
Ofcom's Audio and Podcast Surveys

Consultation to provide details of proposed changes to the 2023 surveys

Overview

This document sets out our proposed changes to Ofcom's Audio and Podcast surveys from 2023 onwards and the impact this will have on future data.

Background to the surveys

Ofcom's Podcast survey provides us with a detailed understanding of podcasts, specifically among those who listen to podcasts on a weekly basis. The survey includes questions about how long respondents have been listening to podcasts, what services they use for podcasts, why and where they typically listen to them and what genres they listen to, among others. The full questionnaire can be found on Ofcom's Statistical Release Calendar [here](#). We interview a nationally representative sample of 1,000 online UK adults aged 16+ which includes c.160 weekly podcast listeners (which is then boosted to reach c.1,000 weekly listeners overall), c.350 less regular listeners and c.500 non listeners via Yonder's online panel once per year in February/March (only weekly listeners complete the full survey). In addition, question 5 (types of audio activities) is also placed on Yonder's telephone omnibus to ensure we also reach offline participants.

In addition to the Podcast survey, Ofcom also runs a broader **Audio Survey**, which provides information on UK adults' use of different audio platforms, including for example, online radio, podcasts and music streaming services. There are a series of key questions which relate to services used for each audio platform which allows us to build a detailed picture of the audio market. In addition, there are questions relating specifically to BBC Sounds and the importance of different services. The full questionnaire can be found [here](#). This survey is run via Yonder's online omnibus, also once a year in February/March with c.2,200 nationally representative online UK adults aged 16+.

Changes to the 2023 surveys

We are proposing to merge the Podcast survey with the existing Audio survey. We are confident these changes will continue to help us to capture an accurate and full picture of listener habits, across a range of media. How we propose this will work:

- Some questions from the Podcast survey will be transferred to the Audio survey. More detail on the questions we propose to transfer, and the questions we will no longer ask are detailed in this document.
- Q5 from the Podcast survey which was previously run via Yonder's telephone omnibus in addition to the online panel (as detailed above) we still be asked via the telephone omnibus as part of the Audio survey.
- The first portion of the Podcast survey is asked to a nationally representative sample of 1,000 online UK adults. This sample includes c.160 weekly listeners of podcasts. Weekly podcast listeners are then targeted via boost interviews to reach 1,000 weekly listeners overall. Weekly listeners then go on to answer the rest of the survey. The Audio survey will not be boosted to ensure a minimum sample of weekly podcast listeners; therefore, we plan

to ask all podcast-related questions to all podcast listeners, regardless of the frequency they listen (last year the Audio survey sample included 585 weekly listeners, 250 monthly listeners and 391 less often than monthly listeners).

- As the Audio survey questionnaire will be extended to include some questions from the Podcast survey, we may need to shorten the questionnaire in other places, for example by removing questions (detailed below).
- As is normal for all Ofcom's tracking surveys, all remaining questions on the Audio survey will be reviewed to ensure they remain up to date and fit for purpose.

Further information can be found in the following sections overleaf.

We would like your views

If you would like any further information or if you would like to highlight any concerns for Ofcom's consideration regarding the Podcast and Audio surveys, please email marketresearch@ofcom.org.uk by 9am on Wednesday 30 November 2022.

Proposed changes to the 2023 Podcast and Audio surveys

Questions in the Podcast survey no longer to be asked

We propose to merge the Podcast survey with the Audio survey from 2023 onwards. Some questions from the Podcast survey will be transferred to the Audio survey, the questions listed below will not be transferred and therefore will not be asked going forward. Note: question numbers refer to the [2022 questionnaire](#).

- **Q5** asking all respondents (via an online panel and telephone omnibus) which types of audio activities they do. Note: the same question is currently asked in the Audio survey so this metric will not be lost. As detailed above, we also ask this question via Yonder's telephone omnibus in addition to Yonder's online panel to ensure we include offline participants in the audio platform measurement. We intend to continue asking this question, as part of the Audio survey via Yonder's telephone omnibus.
- **Q6A** asking respondents who never listen to podcasts in Q5 if they have ever listened to a podcast in the past.
- **Q6B** asking those who said 'yes' in Q6A why they stopped listening to podcasts and **Q6C** asking those who said 'no' in Q6A why they have never listened to a podcast.
- **Q6D** asking those who listen to podcasts less often than weekly, why they don't listen to podcasts more often.
- **Q6E** asking all respondents what they think best describes a podcast.
- **Q6F-H** asking all those who listen to podcasts (regardless of how frequently they listen) how long they have been listening, whether they currently listen to more/less podcasts than compared to when they first started and if they listen to fewer now, why that is.
- **Q6I** asking everyone where they tend to hear about new podcasts.

The following questions were just asked to those who are regular (weekly) podcast listeners:

- **Q9** asking all weekly listeners how many individual podcasts they listen to in a week
- **Q10** asking all weekly listeners how many podcast series they are subscribed to, **Q11** how many of those series are active and currently releasing podcasts and **Q12** what proportion of individual podcast episodes they are subscribed to that they actually listen to.

- **Q17** asking all weekly listeners which type/genre of podcast is their favourite Note: we propose to transfer the previous question (Q13) asking how frequently weekly listeners listen to different types/genres of podcasts.
- **Q18** asking all weekly listeners if they have ever done anything as a result of listening to a podcast (e.g. talked about it on social media, thought about creating their own podcast).
- **Q19** asking all weekly listeners which services (apps/websites) they use to listen to podcasts and **Q19B** which service they use most frequently. Note: the same question currently exist in the Audio Survey so we won't lose this metric. The Audio Survey does not ask which service they use most frequently but it does ask how frequently the listener listens to podcasts via each service used.
- **Q19C** asking which devices weekly listeners use to listen to podcasts via each of the services selected in Q19.
- **Q20C** asking those who said they do not use a smart speaker for listening to podcasts in Q19C why that is.
- **Q21B** asking those that listen to podcasts via YouTube why they use it for podcasts.
- **Q22** asking all weekly listeners whether they do any other activities more or less as a result of their podcast listening (e.g. listening to radio, music streaming services or reading books).
- **OPEN-ENDED 1/2** asking all weekly listeners which podcasts they have listened to in the past month, and which podcast they would miss the most if they couldn't listen to it.

Questions from the Podcast survey to be transferred to the Audio survey

We have identified some questions from the Podcast survey we propose to transfer to the Audio survey. These include:

- **Q7** asking all weekly listeners when they listen to podcast and other audio content (e.g. when travelling in a car/on public transport, while walking or cycling).
- **Q8** asking all weekly listeners why they listen to podcasts and other audio content (e.g. for background listening, for company or to relax).
- **Q13** asking all weekly listeners how frequently they listen to different types/genres of podcasts.
- **Q19C-E** asking all weekly listeners who said in Q19 they use either websites/apps of non-BBC radio stations, newspaper/magazine sites/apps or websites/apps of the podcast itself for

listening to podcasts how many of each they use for listening to podcasts. Note: this is to allow the calculation of the average number of services used.

- **Q20A** asking all weekly listeners how important a range of attributes are when thinking about the ways in which they can access podcasts (e.g. quality, ease of use and ease of navigation). Note: we have an existing question in the Audio Survey ([Q17](#)) which asks about the different types of online audio platforms (e.g. radio and online music streaming services) and how important a range of attributes are. We propose to adapt this question to include all relevant codes from Q20A in the Podcast Survey and to ask about each type of audio platform a respondent uses.
- **Q20B** asking all weekly listeners how good or bad each of the services they use of podcasts are for a range of different attributes. Note: we have a similar existing question in the Audio Survey ([Q18](#)) which asks how good or bad services are for a range of attributes. We may add additional codes to Q18 from the Audio Survey to cover all relevant codes from Q20B in the Podcast Survey.
- **Q21** asking all weekly listeners how often, if at all, they listen to different types of podcasts (e.g. podcasts that also have videos or podcasts that are linked to TV programmes).
- **Q23** asking all weekly listeners whether they agree or disagree with various different statements about podcasts (e.g. 'I find it easy to find podcasts I might enjoy' or 'I trust what I hear in podcasts').

Questions proposed for removal from the Audio survey

As the Audio survey questionnaire will be extended to include some questions from the Podcast survey, we may need to shorten the questionnaire in other places, for example by removing questions. The questions we are considering removing include (note: question numbers refer to the questionnaire [here](#)):

- **Q2** asking all respondents which radio stations they have listened to in the past 7 days.
- **Q4** asking all radio listeners who use a smart speaker to listen to the radio whether they have ever asked their smart speaker to play a particular radio station or radio programme and it has started playing the wrong thing.
- **Q16** asking all who listen to online music how they tend to choose what to listen to via online music streaming services.
- **Q20** (open-ended) asking those who listen to the radio and either online music streaming or podcasts, when they choose to listen to radio, what is the main reason they decide to listen to radio instead of either online music streaming/podcasts.

- **Q21** (open-ended) asking those who listen radio and online music streaming when they choose to listen to online music streaming, what is the main reason they decide to listen to this and not radio.
- **Q22** (open-ended) asking those who listen to radio and podcasts when they choose to listen to podcasts, what is the main reason they decide to listen to this and not radio.