

# Government to consult on future analogue radio licences

The Government has today launched a consultation on whether to extend licences for analogue commercial radio stations. Although digital radio now accounts for around 57% of all radio listening, analogue stations remain an important platform for millions of listeners who still use FM and AM radio services every day.

A number of FM and AM licences are due to expire from early 2022, including those for Classic FM and TalkSport. Ofcom does not have the power to renew these licences for a longer period under current legislation.

Therefore, the government is seeking views on whether analogue licences should be renewed for a further period and if so, how long they should be renewed for.

Digital Secretary Nicky Morgan said:

Although we now live in an increasingly digital world, there are still many people that use FM and AM radio and will want to continue listening to these services. That's why we are seeking early views on options to renew commercial radio licences in a way that benefits both the commercial stations affected and their loyal listeners.

The consultation will remain open until 21 February and the government plans to take forward any legislative reform at the earliest opportunity.

## **Notes to editors:**

Read and respond to the [consultation](#).

Commercial radio licences are entitled to a number of renewals of their analogue (FM or AM) licences provided they also broadcast their services on digital radio. A number of licences, including national analogue licences for Classic FM and Talksport, have used up their renewals and are to expire from early 2022. Ofcom has no power to renew these licences for a further period. The changes only affect analogue commercial radio services. Digital radio and community radio are subject to different licensing arrangements.

The government consultation contains three options:

- Do nothing and allow licences to expire and be re-advertised by Ofcom;
- Allow the renewal of licences for a further 5 years;
- Allow the renewal of licences for a further 8 years.