

# Sweden extends TV license fee to computers and phones

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The agency last week began asking people able to access public

broadcasting online to pay the license that funds public service broadcasting, Radiotjänst chief executive Carl-Gustav Johansson said.

A significant number of conscientious [Swedes](#) had already begun paying the 2,076 kronor (248 euros or \$322) annual cost for owning a TV set even though they only had a [smartphone](#) or a computer, after the issue was recently raised in the media, he added.

"It has resulted in what one might call spontaneous registrations," he said.

Last year, commercial broadcaster TV4 began streaming its channels live on the Internet as part of a subscription-based service. [Public broadcaster](#) SVT followed suit this year, but without charging for its content.

In the first nine weeks of the year 12,600 new license payers registered with Radiotjänst compared with just 2,200 in the same period a year ago.

Johansson said he believed half the growth came from people accessing TV programmes through digital devices.

The new policy met with scorn on micro-blogging site [Twitter](#), but Johansson said most of the [negative comments](#) were based on a misunderstanding.

"They seem to think this is a new fee that's been added for just smartphones and computers, but that's not the case," he said.

Neighbouring Finland abolished its license fee this year and replaced it with a progressive tax, meaning people on low incomes pay less.

In 2006, Sweden's newly-appointed culture minister Cecilia Stegoe Chilo had to resign after just one week following revelations that she had failed to pay her TV [license](#) for 16 years.

The Swedish licensing body collects around 7.3 billion kronor in fees each year and is owned by Swedish Television (SVT), Swedish Radio (Sveriges Radio) and Swedish educational broadcasting (Utbildningsradion, UR).

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