

British radio listening at record levels

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Recent film *The Kings Speech* featured the radio broadcasting difficulties faced by King George VI, picture with Queen Elizabeth in London in 1938. Listening to good old "steam" radio was more popular than ever in Britain in the first quarter of the year, according to the latest figures from industry research group RAJAR.

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Despite British people's supposed fascination with new media, 91.6% of the population tuned in to radio every week during the period, a new all-time high, the organisation said.

Brits listened to a total of more than 1.058 billion hours of radio a week ,

another new peak, Rajar (Radio Joint Audience Research Ltd) said.

"Radio listening reached its highest level ever recorded in the first quarter as 47.3 million adults or 91.6% of people of 15 or above tuned in to their favourite radio stations each week. This up by three quarters of a million from a year ago and is the highest since audience measurement began in 1982," a spokeswoman said.

In fact, new digital communications methods are helping radio stations increase their listener bases.

More people are accessing their favourite channels via [digital radio](#) sets, digital television receivers or the internet, and there has been a 10% jump in people listening via their mobile phones, Rajar said.

The BBC said Rajar's figures show that more than 35 million people listened every week to the state broadcaster's channels, the biggest total since new research methodology was introduced in 1999.

The total was boosted by record performances from Radio 1 and Radio 4, and digital-only networks Radio 6 Music, Radio 1Xtra and Radio 7 (now Radio 4 Extra).

Tim Davie, Director BBC Audio & Music, said: "It is quite brilliant to see radio reaching a record number of listeners in the digital age. These results speak to the unique quality of radio in the UK and reflect our work as an industry to keep innovating to attract new listeners. From a BBC perspective, the record results reflect the unique strength of our programme makers and the growing value of distinctive radio stations."

BBC Radio 1 had a record 11.83 million listeners per week in the quarter, while Radio 4 had its biggest audience under current methodology, some 10.83 million people weekly, boosted by a record

performance from the Today news programme.

Even highbrow classical musical station [Radio 3](#) increased its listener base, with 2.26 million people hearing it each week, its highest listening figures for seven years, the BBC said.

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