

Radio, the Trusted Guide in a Changing World

Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

World Radio Day 2024 marks 100 years of radio, a period in which it has become the medium that is arguably closest to human hearts and minds, providing news, entertainment and education in all corners of the world. It satisfies our need to be informed both for day-to-day decision-making and in times of emergency and crisis. Over the past century, radio has proved itself as a crucial medium in maintaining freedom of opinion and expression, often being the only one still up and running in times of crisis.

Studies have repeatedly shown that radio has the greatest trust, with most citizens rating it above television, the internet, social networks or the written press. Radio is a triumph of accessibility, immediacy and intimacy, and there’s a strong public-interest case for protecting it and our access to it.

We believe that remaining easily accessible to all people, in all places, regardless of how they receive

radio means using terrestrial broadcast networks (both analogue and digital) – still relied upon by the majority of listeners globally – and fostering online access to radio that is just as democratic and open.

Cars are a particular concern, consistently among the most popular locations for radio listening. Whether it is terrestrial broadcast or internet, radio in cars should not just be easy to find, it must be impossible to miss.

Information is a public good and a shared resource for all of humanity. Radio has its place in the digital transformation of the information ecosystem, complementing the internet and digital platforms. The evolution of communication technologies should advance people’s right to receive information and ideas through any media – instead of regressing it.

We call upon governments, regulatory bodies, the technology and automotive industries, and all members of the global radio community to put safeguards in place to ensure that radio continues to thrive; to protect the free and unfettered access radio provides to a plurality of opinions and to trusted information; to allow radio to continue to help communities and all minority language speakers to receive information and participate in democratic processes; and to ensure radio remains available to all people regardless of their financial means or personal circumstances.

