chart as it allows us to compare a range of different audio types, and over time.

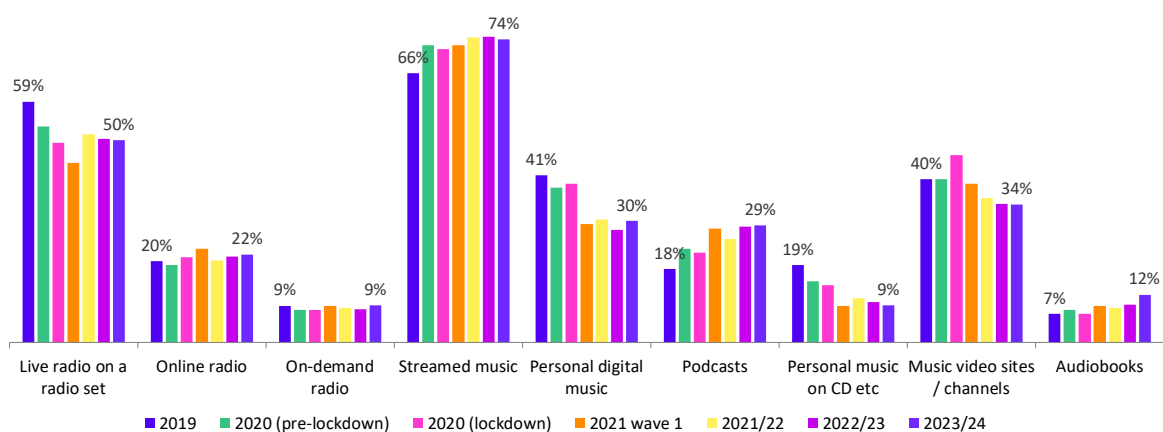
Figure 46: Weekly use of different audio types, adults 15+: 2019-2024⁶³



Source: IPA TouchPoints.

Online audio formats continue to be more popular among younger listeners. About three-quarters (74%) of 15-34-year-olds listen to streamed music each week, but half still listen to live radio on a radio set (either at home, in the car or at work/elsewhere) at least once a week. The next most popular form of audio among 15-34s is music via video sites or channels, with just over a third listening to them each week (34%). The reach of music on physical formats has almost halved for this age group over the past five years (down from 19% to 9%) while the use of audiobooks has nearly doubled, from 7% to 12%, perhaps linked to their increased availability on online platforms such as Spotify.

Figure 47: Weekly use of different audio types, 15-34s: 2019-2024



Source: IPA TouchPoints.

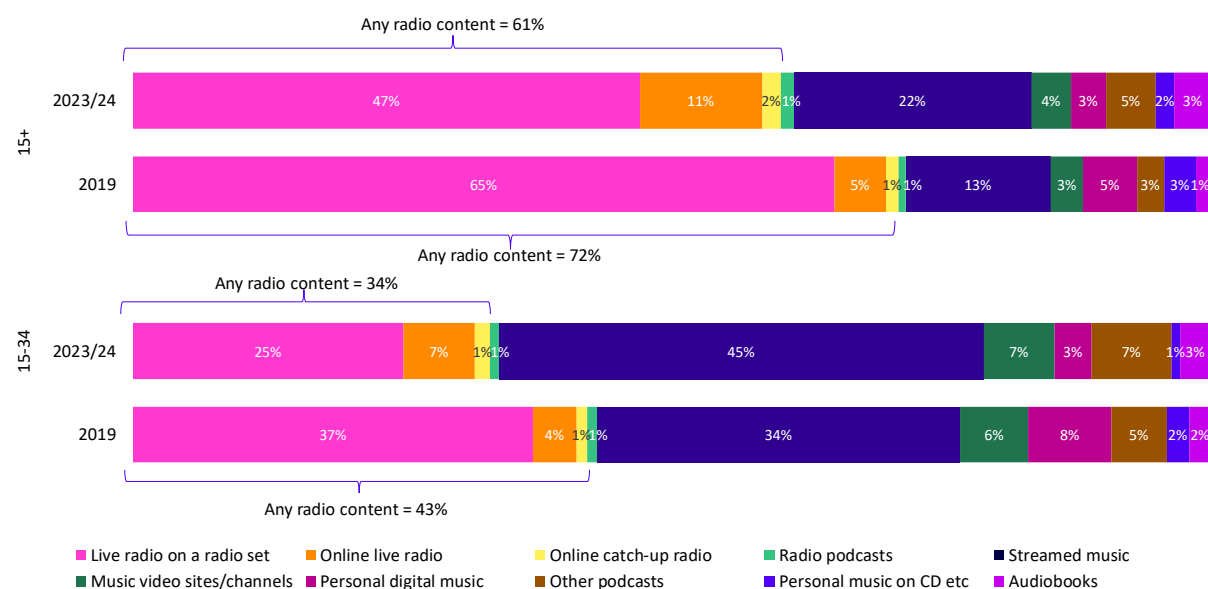
⁶³ The deduplicated figure from IPA TouchPoints for weekly reach of all live radio on any device and platform is slightly lower than the RAJAR equivalent. We include the granular splits in this chart (live radio on a radio set, online radio and on-demand radio) to show the changes compared to other audio types over time, but we defer to RAJAR for weekly reach of all live radio (88.6% of adults) as it is the industry standard for measuring radio listening.

Live radio on a radio set still accounts for the largest proportion of listening time, but online audio's share continues to increase

The majority (61%) of time spent listening to audio is listening to radio, either live radio (58%) or on-demand radio content (3%), while a fifth (22%) is listening to streamed music. Music streaming's proportion of listening time has increased by nine percentage points in the past five years (from 13% in 2019), while radio's share has decreased by 11 percentage points, from 72%. These changes reflect the continued shift towards online listening in general, with online live radio's share more than doubling from 5% to 11% over the same timeframe.

For 15-34s, just over a third of their weekly audio time is to radio (32% any live radio and 2% on-demand radio content) while 45% is to streamed music: almost the inverse of the average across the whole population. Other forms of audio, notably music video sites and podcasts, account for a greater share of this age group's time spent listening, compared to the average.

Figure 48: Share of time spent each week on any audio: adults 15+ vs 15-34s



Source: IPA TouchPoints.

Young people are more likely than the average listener to use Spotify, YouTube and Apple music services

Our report earlier this year, [Audio Listening in the UK](#), showed that Spotify is the most-used platform for online music and podcasts, BBC Sounds for online radio and Audible for audiobooks.

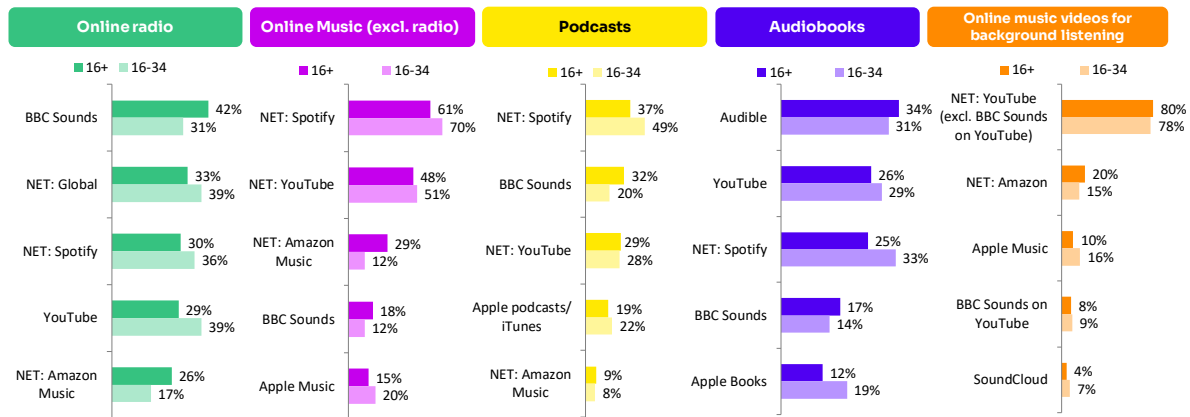
Unsurprisingly, YouTube⁶⁴ comes out top for music videos as background listening, with eight in ten adults saying they use it this way. Perhaps more surprisingly, nearly three in ten listeners say they also use it for podcasts (29%) and about a quarter use it for audiobooks (26%).

There are some notable differences by age group. Over-54s who listen to online radio and podcasts are more likely than younger listeners to use BBC Sounds for these activities (58% say they use BBC Sounds for online radio listening and 59% for podcasts). Under-35s, meanwhile, are more likely than

⁶⁴ Excluding BBC Sounds content on YouTube, such as BBC Radio 1's Live Lounge or Glastonbury sets, for example – asked about separately.

the average adult to use Global stations or YouTube for online radio (both 39%), and Spotify for listening to audiobooks (33%) and podcasts (49%).

Figure 49: Most-used services by weekly users of different types of online audio, by age: 2024



Source: Ofcom Audio Survey 2024. Questions: 9a/c/e/g/i. Thinking specifically about listening to [radio], which of these ways do you listen (using websites or apps)? Base: All respondents who listen to the radio online (unweighted 838 / weighted 843), online music (1,439 / 1,453), podcasts (999 / 987), audiobooks (565 / 557), music videos as background listening (1,372 / 1,369). *Includes Global Player and website or app for Heart, Capital, Classic FM, Smooth, Radio X radio stations.

In previous waves of our Audio Survey, respondents added Spotify and Amazon Music under the 'other' option for online radio, presumably due to their 'Radio' and 'Stations' functionalities, which is why we now list these as options for this audio type.

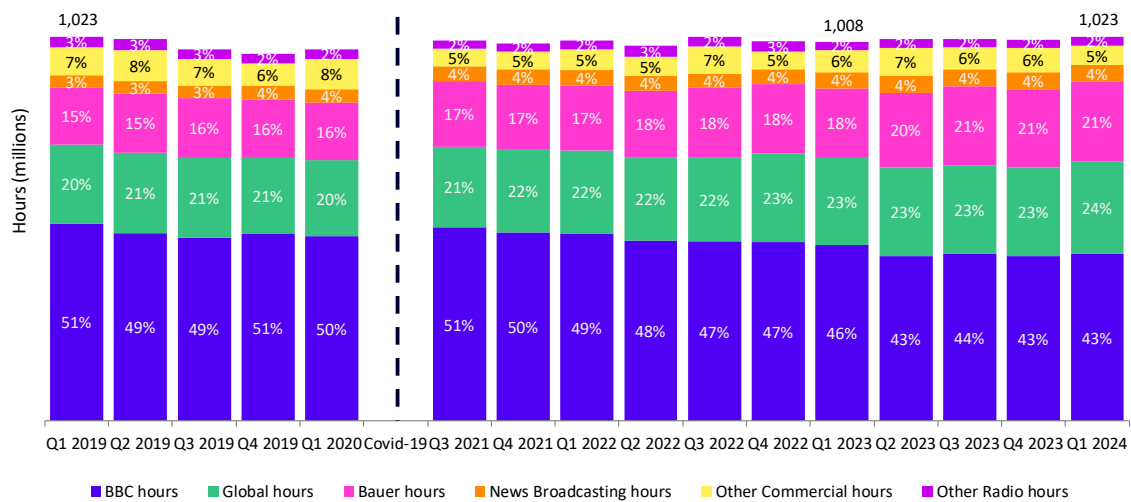
Live radio listening

Just under 50 million adults listen to radio each week

Q1 2024 saw the highest number of radio listeners in the past twenty years, with an average of 49.9 million adults (88.6%) listening each week, passing the previous high of 49.7 million in Q1 2022. In percentage terms reach has declined since Q1 2019, but only marginally (0.8 percentage points). Average listening time was 20.5 hours per week in Q1 2024, up by six minutes year on year; not only are more people tuning in, but they are listening for longer across the week.

Much of this growth can be attributed to commercial radio's continued success in attracting new audiences and increasing its average hours per listener. Just over seven in ten UK adults tune into commercial stations at least once a week (70.4%) compared to 55.6% for BBC stations. Despite having fractionally lower average time spent listening each week (14.0 hours compared to 14.2 hours for BBC stations), the difference in reach translates to almost an 11 percentage point difference in market share: 43.4% of all radio listening is to BBC stations, while 54.2% is to commercial radio.

Figure 50: Radio listening hours and share, by broadcaster group: 2019-2024



Source: RAJAR. Automatic weighting. Note: dotted line indicates suspension of fieldwork due to the Covid-19 lockdowns. This led to subsequent changes in methodology, so comparison with previous quarters should be made with caution.

Global has the largest share of the main commercial radio groups, accounting for just under a quarter (24.0%) of all radio hours. Bauer is not far behind (20.8%) and has been steadily increasing its share, most notably through its Greatest Hits Radio brand. The network’s figures were boosted by Ken Bruce’s move there from BBC Radio 2 in early 2023, and in the past year Bauer has built on this success by rebranding a string of local stations under the Greatest Hits banner. Wave 105 and Pirate FM in Cornwall are the latest stations to have been brought into the Greatest Hits brand, rebranded in April this year as Greatest Hits Radio South Coast and Greatest Hits Radio Cornwall respectively.

Of the most popular UK-wide stations, four are BBC, four are Global and two are Bauer stations. BBC Radio 2 remains the most listened-to UK-wide radio station, accounting for 13.7% of live radio listening in Q1 2024, followed by BBC Radio 4 at 11.1%. Greatest Hits Radio has now edged above Heart into third place, with a share of 6.3% compared to Heart’s 5.9%.

Figure 51: Top ten UK-wide stations/networks, ranked by share of listening hours: Q1 2024⁶⁵

Rank	National station/ network	Share (%)	Average hours per listener	Owner
1	BBC Radio 2	13.7	10.6	BBC
2	BBC Radio 4	11.1	12.3	BBC
3	Greatest Hits Radio	6.3	8.3	Bauer
4	Heart	5.9	6.4	Global
5	BBC Radio 1	4.5	6.3	BBC
6	Smooth Radio	3.7	6.5	Global
7	Classic FM	3.6	8.4	Global
8	Capital	2.9	4.7	Global
=8	BBC Radio 5 Live	2.9	6.0	BBC
10	Hits Radio	2.8	6.4	Bauer

Source: RAJAR Q1 2024. Automatic weighting.

BBC Radio 2 continues to be the most popular station, but local commercial radio has regained ground in the past year

Narrowing our focus to a local level shows some differences in radio listening across the different parts of the UK. Figure 52 shows the top three stations, based on share of listening hours, in each of the BBC local areas.⁶⁶ BBC Radio 2 was again the number one station in most markets, and where it wasn't, it was usually number two. However, comparing this table to last year's, we can see the impact of Bauer's strategy of acquiring and rebranding local stations under the Greatest Hits Radio brand: the networked station appears in 13 of the 43 areas listed below, edging BBC Radio 2 off the top spot in the Lincolnshire, Merseyside, Sheffield and Solent areas.

BBC nations' / local stations appear in the top three in three areas: Derby, Jersey and Northern Ireland, and in the latter, BBC Radio Ulster ranks first, ahead of local commercial stations. This is a change from last year, when BBC nations' / local stations featured in the top three positions in 11 areas and held the number-one spots in both Northern Ireland and Cornwall.

⁶⁵ The table shows stations that are available across the UK. These can be stations that either have the same output regardless of where in the UK they are listened to (e.g. BBC Radio 2, or Heart UK on national DAB), or they can be local radio services that have some tailored local content (notably local news) alongside output that is mostly 'simulcast' or 'networked' across a number of local stations which share the same branding.

⁶⁶ We have used BBC nations'/local radio total survey areas (TSAs) for this analysis as they are non-overlapping areas. A TSA is the defined area RAJAR uses to measure listening to ensure robust sample sizes in those areas. Market share for a particular station can vary when measured within different TSAs.

Figure 52: Top three stations in each BBC nations'/local radio area, by share of listening: Q1 2024

Total survey area (TSA)	Station ranked 1 st	Station ranked 2 nd	Station ranked 3 rd
UK	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Greatest Hits Radio
BBC Coventry & Warwickshire	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 1
BBC Essex	BBC Radio 2	Heart	BBC Radio 4
BBC Hereford & Worcester	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 1
BBC Radio Berkshire	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Heart
BBC Radio Bristol	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Heart
BBC Radio Cambridgeshire	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Heart
BBC Radio Cornwall	BBC Radio 4	Hits Radio Cornwall	BBC Radio 2
BBC Radio Cumbria	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Greatest Hits Radio
BBC Radio Derby	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio Derby	BBC Radio 1
BBC Radio Devon	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Heart
BBC Radio Gloucestershire	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 1
BBC Radio Guernsey	Island FM 104.7	BBC Radio 1	BBC Radio 2
BBC Radio Humberside	BBC Radio 2	Greatest Hits Radio	Hits Radio
BBC Radio Jersey	Channel 103 FM	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio Jersey
BBC Radio Kent	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Heart
BBC Radio Lancashire	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Hits Radio
BBC Radio Leeds	BBC Radio 2	Greatest Hits Radio	BBC Radio 4
BBC Radio Leicester	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Smooth Radio
BBC Radio Lincolnshire	Greatest Hits Radio	BBC Radio 2	Hits Radio
BBC Radio London	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	LBC (UK)
BBC Radio Manchester	BBC Radio 2	Smooth Radio	BBC Radio 4
BBC Radio Merseyside	Greatest Hits Radio	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4
BBC Radio Newcastle	BBC Radio 2	Hits Radio	Smooth Radio
BBC Radio Norfolk	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Greatest Hits Radio
BBC Radio Northampton	BBC Radio 2	Heart	BBC Radio 4
BBC Radio Nottingham	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Smooth Radio
BBC Radio Oxford	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Heart
BBC Radio Scotland	BBC Radio 2	Clyde 1	Greatest Hits Radio
BBC Radio Sheffield	Greatest Hits Radio	BBC Radio 2	Hits Radio
BBC Radio Shropshire	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Greatest Hits Radio
BBC Radio Solent	Greatest Hits Radio	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4
BBC Somerset	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Heart
BBC Radio Stoke	BBC Radio 2	Hits Radio	BBC Radio 4
BBC Radio Suffolk	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Heart
BBC Surrey	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Heart
BBC Sussex	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Heart
BBC Radio Tees	BBC Radio 2	Smooth Radio	BBC Radio 4
BBC Three Counties Radio	BBC Radio 2	Heart	BBC Radio 4
BBC Radio Ulster	BBC Radio Ulster	Cool FM	Downtown Radio
BBC Radio Wales	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Heart
BBC Radio Wiltshire & Swindon	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 2	Greatest Hits Radio
BBC WM 95.6	BBC Radio 2	Heart	Smooth Radio
BBC Radio York	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	Greatest Hits Radio

Key	BBC Radio 2	BBC Radio 4	BBC Radio 1	BBC nations'/local	Global	Bauer	Tindle
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Source: RAJAR Q1 2024, based on market share in the BBC nations'/local total survey areas. BBC Radio Guernsey, Jersey and Solent TSAs use 12-month weighting, all other station TSAs six-month weighting. *Hits Radio Cornwall was surveyed as Pirate FM.

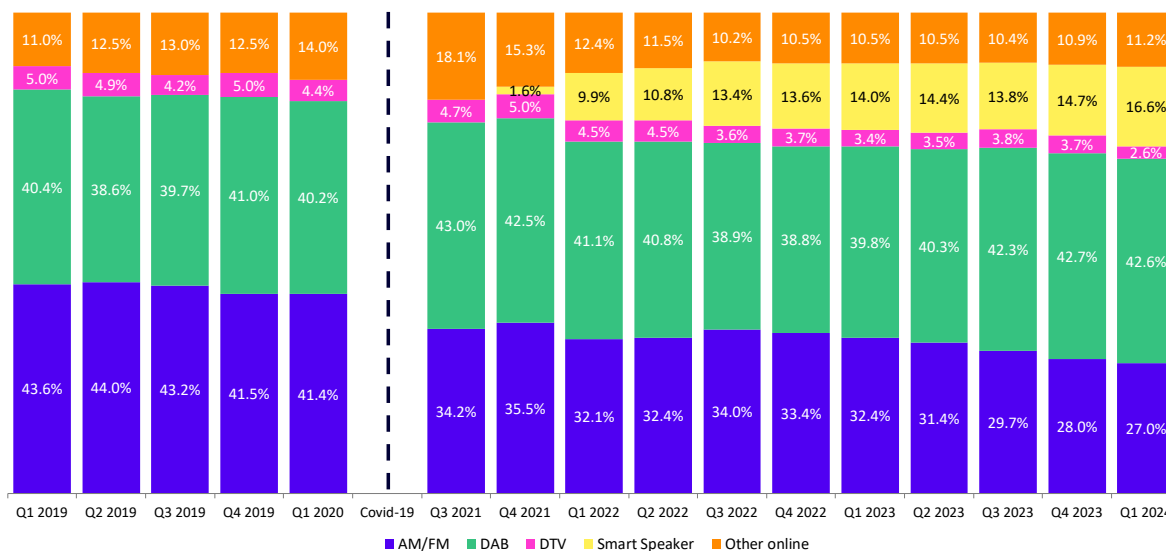
Online now accounts for more listening than analogue

Online listening continues to grow steadily, and in the first quarter of this year it overtook AM/FM for the first time, accounting for 28% of all live radio hours. The majority of this listening is through smart speakers (16.6% of all live radio hours), with the remainder coming from other online sources including browsers and radio apps (11.2%). This gradual shift to online listening comes as take-up of connected devices increases, and broadcasters invest to offer online, signed-in listeners more stations and exclusive content via proprietary apps.

This growth in online comes mainly at the expense of analogue listening, which has declined by five percentage points in the past year alone. Even listening via digital televisions (DTV), which has historically stayed between 4% and 5%, has almost halved in the past couple of years to just 2.6% of hours, affected most recently by Bauer's decision to remove its stations from satellite, cable and Freeview TV services.

DAB remains the most popular platform for radio listening, accounting for over four in ten radio hours (42.6%) and up by 2.8 percentage points in the past year. According to Ofcom's Technology Tracker 2024, just under three in ten households had a DAB radio set in the home (27%) and 46% had one in the car, taking overall household ownership to 57%. With DAB penetration still relatively high and broadcasters increasingly using DAB+ to provide listeners with a greater choice of stations, it will be interesting to see whether DAB's share continues to hold, or if online listening will start to encroach on DAB hours.

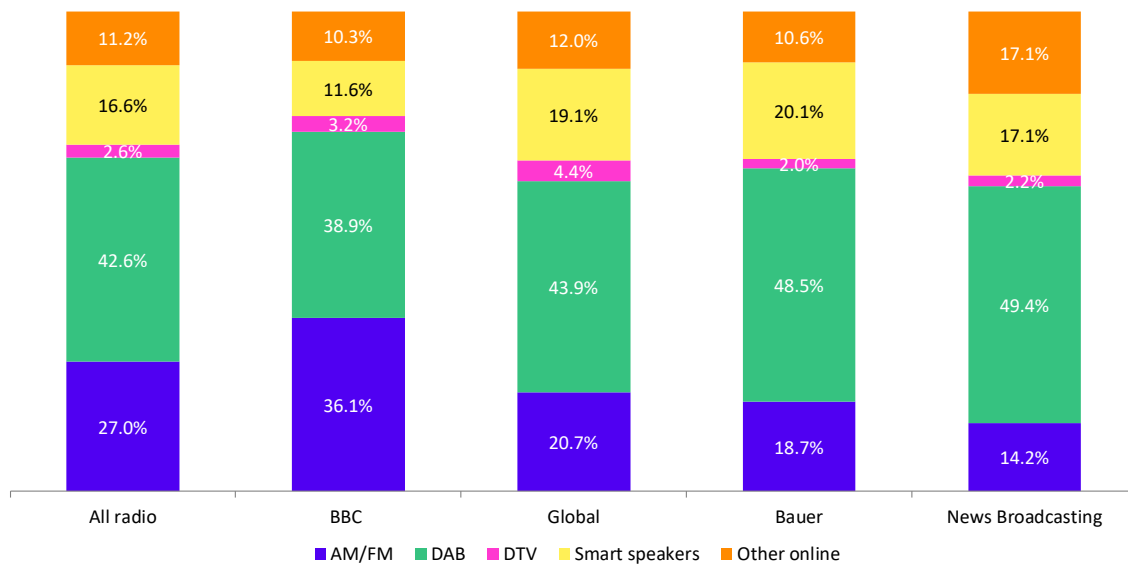
Figure 53: Share of listening, by platform: 2019-2024



Source: RAJAR. Dotted line indicates suspension of fieldwork due to the Covid-19 lockdowns. This led to subsequent changes in methodology, so comparison with previous quarters should be made with caution.

Splitting this listening out by the main broadcaster groups, we can see how listening differs between them, driven partly by the availability of the various portfolios on different platforms, but also by the age of the audience. Online listening accounts for just over a fifth (21.9%) of the BBC's total radio listening, while commercial broadcasters Global, Bauer and News Broadcasting (including talkSPORT, Times Radio and Virgin Radio) all have a higher proportion of their listening via online platforms.

Figure 54: Share of listening, by platform, of each main broadcaster group: Q1 2024



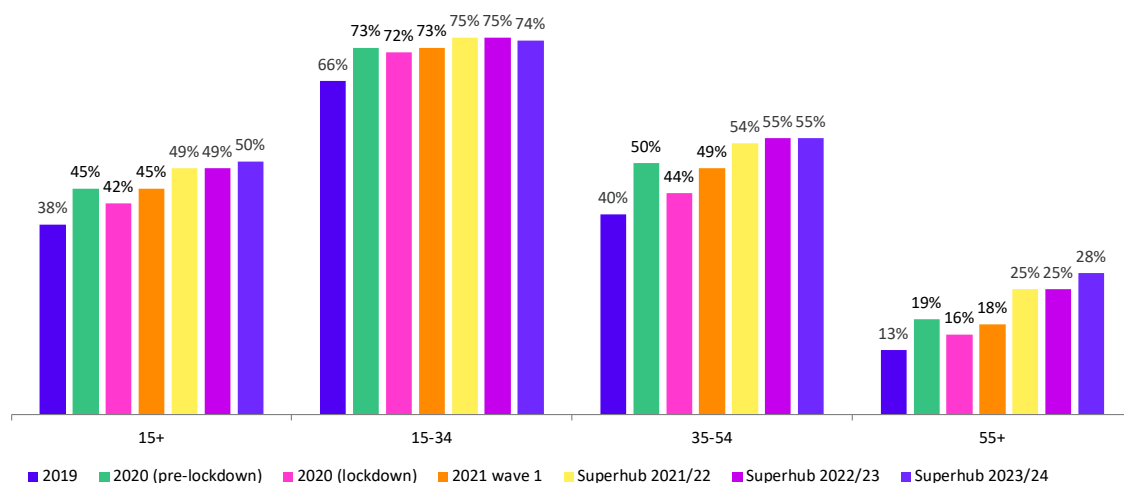
Source: RAJAR.

Music streaming

The reach of music streaming services hits the halfway point, although its rate of growth has slowed

Music streaming services now reach half of all adults each week, although growth is increasingly marginal. Reach among younger adults continues to be much higher than the average, with three-quarters of 15-34-year-olds using music streaming services each week (74%) in 2023/24 – this has been relatively stable since the uplift in 2020 driven by the first Covid-19 lockdown. As highlighted in last year’s [Media Nations](#) report, there is still growth in the 55+ age group, where the reach of music streaming services has more than doubled in the past five years (13% to 28%) and has increased by three percentage points in the past year alone. This can be attributed in part to population shifts, with people who are already using these services entering this age group.

Figure 55: Weekly reach of streamed music, by age: 2019-2024

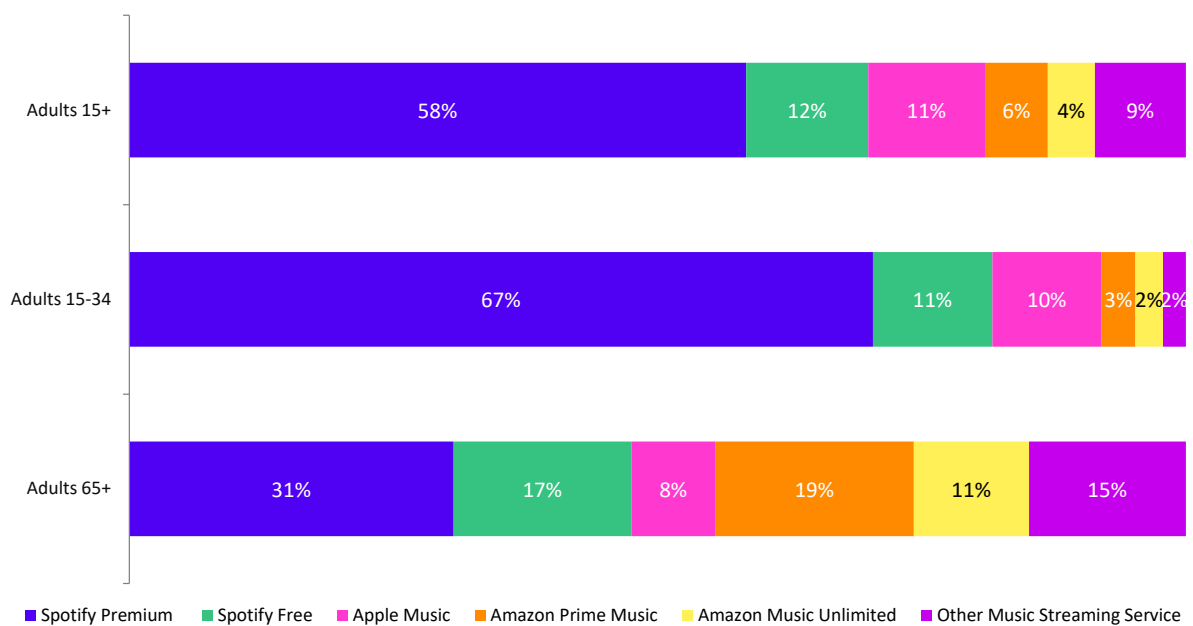


Source: IPA TouchPoints.

Spotify Premium is favoured by young people; older listeners are more likely to use a range of different services

By far, Spotify Premium accounts for the most time spent listening to music streaming services, with 58% of overall share. This proportion dwarfs the free version of this service (12%) followed closely by Apple Music (11%). For 15-34s, the use of Spotify Premium increases further still, accounting for 67% of time spent. Among those aged 65+ who listen to music streaming services, Spotify Premium accounts for the single largest share (31%), but it represents less than half the amount of time spent, which is spread more widely across other services, in particular Amazon Prime Music.

Figure 56: Share of time spent streaming music, by provider and age: 2023-2024



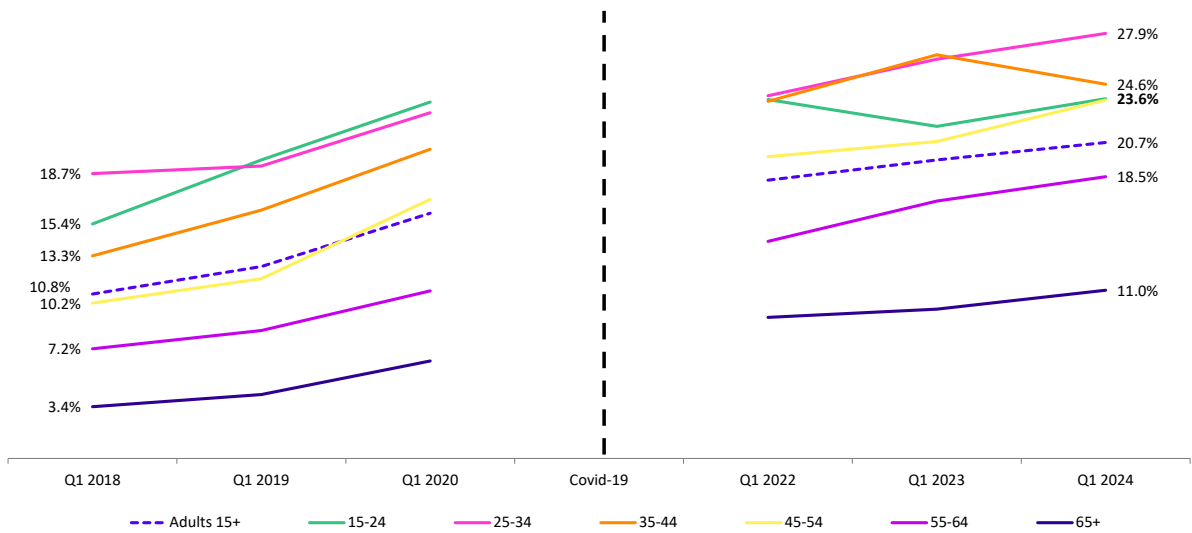
Source: IPA TouchPoints Superhub 2023/24.

Podcasts

The reach of podcasts continues to inch upwards, with just over a fifth of adults listening to at least one each week

The past few years have seen incremental growth in the reach of podcasts, with 11.7 million (20.7%) UK adults aged 15+ now listening to at least one podcast per week. After a dip in the past couple of years, it seems that 15-24-year-olds are getting back into podcasts, while 35-44s are turning away. Podcasts are still most popular among adults aged 25-34, with weekly reach increasing to 27.9% in the last year. The over-54s remain less likely than average to listen to podcasts, but in contrast to the fluctuation in younger age groups, reach has been steadily increasing among over-54s in the past five years. As of Q1 2024, more than one in ten adults aged 65 and over listened to podcasts each week (11.0%). As we begin to see more crossover with TV (discussed above in the market developments section) we may well see a boost to these figures in the coming year.

Figure 57: Weekly reach of podcasts, by age: 2018-2024

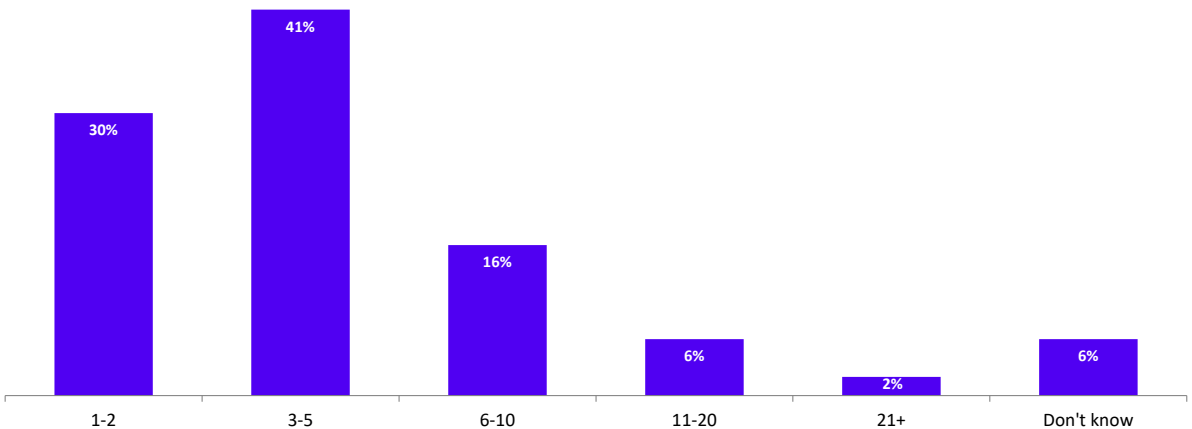


Source: RAJAR. Vertical dotted line indicates suspension of fieldwork due to the Covid-19 lockdowns. This led to subsequent changes in methodology, so comparison with previous quarters should be made with caution.

Most podcast listeners listen to five or fewer podcasts each week

Among our podcast listeners, the majority (71%) say they listen to between one and five podcasts each week, while nearly a quarter (24%) say they listen to six or more. One in ten regular podcast listeners said they subscribed to 11 or more podcasts (10%), while 12% said they didn't subscribe to any, and 15% weren't sure.

Figure 58: Number of individual podcasts listened to weekly: 2024



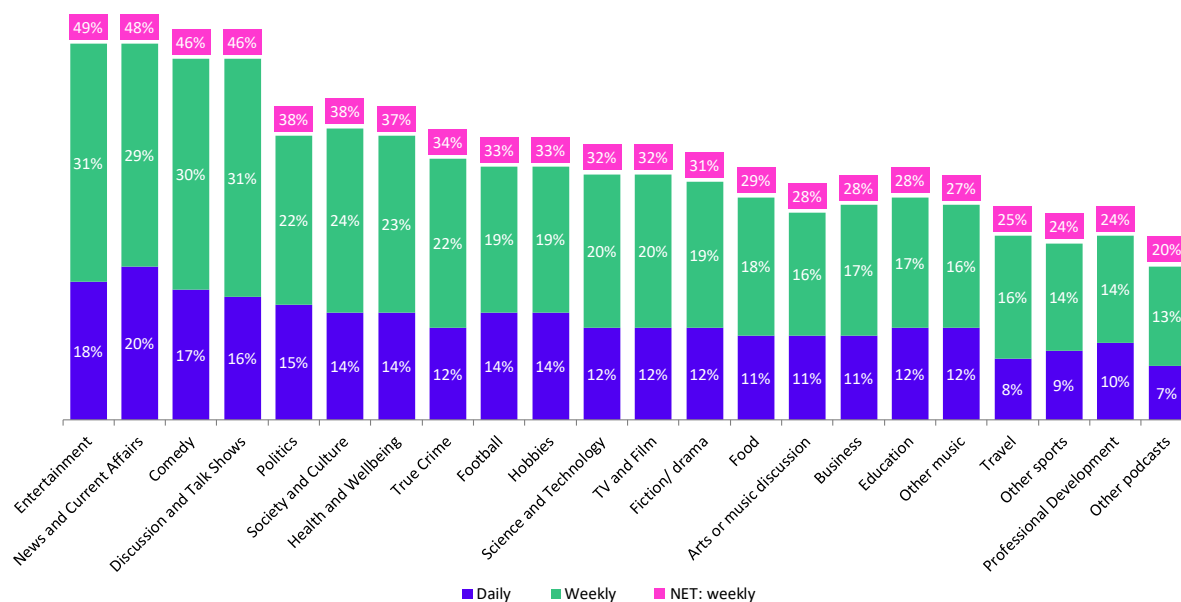
Source: Ofcom Podcast Survey 2024. Question 9. On average, how many individual podcasts do you listen to in a week? Base: all respondents who listen to podcasts at least once a month (1,006).

A fifth of podcast listeners say they listen to news and current affairs podcasts daily

Looking at what kinds of podcasts people are listening to, the most popular genres are entertainment, news and current affairs, comedy, and discussion and talk shows. Of those who listen

to podcasts at least once a month, a fifth say they listen to news and current affairs podcasts daily – the highest daily percentage of any genre.

Figure 59: Frequency of listening, by podcast genre: 2024



Source: Ofcom Podcast Survey 2024. Question 13. How frequently, if at all, do you listen to these different types of podcasts? Base: all respondents who listen to podcasts at least once a month (1,006).

There are some notable differences by age group, with over-54s more likely than the average listener to listen to news and current affairs podcasts each week.⁶⁷ People who listen to podcasts via BBC Sounds, Amazon, YouTube, TuneIn and dedicated podcast sites were also more likely than average to listen to news and current affairs podcasts.

Figure 60: Top ten genres of podcast listened to at least weekly, by selected age group: 2024

	All adults 18+		18-34s		55+	
1	Entertainment	49%	Entertainment	58%	News and current affairs	55%
2	News and current affairs	48%	Comedy	54%	Politics	42%
3	Comedy	46%	Discussion and talk shows	54%	Discussion and talk shows	34%
4	Discussion and talk shows	46%	News and current affairs	47%	Health and wellbeing	27%
5	Politics	38%	Society and culture	45%	Entertainment	26%
6	Society and culture	38%	Health and wellbeing	42%	Society and culture	26%
7	Health and wellbeing	37%	Hobbies	41%	Comedy	25%
8	True crime	34%	TV and film	41%	Fiction/ drama	25%
9	Football	33%	Football	40%	Science and technology	21%
10	Hobbies	33%	True crime	39%	True crime	18%

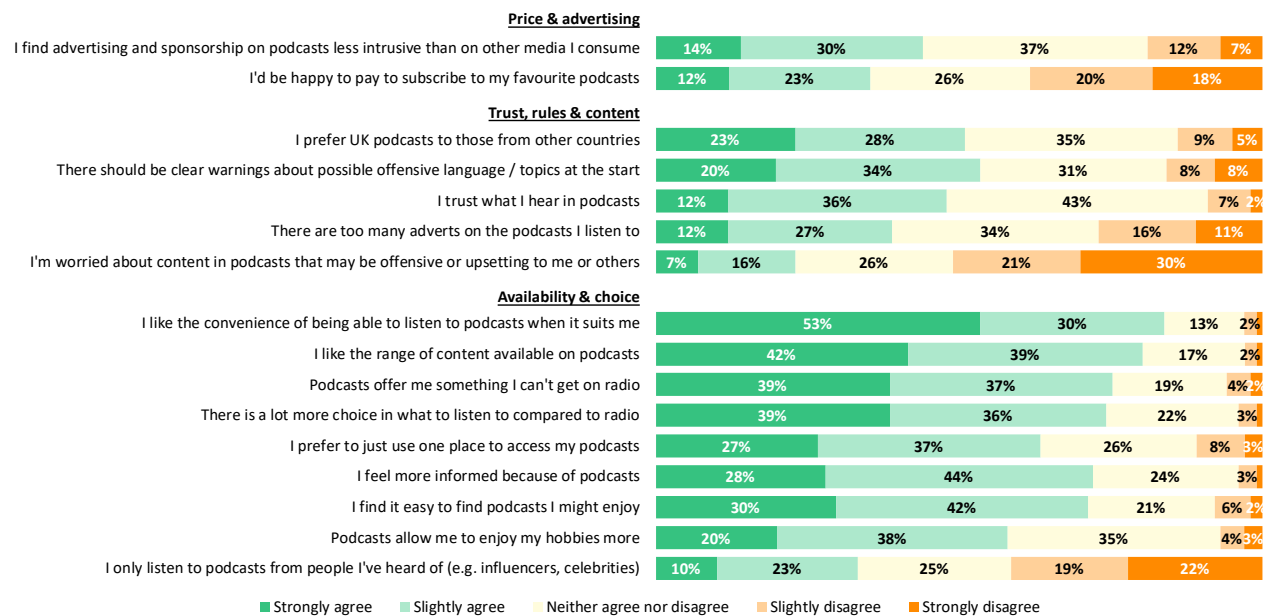
⁶⁷ Ofcom Podcast Survey 2024. Base: all respondents who listen to podcasts at least once a month (1,006).

Source: Ofcom Podcast Survey 2024. Question 13. How frequently, if at all, do you listen to these different types of podcasts? Base: all respondents who listen to podcasts at least once a month (1,006).

People like the convenience and choice that podcasts offer, which sets them apart from radio

Convenience is the key advantage in podcast listening: 83% of regular podcast listeners said they like the convenience of being able to listen to podcasts whenever it suits them. This was the most agreed-with statement in our survey, but other statements divided listeners. For example, 35% agreed that they would be happy to pay to subscribe to their favourite podcast, while 38% said they would not. More than a third of listeners said they found advertising and sponsorship on podcasts less intrusive than on other media (34%), while just under a fifth (19%) disagreed. The most disagreed-with statement, however, concerned potentially offensive material; more than half of listeners (51%) said they were not worried about content in podcasts that might be offensive or upsetting to themselves or others.

Figure 61: Attitudes to podcasts: 2024



Source: Ofcom Podcast Survey 2024. Question 23. How strongly would you say you agree or disagree with the following? Base: all respondents who listen to podcasts at least once a month (1,006).

More information and data from our latest research on audio and podcast listening is included in our [Audio report](#), published earlier this year.

Smart speakers and voice assistants

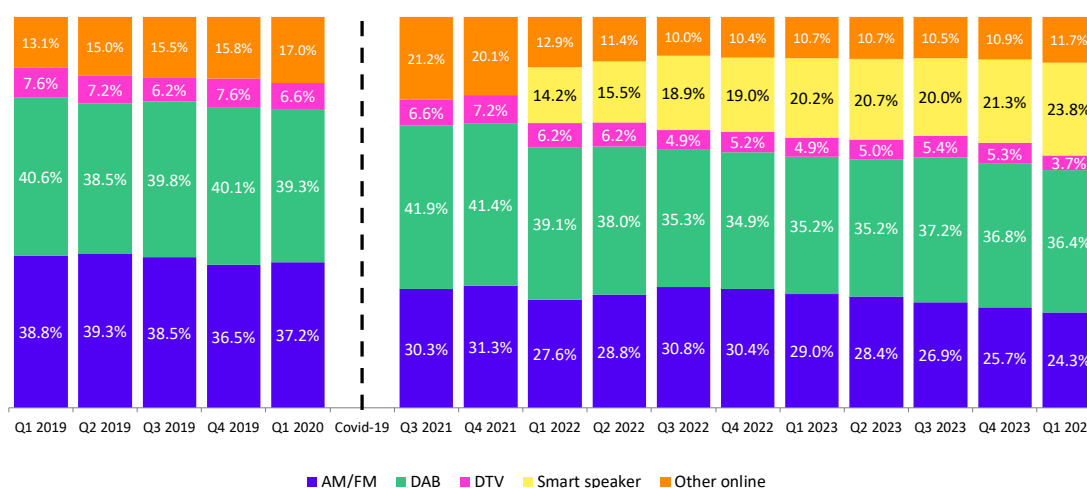
This section focuses on the take-up of voice assistants and the use of smart speakers, and their importance as a way of accessing radio services. Voice assistants such as Alexa and Google Assistant are voice-controlled platforms through which people can access audio content, search for information and control devices such as lights and heating in the home. Voice assistants can be accessed through a range of devices, including smartphones, tablets, smart TVs and in cars, as well as smart speakers – dedicated audio hardware (such as the Amazon Echo or Google Nest) which people can interact with by using their voice. Most smart speakers are only compatible with a single voice assistant platform, although some brands (such as SONOS) allow users to choose which voice assistant they would like to use with their smart speaker device.

41% of households have a smart speaker, and they are most commonly used for music streaming and listening to live radio

Four in ten households (41%) had a smart speaker in Q1 2024, with 46% of these having two or more. The most common device was the Amazon Echo; eight in ten homes with smart speakers had one of these (80%), followed by the Google Home / Google Nest, at 15%.⁶⁸

The most usual place to have a smart speaker is the living room/lounge, with over half of all households with smart speakers having one located here (57%), followed by the kitchen (49%) and bedroom (37%). Most owners reported using their smart speaker for music streaming (63%) and listening to the radio (57%); the next most common activities were getting weather reports (40%), using as an alarm clock/reminder or for making shopping lists (39%), and searching for information online or asking general questions (38%). Just under a quarter said they used their smart speaker to get news reports (24%) and a fifth (21%) used it to control smart home devices such as smart TVs or lights. According to the latest RAJAR data, 23.8% of live radio listening at home is on smart speakers – up by 3.6 percentage points year on year.

Figure 62: Share of radio listening at home, by platform: 2019-2024



Source: RAJAR. Dotted line indicates suspension of fieldwork during the Covid-19 lockdowns and change in methodology. Comparison with previous quarters should be made with caution.

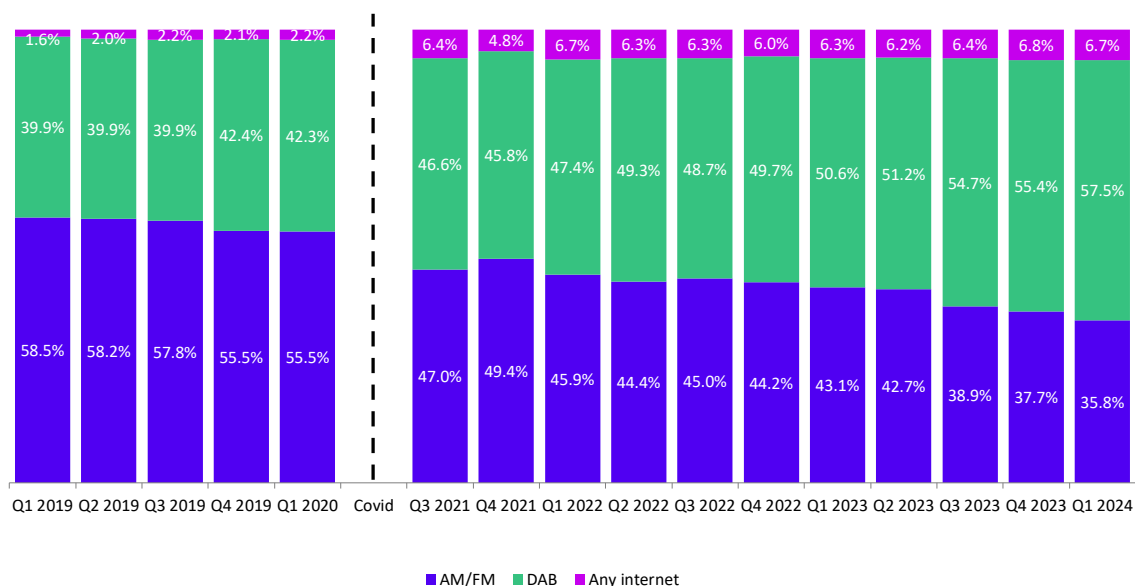
⁶⁸ Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024.

In-car listening

DAB radio listening in cars continues to grow

DAB accounts for the majority of in-car live radio listening (57.5%), up by nearly seven percentage points in the past year, mostly coming at the expense of analogue listening. Listening to the radio online in cars accounts for 6.7% and has held relatively steady in the past three years.⁶⁹

Figure 63: Share of in-car radio listening, by platform: 2019-2024



Source: RAJAR. Dotted line indicates suspension of fieldwork and change in methodology. Comparison with previous quarters should be made with caution. Includes vans and lorries.

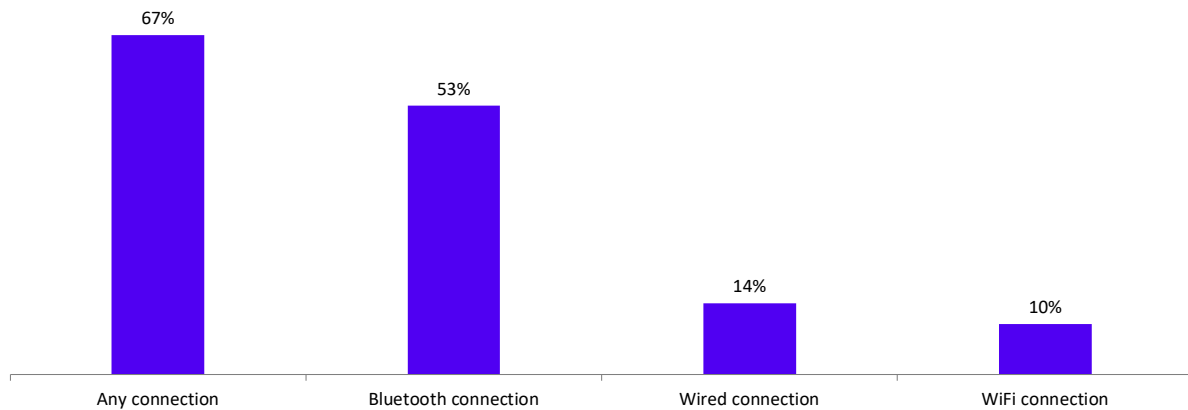
While the radio set is the most-used audio device in cars, about two-thirds of vehicle users connect their smartphones

In order to understand audio listening in vehicles in more detail, we commissioned a survey of regular vehicle users: those who travel weekly either as a driver or as a passenger⁷⁰. About two-thirds of regular vehicle users with smartphones have ever connected their device to their car (67%), with Bluetooth the most typical way to connect (53%). Those who do connect their phones are more likely to be younger: 80% of 25-34s compared to 49% of over-64s.

⁶⁹ RAJAR.

⁷⁰ Ofcom In-car Audio Survey 2024.

Figure 64: Ways in which weekly vehicle users connect their smartphones while travelling



Source: Ofcom In-car Audio Survey 2024. Question 4b. When travelling [in vehicle], how do you connect your smartphone to the [vehicle]? Base: All UK adults (16+) who travel as passenger or driver in car, van or lorry at least once a week, and use a smartphone. Base: 1,580.

As well as age, other characteristics of vehicle users influence the likelihood that they will connect their device. They are more likely to be in the ABC1 socio-economic group than the C2DE group (72% vs 60%), more likely to have children in their household (76% vs 63% with no children in the household) and more likely to have an iOS than an Android phone (76% vs 61%). Those living in London are the most likely (across the UK) to use WiFi to connect their phones to vehicles.

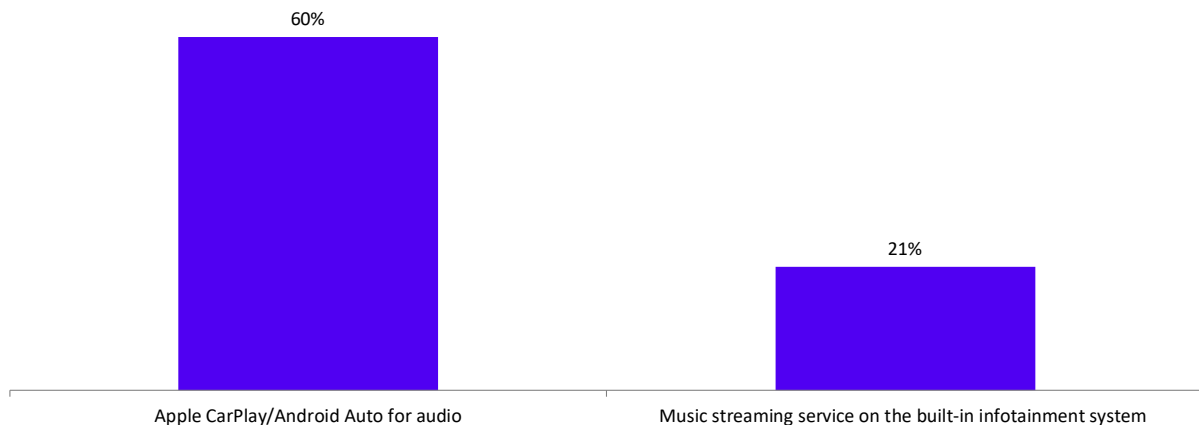
Although DAB radio is the most common type of audio listened to in-car, mirroring systems such as Apple CarPlay are used by a significant proportion of vehicle users

We know from our annual Technology Tracker that the most common audio activity in cars is listening to radio through a radio set, with 49% of people who travel in cars listening through DAB and 47% through AM/FM.⁷¹ The tracker also indicates that listening to music through a smartphone in-car has increased, but doesn't indicate how people are actually doing this.

In our recent in-car audio survey we asked regular vehicle users about the features they used while travelling. After using an FM/DAB radio, the most common way to listen to audio was to use a mirroring system such as Apple CarPlay or Android Auto that allows people to use their smartphones through the vehicle's infotainment screen. Again, this is more likely among younger people, especially those aged 25-34, compared to older vehicle users (71% vs 52% of those aged 65+). Mirroring systems are more likely to be used than streaming direct from the infotainment screen (21%).

⁷¹ Ofcom Technology Tracker 2024.

Figure 65: Ways of listening to audio in-car, apart from the radio set: 2024



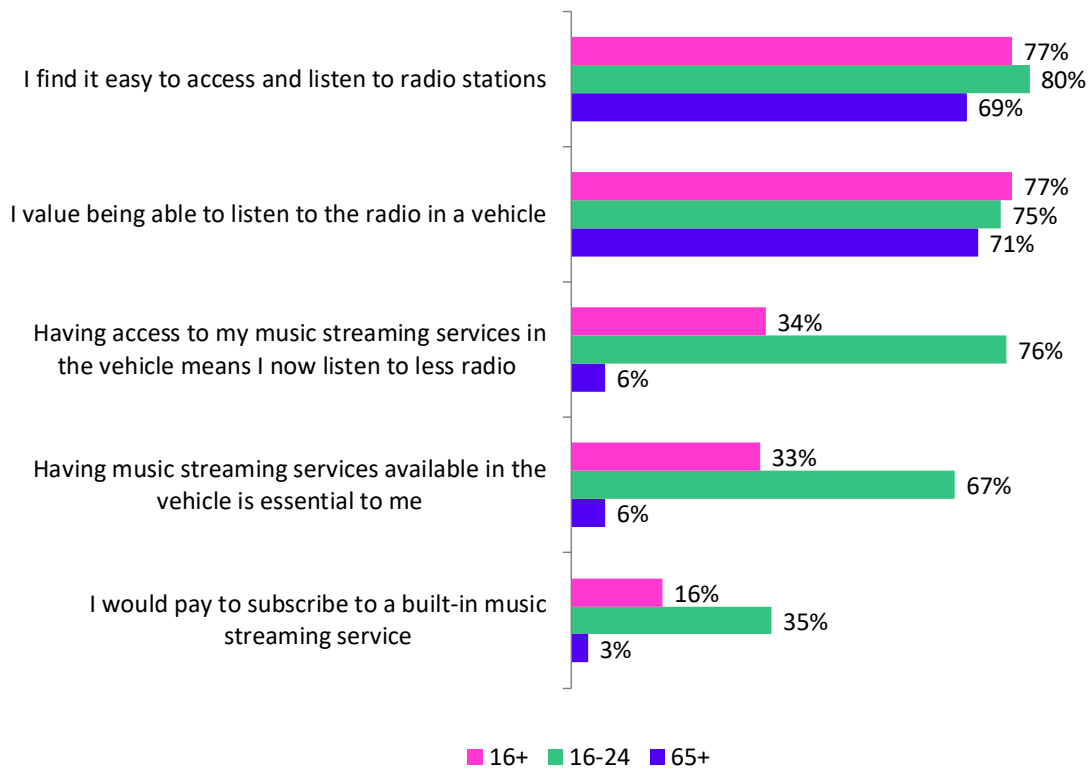
Source: Ofcom In-car Audio Survey 2024. Question 8. How often, if at all, are the following features used by you/someone else while you are travelling [in vehicle]? Base: All UK adults (16+) who travel as passenger or driver in car, van or lorry at least once a week, and use a smartphone. Base: 1,540.

Almost two-fifths of those who connect their smartphones in-vehicle use voice commands

Among the regular vehicle users who connect their phones, 39% have used voice commands, and the activity that they most often control is making / receiving calls on their phone while in the car (76%), followed by navigation (47%), selecting music through a streaming service (43%), and composing text messages (41%). Digging deeper, Apple Siri is the most-used voice assistant, used by 32% of any who use voice commands for in-vehicle audio (66% of iOS users), followed by Google Assist, used by 28% of vehicle users controlling audio in this way (43% of Android phone users).

We asked users about their attitudes to audio while travelling in vehicles. It's clear that radio plays an important role: 77% of regular vehicle users say they value being able to listen to the radio in vehicles, with little variance by age. However, it's also clear that having access to streaming services in vehicles is particularly important to younger people; about three-quarters say they listen to less radio because they have access to these other services (76%) and about two-thirds say these services are essential when travelling in vehicles (67%).

Figure 66: Attitudes to in-vehicle audio, by selected age groups: 2024



Source: Ofcom In-car Audio Survey 2024. Question 13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about listening to audio when you are travelling in a vehicle, in general? Base: All UK adults (16+) that travel as passenger or driver in car, van or lorry at least once a week. Base: 1,540.