

Brussels, 22 January 2026

AER welcomes the Digital Networks Act and calls for stronger safeguards for radio in connected cars

The [Association of European Radios \(AER\)](#) welcomes today's publication of the European Commission's proposal for a Digital Networks Act (DNA), a major initiative shaping the future of Europe's digital connectivity and media landscape.

For Europe's radio sector, the DNA is a critically important file. As cars become increasingly connected and software-driven, radio's presence on the dashboard can no longer be taken for granted. Ensuring that radio remains universally accessible, easy to find and free at the point of use in vehicles is essential for citizens, for democratic life and for crisis preparedness.

AER welcomes the preservation of the interoperability standard for in-car radios in the proposal. Strengthening the existing interoperability framework for radio in cars is however essential. **The Digital Networks Act offers a timely opportunity to secure radio's future presence in cars.** In particular, the final legislation should ensure that **universal access to radio is safeguarded by mandating the inclusion of hybrid-capable radio receivers in all vehicle categories sold in the EU.** Ensuring that all drivers, regardless of the type of vehicle they use, have access to radio services via these technologies is crucial for emergency communication and road safety, as well as for guaranteeing free access to information, safeguarding media pluralism and social cohesion.

“The Digital Networks Act confirms what matters in a crisis: reliable communication,” said AER President Stefan Möller. “Keeping radio in connected cars is a simple, low-cost step that protects trusted information, preparedness and media pluralism across Europe.”

In the run-up to the publication of the DNA, [a broad, cross-party group of Members of the European Parliament called on the Commission to safeguard the future of radio in cars](#), underlining strong political support for radio as a trusted public-interest medium and essential safety channel.

AER also welcomes the fact that the DNA preserves key principles such as media pluralism and the national management of spectrum frequencies. At the same time, AER will closely examine the proposed “voluntary conciliation” mechanism, which risks becoming an indirect way of introducing network fees and could distort competition and reduce choice for listeners.

AER looks forward to working closely with the EU institutions and legislators in the coming months to strengthen the text and ensure the final legislation fully secures radio's future in connected cars and digital environments.



About AER

The Association of European Radios (AER) is the voice of commercial radio in Brussels. More at: www.aereurope.org

Further reading:

[Safeguarding the future of radio in connected cars: AER position on the European Electronic Communication Code revision and proposal for Digital Networks Act \(.pdf\)](#)

[AER's Response to the Call for evidence to the Digital Networks Act \(.pdf\)](#)

[MEPs call for strong safeguards for radio in connected cars under the Digital Networks Act \(.pdf\)](#)

Contact:

AER Secretary General francesca.fabbri@aereurope.org

###