Mediapulse Radio Measurement

Methodology Factsheet

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AG für Medienforschung
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1 Introduction

The following document describes the sampling system for the consumption of radio data in Switzerland, for which Mediapulse AG is responsible. The survey has been conducted within the framework of the parameters listed in this document since January 2023. The purpose of this document is to provide a generally understandable explanation of the most important principles underlying the sampling system.

2 Object of the survey

Mediapulse Radio Data provides a breakdown of the consumption of live radio, regardless of the distribution channel and device on which a radio station was listened to. Listening to the radio via headphones is not logged. All radio stations relevant to Switzerland are taken into account.

3 Universe

For radio research purposes, the universe comprises the permanent resident population of Switzerland aged 15 and over.

The universe is considered separately for each of the three language regions of Switzerland. The current universe figures can be found in the premium section of www.mediapulse.ch.

4 Methodological design

The Mediapulse Radio Data is based on a sampling approach. A pool of recruited participants who contribute to the sampling on a recurring basis forms the basis for the formation of a daily, round-the-clock sample. The sampling of consumption is performed by a sampling device in the form of a wristwatch (Mediawatch), which recognises the radio stations used via audio matching technology. The sampling system is operated by GfK Switzerland on behalf of Mediapulse.

5 Sample

The sample forms the basis on which radio consumption in Switzerland is sampled on a representative daily basis. The sample of the Swiss radio research is disproportionately structured so as to better account for smaller local radio stations and sub-areas.

The sample is drawn from all across the country and comprises 28 recruitment zones. This geographical division is based on the Publicom economic areas.

Other geographical divisions such as language regions, coverage areas, WEMF areas and the SRG regional journal areas are represented accurately and made analysable by means of weighting.

Key factors for the definition of the sample are the gross sample, the net sample, the wearing periods, the sampling structure or quota plan, the introduction of panellists and the waiting periods.

5.1 Gross sample

The gross sample is the initial sample and serves as a control volume to achieve the net sample effectively required on a daily basis.

The daily gross sample is formed from the pool, which contains in the region of 10,000 people. The daily gross sample comprises 2,019 people who are required to wear the sampling watch.

5.2 Net sample

The net sample comprises the panellists who actually provide valid sampling data. Of the 2,019 people in the gross sample, an average of at least 1,533 people have to provide data per day, which corresponds to 75.9 percent.

The structure of the net sample of watch wearers in terms of gender and age groups is as follows.

Age categories	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
15–24 years	95	6.22%	90	5.87%	185	12.09%
25–34 years	124	8.09%	121	7.90%	245	15.99%
35–44 years	127	8.29%	126	8.21%	253	16.51%
45–59 years	201	13.10%	200	13.01%	400	26.12%
60+ years	209	13.65%	240	15.64%	449	29.30%
Total (15+)	**757**	**49.36%**	**776**	**50.64%**	**1533**	**100.00%**

The daily net sample from 1,533 watches with regard to Swiss language regions is depicted in the table below.

Boost Geneva: In addition, a boost of a gross total of 19 additional sampling watches in the daily distribution of sampling watches was financed for the Geneva City and Geneva recruitment zones.

Language region	People
German-speaking Switzerland (DS)	950
French-speaking Switzerland (SR)	430
Italian-speaking Switzerland (SI)	154
Total	**1,533**
Boost RZ Geneva	8
Boost RZ Geneva City	7
Total incl. Boost	**1,548**

5.3 Wearing periods

In order to achieve an ideal ratio of high data quality and fixed costs, two different wearing periods were designated, which the panellists can choose between or which are assigned to them:

- approx. twice a year for one month;
- approx. once a year for six months.

To achieve this ideal ratio, the two wearing periods are not all equally represented in the daily sample. The distribution is as follows:

- 50 percent one month
- 50 percent six months

The panellists with a wearing period of one month are called "short-term wearers" (KZT), those with wearing periods of six months "long-term wearers" (LZT). The many different panellists who wear the sampling watch for the shorter period contribute to the accuracy of the data. Data stability, on the other hand, is ensured by the many people each day who wear the watch for a longer period of time.

5.4 Sampling structure

To ensure that the daily sample is representative, it is adjusted according to a fixed quota scheme.

The quota scheme includes the three quota variables of Recruitment Zones (28), Gender (2) and Age (5). These are linked quotas, adding up to 280 quota cells for Switzerland.

The two gender categories are male and female.
The five age categories are 15–24 years, 25–34 years, 35–44 years, 45–59 years and 60+ years.

6 Person pool

For the definition of the radio research pool, the key parameters are Pool Size, Rotation and the target values regarding Pool Structure.

Pool Size: The size of the radio research pool is variable due to its dependence on the number of subjects needed to ensure the defined net sample and on the estimated number of dropouts.

Definition of pool size: The target size of the radio research pool is approximately 9,950 people.

Rotation of the pool: The extent of natural rotation, for example due to participants leaving or due to inactivation as a result of lack of compliance, has been within the expected fluctuation for a panel of 10 to 15 percent in the past few years.

Pool Structure: The current quota scheme includes the quotas Recruitment Zones (28), Gender (2) and Age (5). These are linked quotas, adding up to 280 quota cells.

7 Recruitment

The aim of recruitment is to compensate for sampling watch wearers withdrawing from the radio research pool; the addition of structurally balanced panellists maintains a sufficiently large and representative radio research pool.

Recruitment methodology: The chosen recruitment methodology must ensure as reliably as possible that all individuals in the universe have a similarly high probability of participating in the radio research. Three recruitment methods are used for the recruitment of the radio research pool:

- Recruitment via purchased addresses;
- Recruitment through 'alternative' recruitment, in which a suitable sample is drawn from previously collected addresses, which is checked for representativeness using control variables;
- Recruitment via addresses from the Mediapulse Establishment Survey (ES).

8 Sampling

Radio research works with GfK's radio research system "Mediawatch 4", consisting of a new generation of sampling devices and Sound Sampling Units (SSU).

The sampling device is the "Mediawatch 4" in two different versions (digital and analogue). Both versions of the "Mediawatch 4" are used together with the same docking station, which charges the watch battery overnight as well as transmitting the recorded fingerprints (sampling data) to the control centre.

The SSUs are used to create the reference data for audio matching.

Sampling process: Panellists are required to wear a sampling watch during their wearing period. During this time, the watch continuously records the ambient sounds, encodes them in a non-reversible process into a sequence of numbers (fingerprint) and stores them. At the same time, the radio programmes are recorded and processed into fingerprints using the same procedure (reference database).

9 Data processing

Data production consists of audio matching, application of the editing rules and weighting.

Audio matching: In the data production process, the stored number sequences from the sampling device are compared with the number sequences of the reference database. If the number sequences match, this identifies programme sequences that have been consumed.

Editing rules: The filtering following the audio matching uses editing rules to ensure a plausible assignment of the identified consumption to the station, for example within simulcasting windows or station families.

Weighting (general): The evaluation dataset is weighted daily according to the universe specifications of the Federal Statistical Office. Daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly weightings are calculated.

Weighting scheme: The weighting scheme for Switzerland contains the following weighting variables: Age Categories (5), Gender (2), Recruitment Zones (28), Sub-Areas (63), WEMF Areas (24) and Regional Journal and Language Regions (10).

10 Data provision

The purpose of the data provision is to make the data available to the contractual partner for evaluation together with socio-demographic information from the panel participants and station information. The data can be evaluated using the evaluation software.

Latency of data delivery: Currently, a latency period of seven days applies to data delivery.

11 Quality management

The aim of quality management is to automatically monitor all important parameters of the radio research system at defined times for defined periods in order to be able to detect irregularities and correct errors as swiftly as possible.

The following areas are tested in a standardised manner: radio consumption data, weighting, time delay, simulcasting, heavy consumption, sample and pool (size and structure), panellist compliance (missings, dropouts, wearing and docking behaviour), hardware stock management, referencing (recorded stations and missed recordings).

The standardised check is carried out daily, weekly, monthly or per semester, depending on the parameter.

The radio research system is subjected to an annual audit on general quality by the Media Research Commission (MWK).

12 Target group information

Target group information is provided, which offers not only relevant criteria for the analysis of the data but also relevant details for the planning of radio campaigns.

Survey methodology: The survey of criteria (B interview) is conducted online (CAWI) or by phone and is linked to recruitment.

Updates: All criteria are re-surveyed every two years – in the context of the follow-up survey. The follow-up survey is designed in such a way that the new criteria can be released at the beginning of January of the following year.

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