

RAJAR's Audio Survey 'MIDAS' Summer 2026

The MIDAS Survey is designed to provide context and insight into how, when and where audio content is being consumed in this current liberated environment.

With the increasing penetration of connected devices such as smart speakers, smartphones and many more, MIDAS shows how listeners are embracing the multi-platform and multi-device offering, as well as how audio-on-demand is contributing to listening behaviour.

It also reveals the activities they are doing whilst listening, where they are listening, and who they are listening with, and how the audio makes them feel.



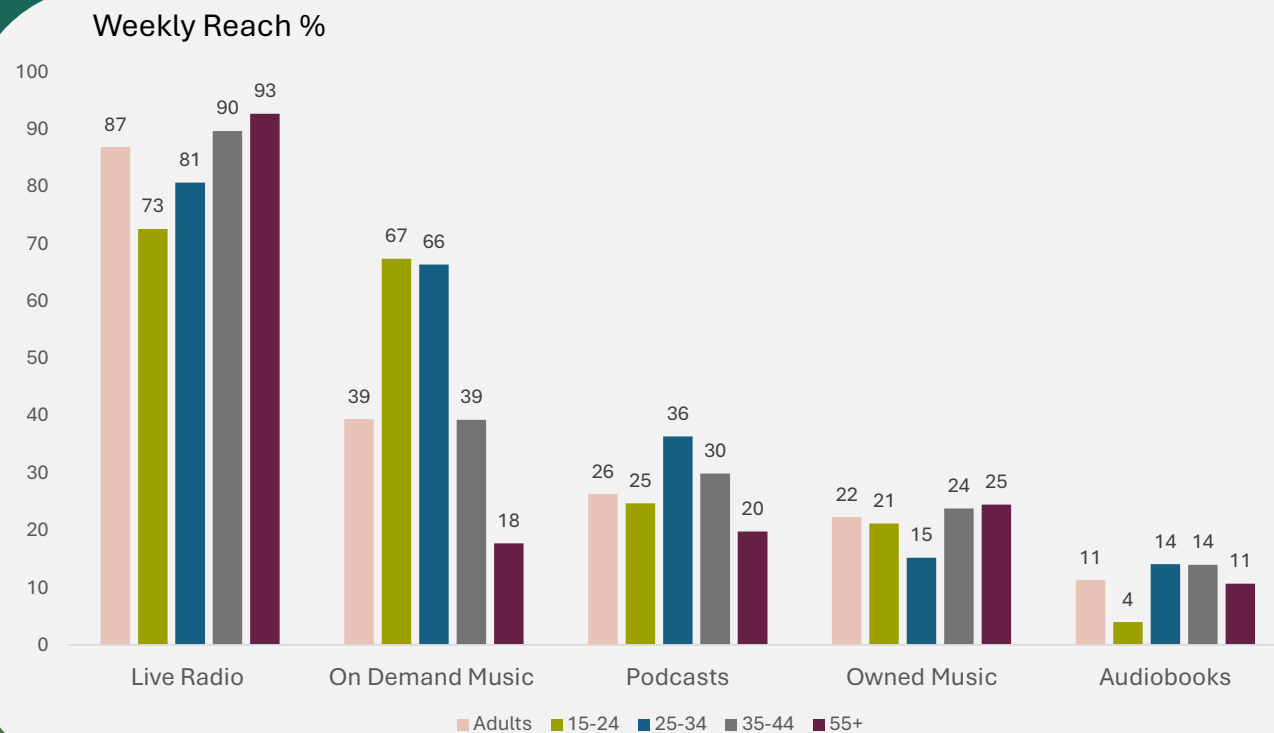
In Summary

Weekly audio listening in the UK remains strong, albeit varied between age and gender. The Summer 2026 wave of MIDAS finds that the weekly reach for audio consumption that is solely listened to and not viewed, remains very high with **56 million** adults or **97%** of the UK population (adults 15+) doing so in a week. Listeners spend on average **27.5 hours** a week engaging in their favourite audio type. The total number of UK weekly hours listened to audio is over **1.5 billion**; this is slightly above MIDAS Summer 2024.

The audio types focused on are live and catch-up radio, on demand music services, podcasts, owned music and audiobooks. For more detailed information on live radio, please see the most recent RAJAR release (Q2 2026) https://www.rajar.co.uk/listening/quarterly_listening.php

The key metrics for audio listening are based on the non-visual elements of the survey and the following charts are displayed by either reach %, share % or numbers in 000s (reach is defined by those who listened for five minutes or more in the diary week). Most of the information is based upon all adults (15 plus) except where specified by demographic breakdown (15-24, 25-34, 35-54 and 55+) or gender.

Audio listening in the UK remains strong.

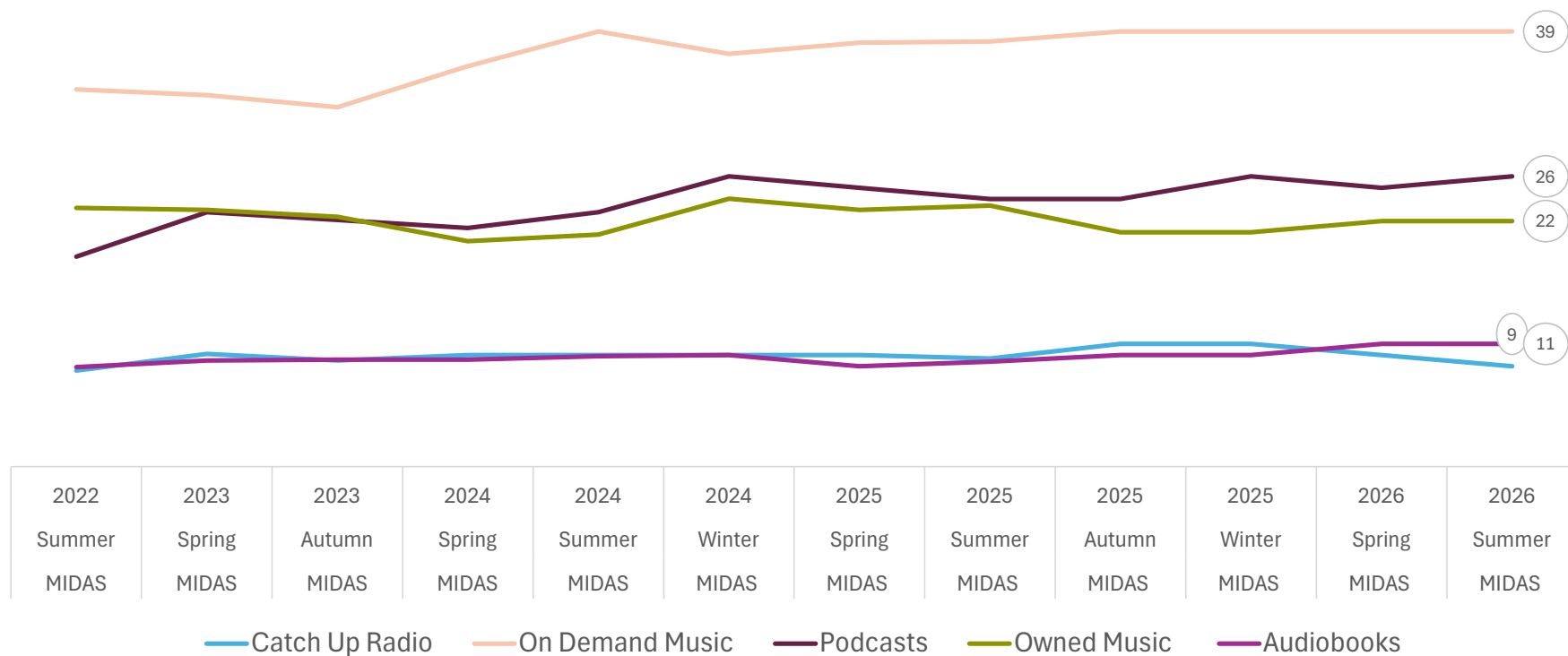


Audio Type Listening Trends

Over the last five years, there has been a noticeable decline in weekly listening of owned music (Digital tracks, CDs, Cassettes and Vinyl).

On Demand Music services and Podcasts have become increasingly popular, whilst Catch Up radio and Audiobooks have remained stable throughout.

Weekly Reach %



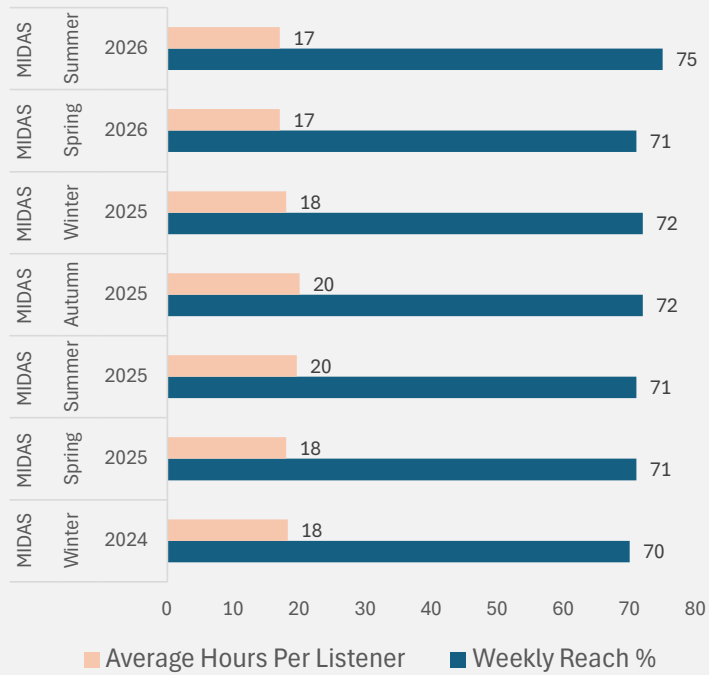
'Connected Audio' continues to grow.

The term 'connected audio' featured in this report is defined by audio consumption that can only be listened to by a device with an internet connection. This has been a particular area of growth over the last few years as the population continues to desire their listening preferences stored on their devices and accessible with a single touch.

Connected Audio reaches **75%** of the population in an average week and on average adults listen for around **17 hours** per week.

Connected Audio, includes Podcasts, Audiobooks, On Demand Music, Catch Up Radio and Live Radio (via smartphone, computers, games consoles, wearable tech, media players, smart speakers).

Connected Audio



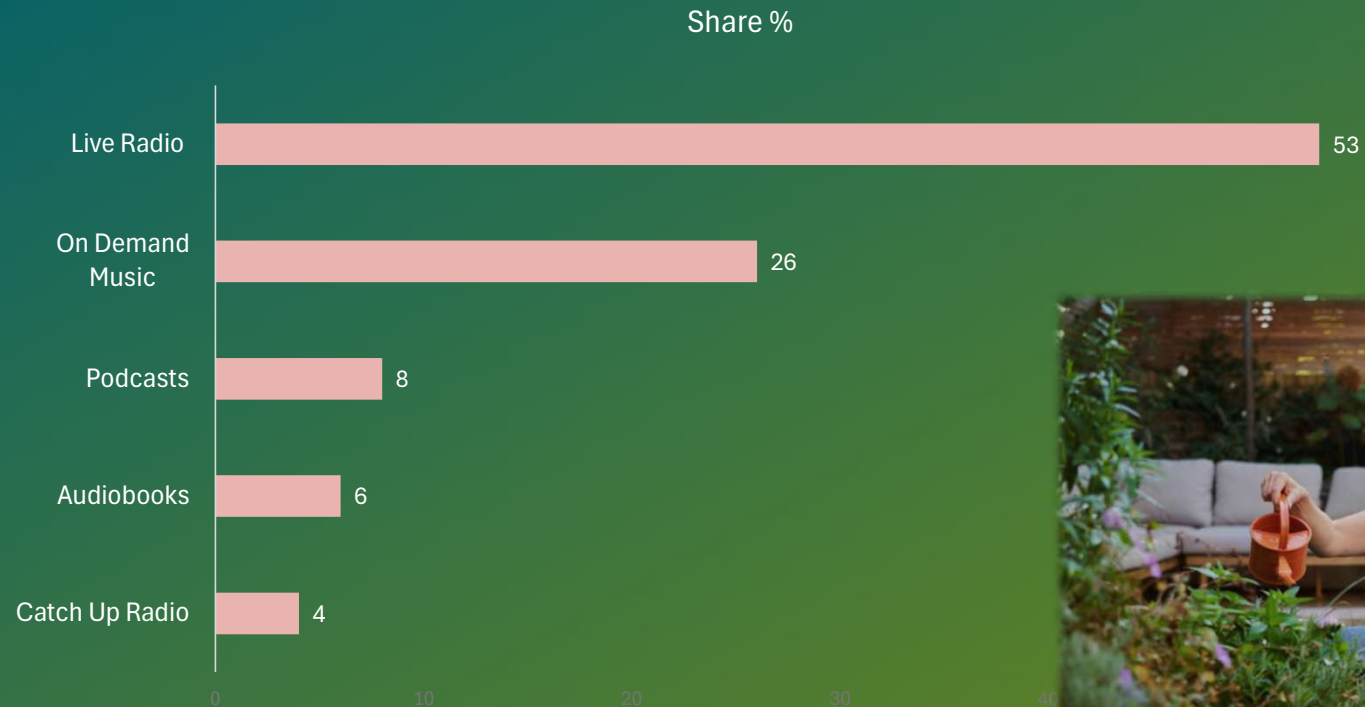
The need to feel more connected.



The MIDAS survey also asks participants their need states around audio listening; the purpose it serves them whilst listening, how it makes them feel or why they listened.

Some audio types serve similar purposes, like keeping us company, helping us relax or making us feel informed on what is going on in the world, but others serve more specific needs like providing a social soundtrack or assisting us to help engage in conversations.

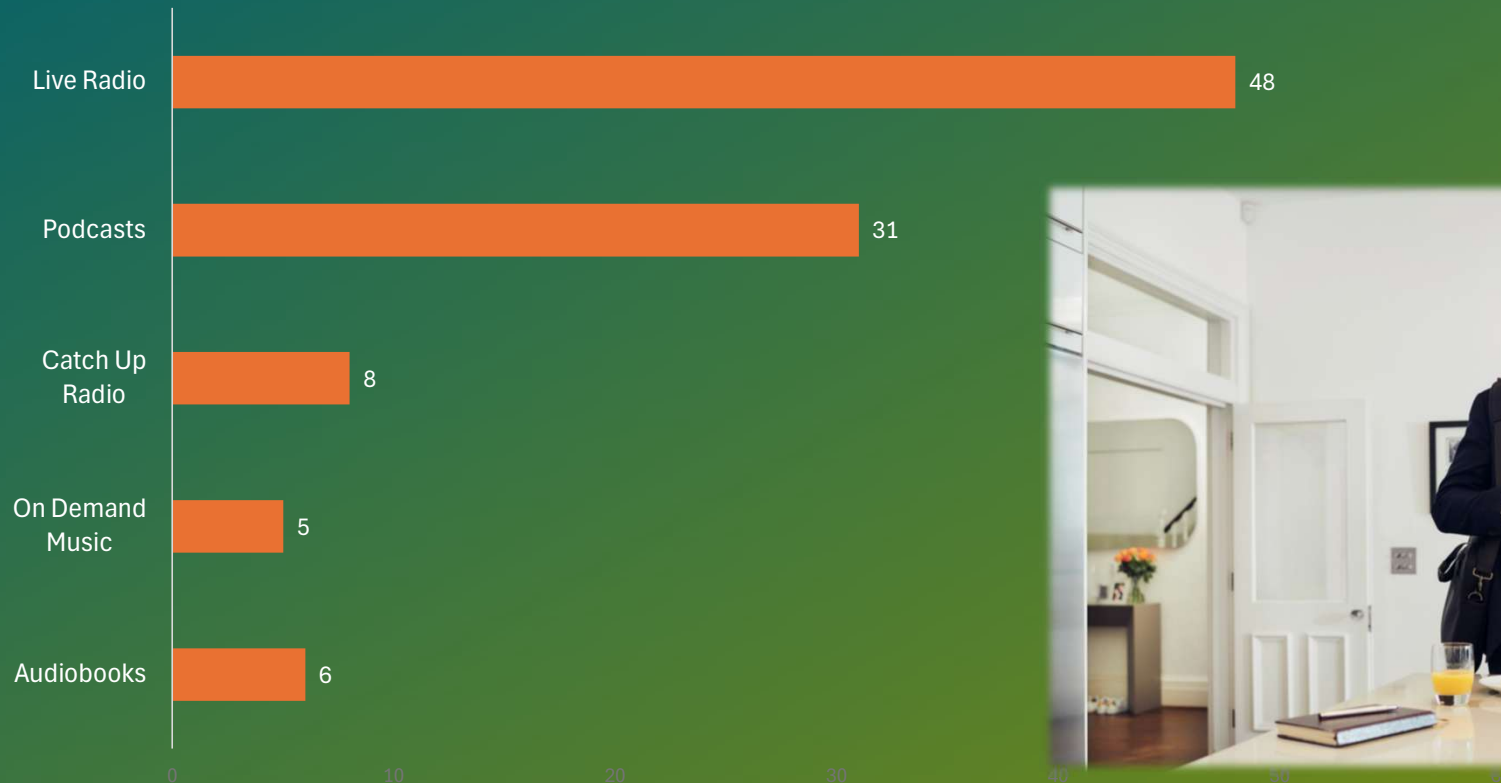
Need State – Amplify My Mood



Based on listeners that chose this need state.

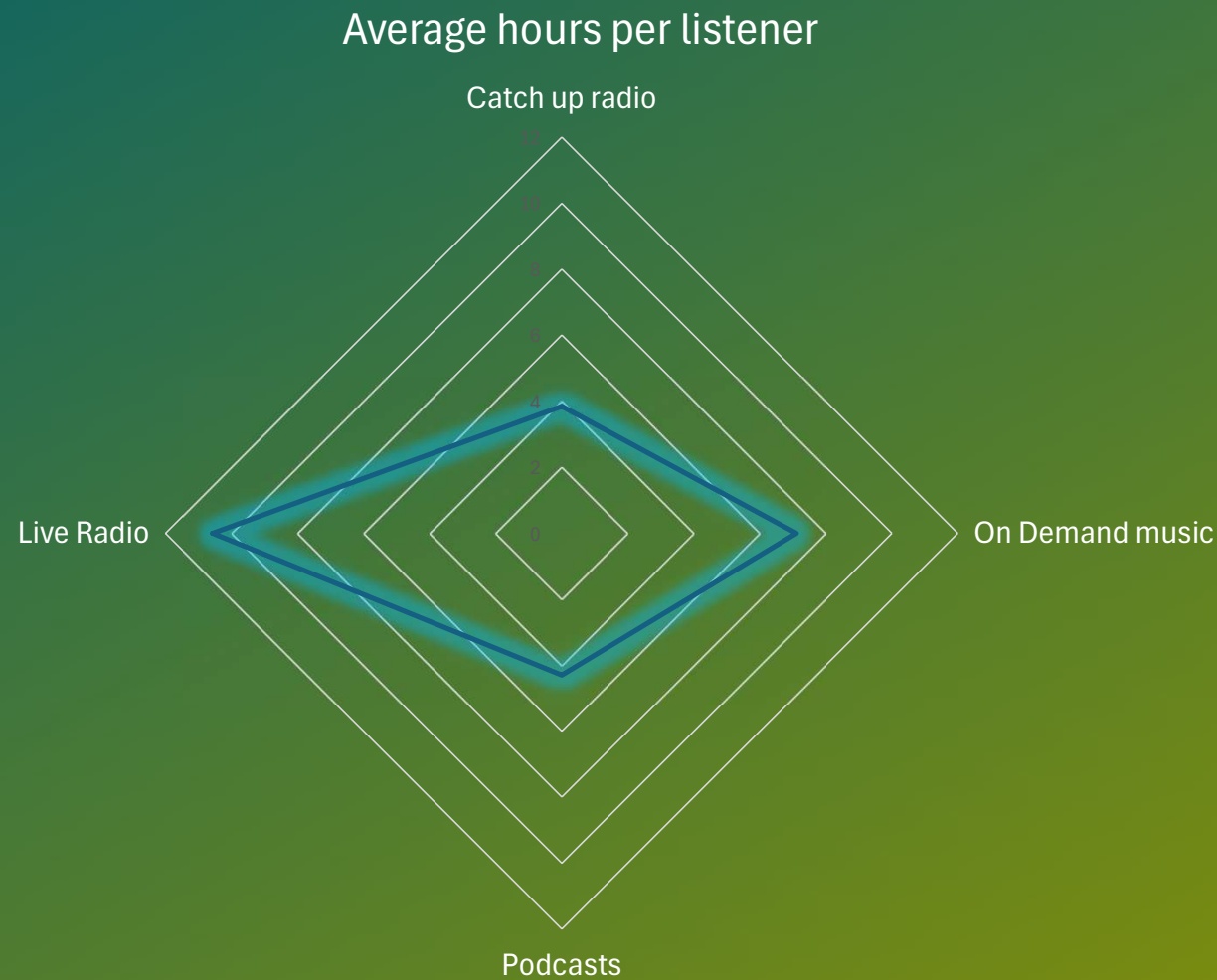
Need State – To feel informed

Share %

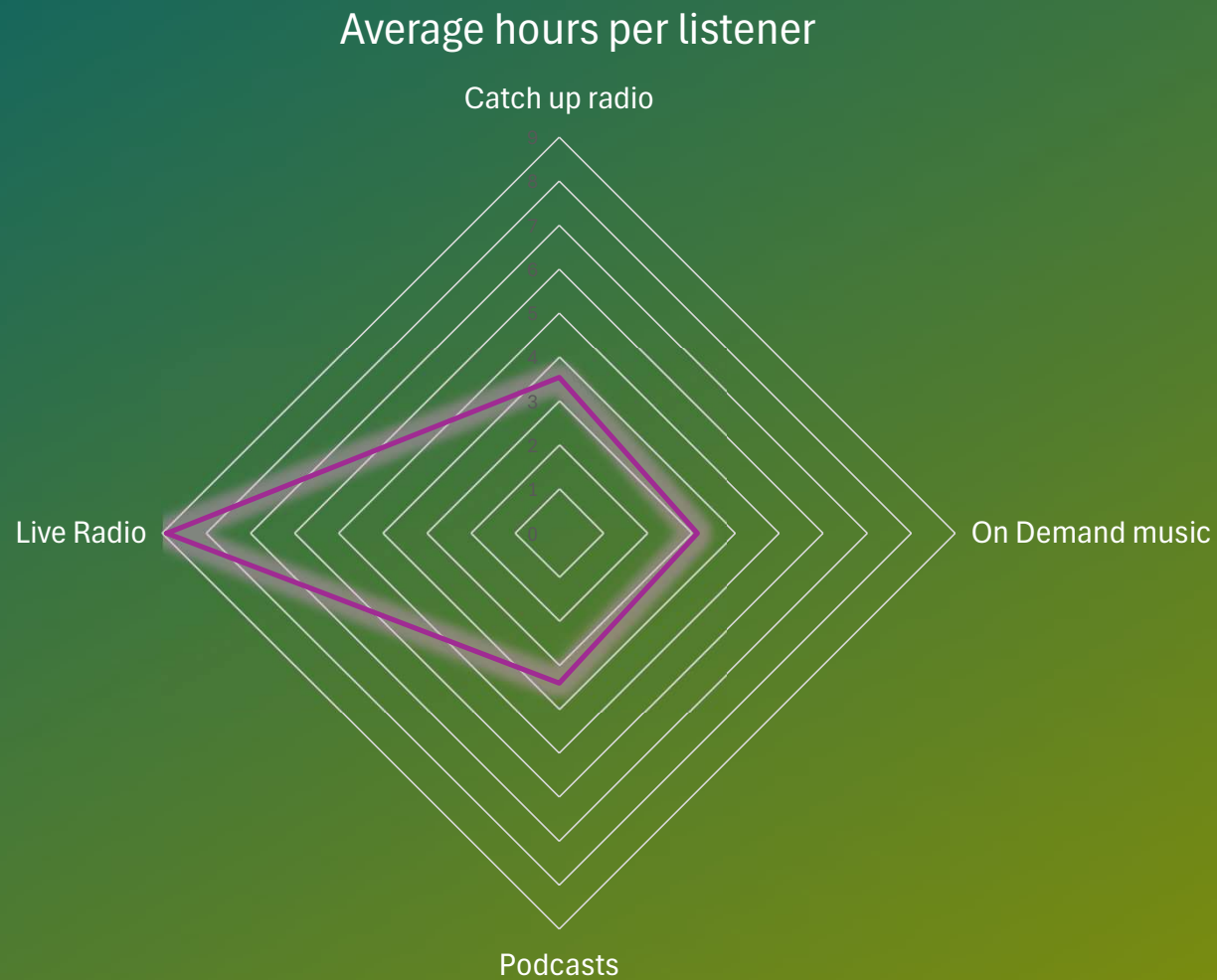


Based on listeners that chose this need state.

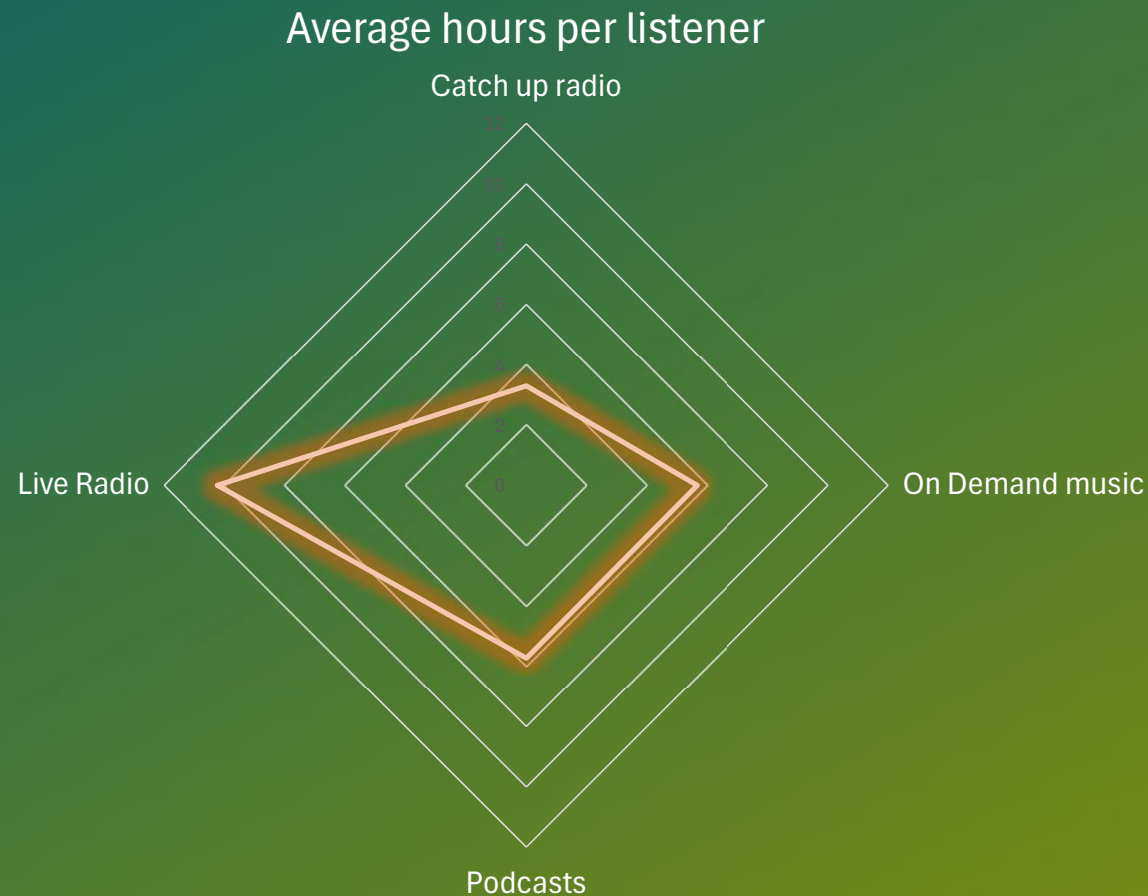
Need State – Keep me company



Need State – Keep me in the loop



Need State – To provide a social soundtrack



'Live Radio' dominates the time spent listening to Audio.

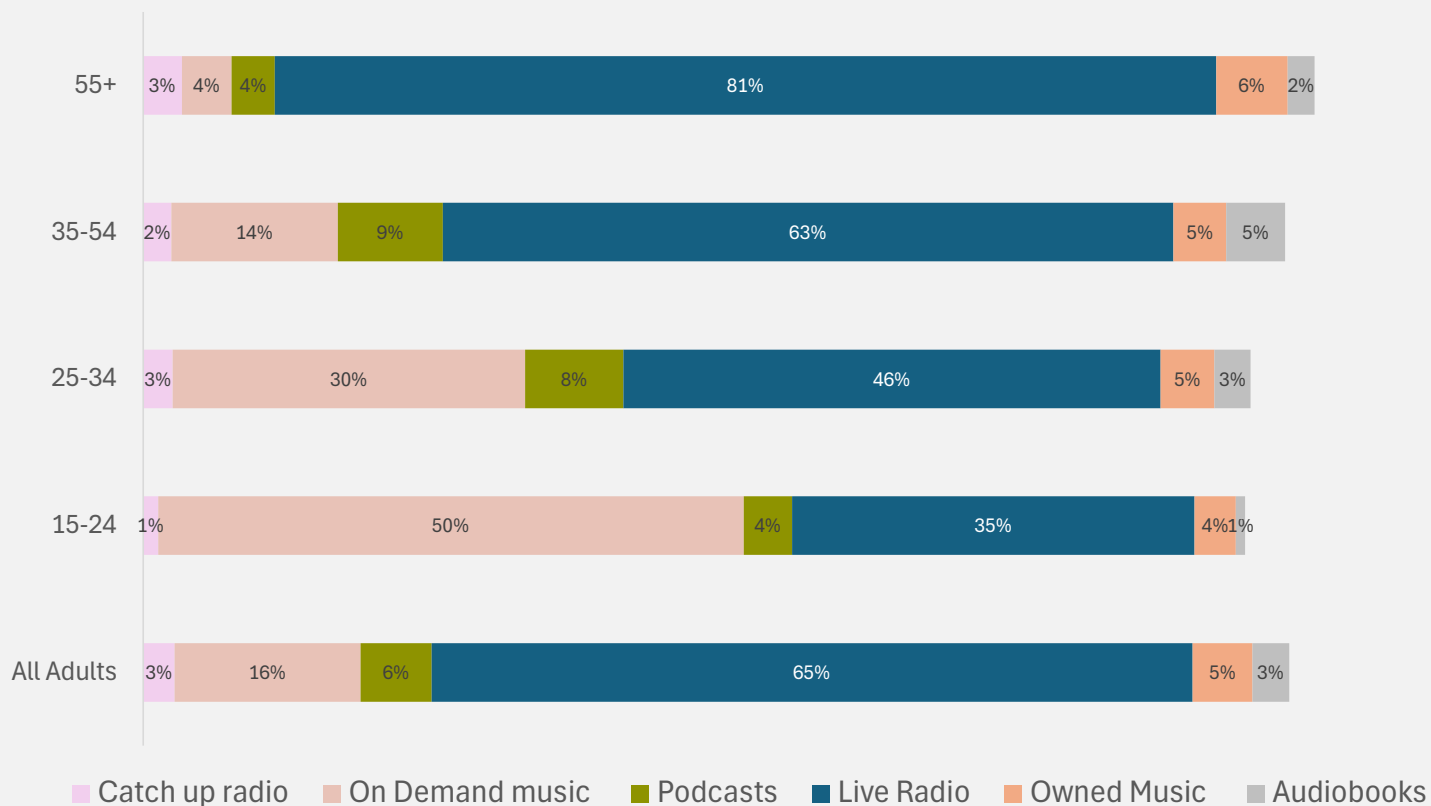


For all adults, the share of 'live radio' dominates audio listening (excluding visual) with **65%** of their listening hours spent engaging in this audio type.

Followed by on demand music streaming (**16%**), podcasts (**6%**), owned music (**5%**), audiobooks (**3%**) and catch-up radio (**3%**).



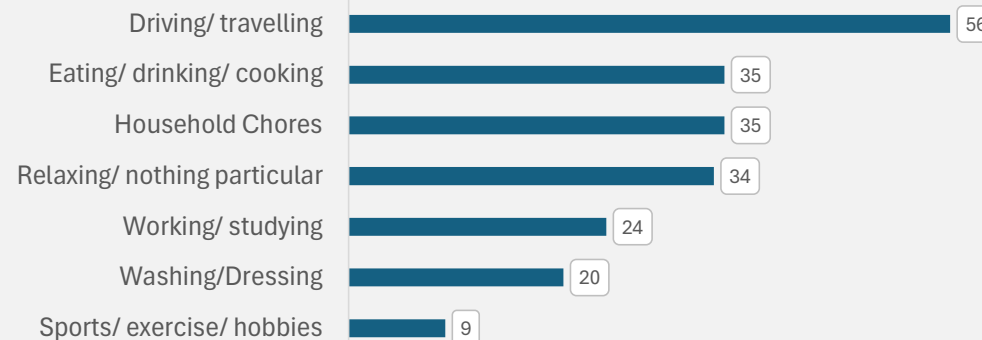
Share (%) of Audio Listening by Age



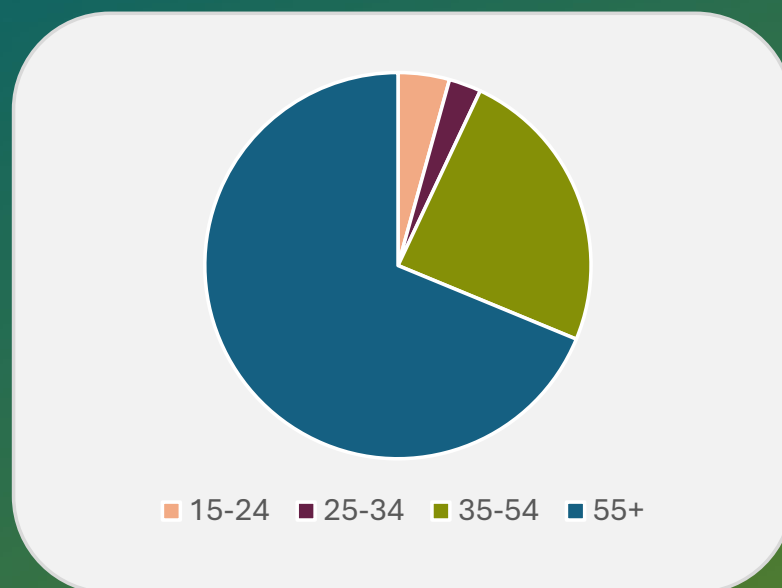
Live Radio is a perfect companion home or away.

Radio content provides the perfect company for many of our daily tasks and listening to live radio is often a shared experience, **43%** of the time listening is with others. People engage with several activities whilst listening to live radio, **57%** of the listening hours are consumed whilst someone is driving/travelling, relaxing or working/studying. **64%** of listening hours are consumed by traditional FM or DAB radio sets.

Weekly Reach %



9% of the UK population listen to radio at a more convenient time.



♂ 50% Male

♀ 50% Female

9% of the population listen to catch up radio in an average week. This type of content normally takes place in the home (78%); activities while listening such as 'doing nothing in particular' or 'eating/drinking/cooking' are the most cited by catch up users.

The profile of the Catch-Up Radio listener is dominated by the 35 plus age group with an equal gender split.

They listen for approximately **7 hours** each week and typically do so alone (83% of the time). There are so many apps making curated content easy to access, therefore devices such as Smartphones (56% share of hours) and Computers (19%) are used most frequently, with some listening also via Tablets (15%).

On Demand Music is an anywhere, anytime accompaniment.

In terms of all adults, **39%** of the population tune in to On Demand Music services each week, listening for an average of **10.6** hours per listener. **77%** of On Demand Music service users claimed to use a premium service with no ads in the diary week. The share of listening by device is **60%** Smartphone, **20%** Smart Speaker, **14%** Computer; devices such as Tablets and TVs have a much smaller share.

It's still mostly listened to on our own (**71%**), and the location of listening is split between **51%** in home and **39%** out of home, however, there are nuances within listening behaviour among different age demographics. The profile of the listener is typically young adults, **52%** are under 35 years old, **25%** are under 25.



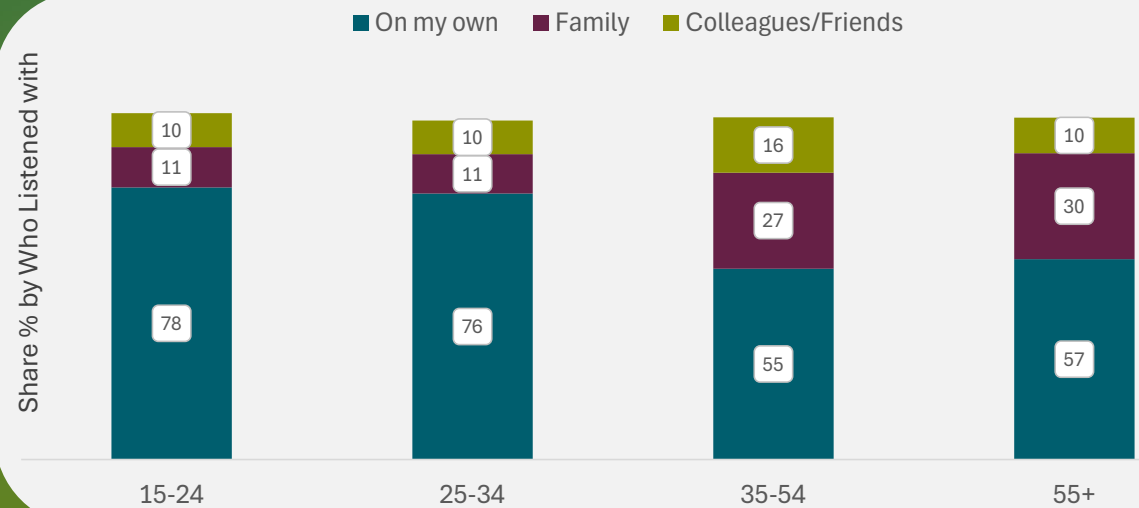
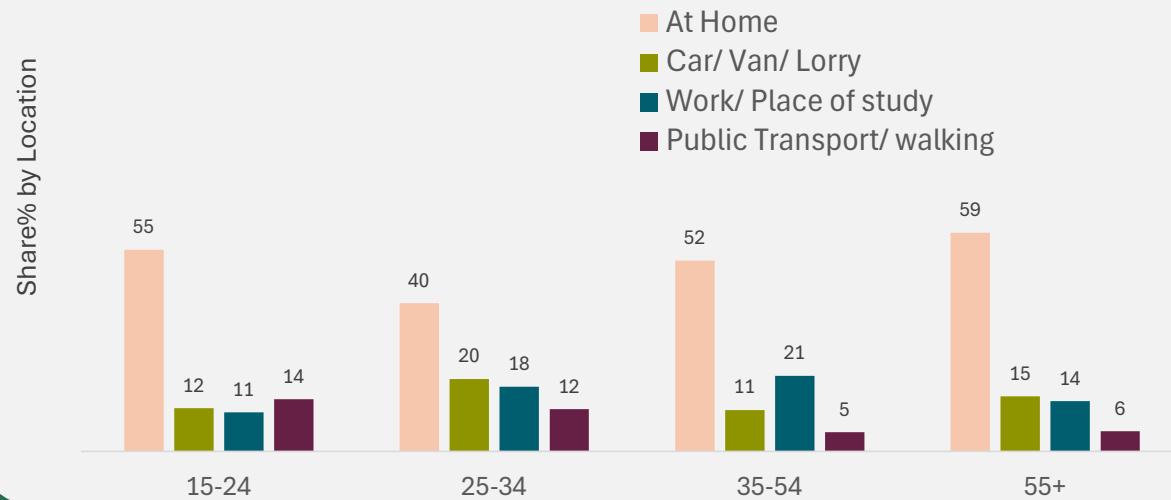
25% of all On Demand Music listeners are under 25 years old.



On Demand Music reaches **67%** of the 15-24 population who are listening for **13.9 hours** in the week. **71%** of their listening hours are via a Mobile Phone, **12%** by Computer and **14%** via a Smart Speaker.

41% of the listening hours in this age group are consumed whilst working/studying or travelling each week.

On Demand Music...where, and who with.



Podcasts

26% of the UK population tune in to podcast episodes in an average week and those listen for around **6.9 hours** per person. Podcasts are mainly a single person audience and not often a shared experience as **87%** of listening hours are consumed alone. **106 million hours** are listened to podcasts in an average week in this Summer 2026 wave.

71% of podcast listeners are aged under 55 and the gender split in this wave is **54% Male** and **46% Female**. Listening to a podcast allows for engagement in other activities whilst listening and is enjoyed at home as well as commuting, or in the workplace.

Podcasts are mainly consumed via apps on Smartphone (**69%**), but some listening does take place using Computers (**19%**), Tablets (**4%**) and Smart Speakers (**3%**).

25% of young adults (15-24) listen to Podcasts in an average week.

The Podcast Listener

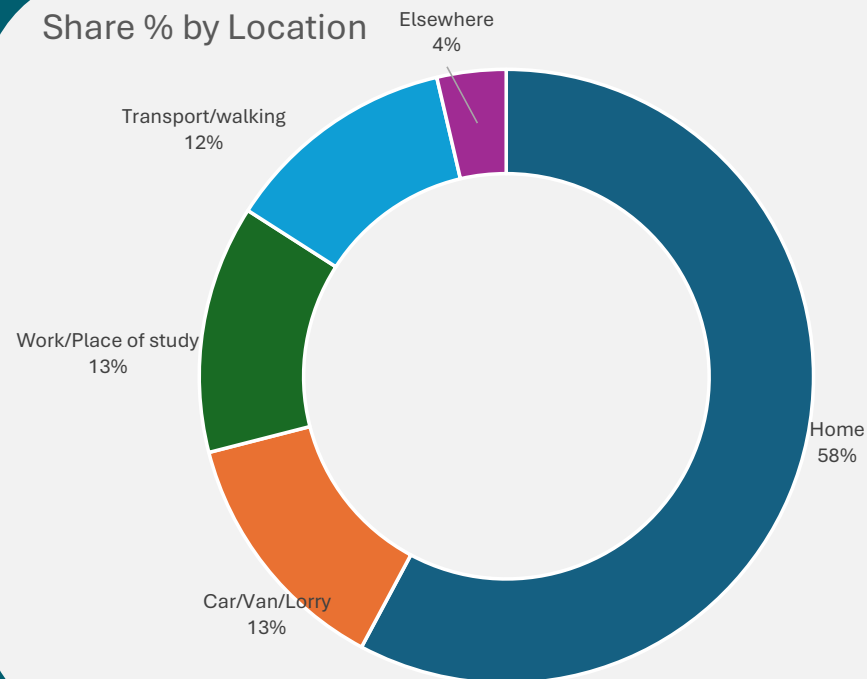


54%
Male

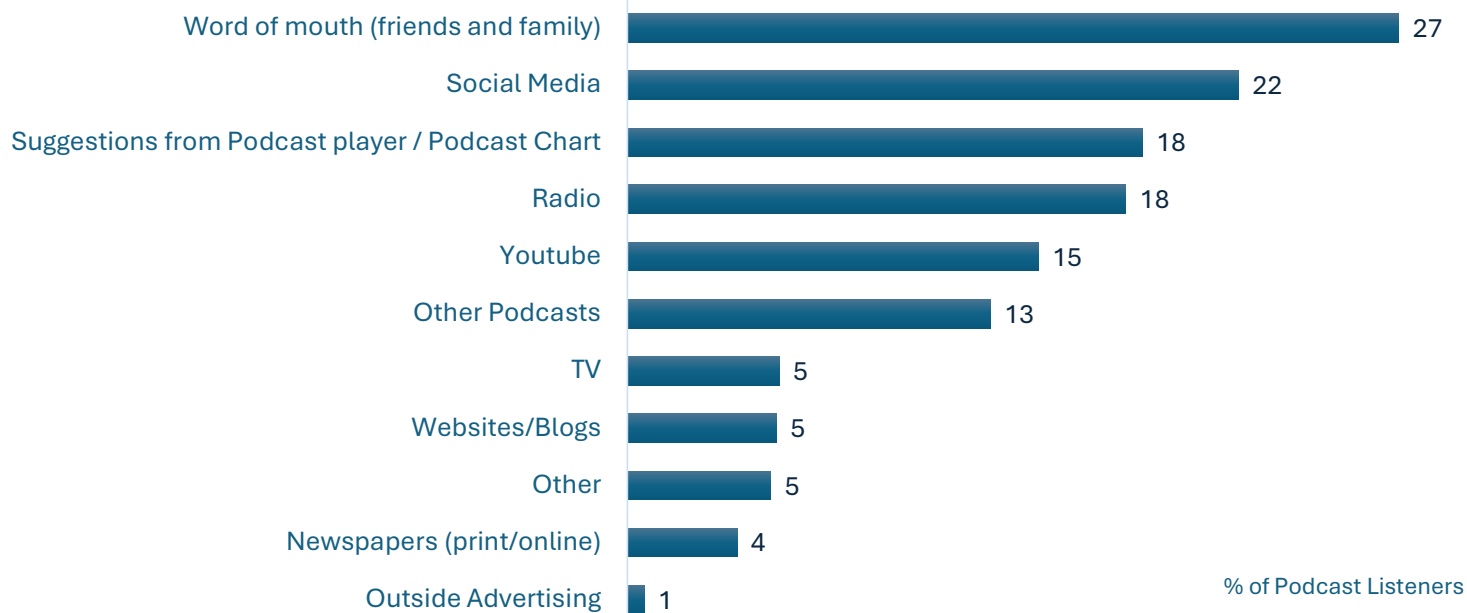


46%
Female

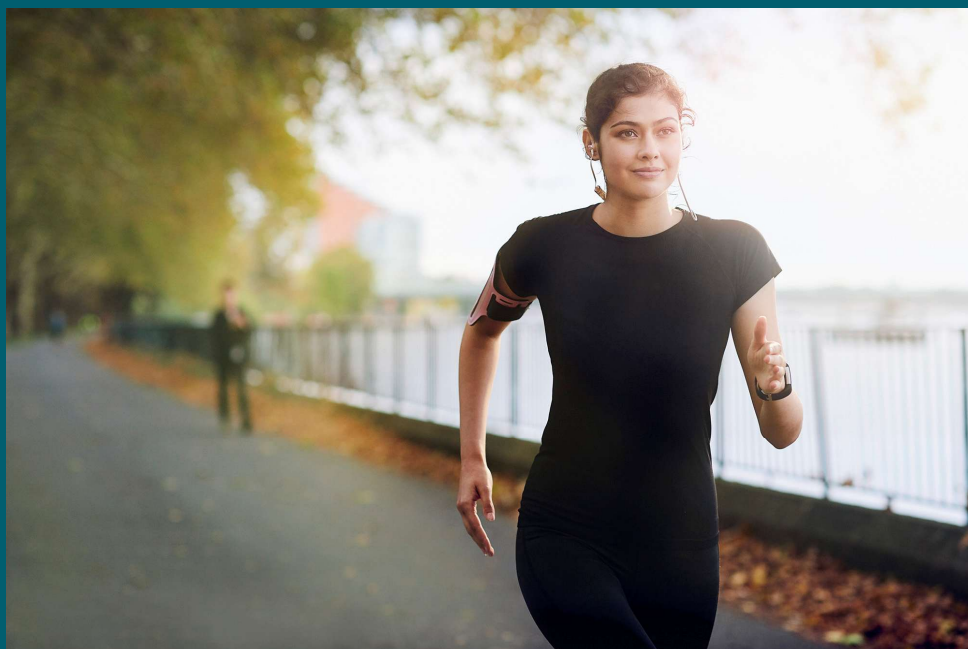
Share % by Location



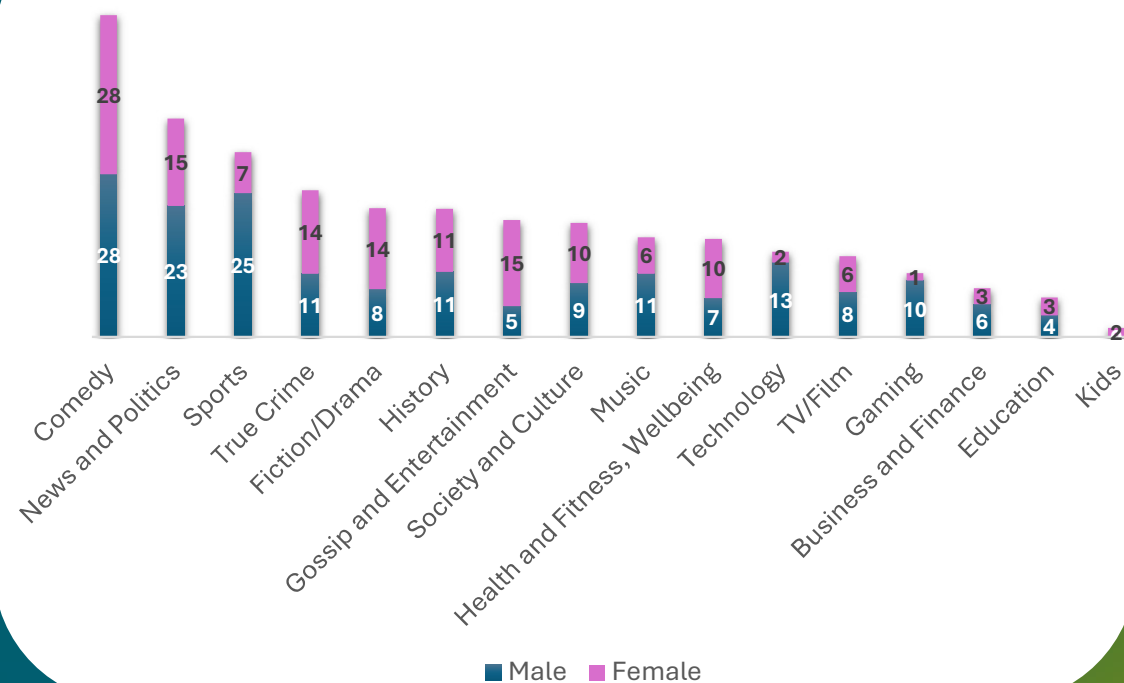
Sources of Podcast Discovery



Popular Podcast Genres



% claimed genre listened to the most



*claimed podcast listeners (everyday, most days, once a week, once a month, less often) via questionnaire

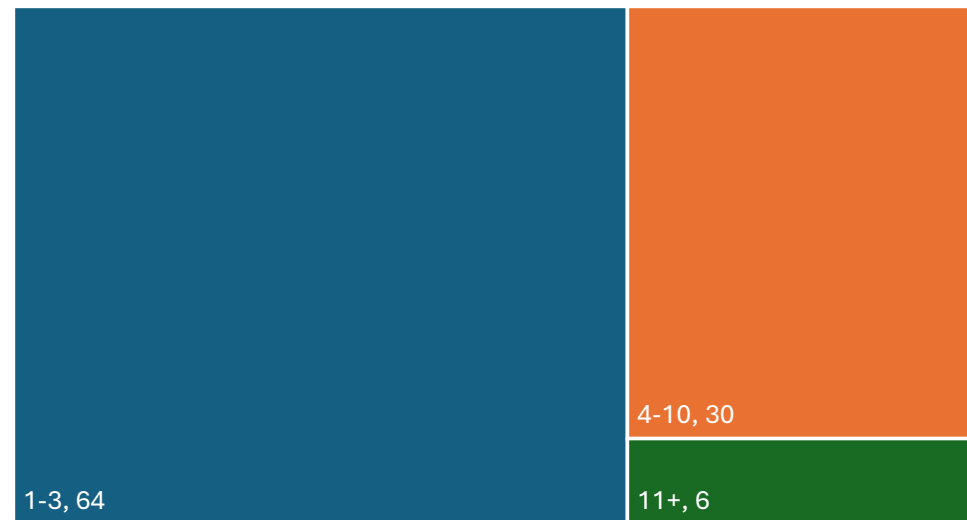
Podcast users are highly engaged.

64% listen to 1-3 episodes, **30%** listen to between 4 and 10 episodes and **6%** listen to 11 episodes or more in an average week.

83% claim to listen or view all or mostly all of each episode they have downloaded.

23% also claimed to watch podcasts weekly.

% claimed number of weekly Podcast episodes listened to



*claimed podcast listeners (everyday, most days, once a week, once a month, less often) via questionnaire

Time of Day

Listening Peak

Live Radio 8-8.30am

Podcasts 8.30-9am

On Demand Music 3-3.30pm

Catch Up Radio 11-11.30am

Monday – Friday Average Reach % of those who listen



MIDAS Summer 2026 fieldwork was carried out over two weeks in June 2026 with a final sample of 1,648 former RAJAR participants aged 15 plus who completed a 7-day online diary.

This information can be used publicly quoting the source: **RAJAR/MIDAS Summer 2026**. All the key metrics of the data are based on an average weekly basis. As per RAJAR, the most recent set of published MIDAS data should be used for any external purposes.

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