
On-air diversity and inclusion

Younger audiences

Audiences in education

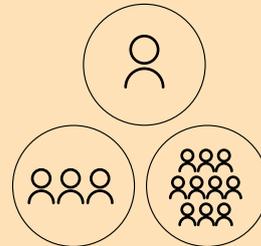
Life stage audience segments

Loyal Audiences

Accessibility

RTE in the community

Audiences abroad



While RTÉ enjoys universal reach, it is a challenge to attract younger audiences and retain other traditionally loyal audiences. To know, reflect and engage with its audiences, RTÉ will:

- Reflect the nation's diversity both on and off air
- Connect with the many communities of Ireland
- Open a two-way channel with audiences in education
- Continue to serve those with sensory disabilities
- Be a connection to home for the Irish abroad and represent Ireland to those interested in Irish culture

In putting the audience first, RTÉ recognises that:

- Life stage is the key differentiator of media needs
- It must improve the relevance of its content for all audiences
- Perceptions of RTÉ One are key to influencing perceptions of RTÉ overall
- Viewers can find the tone of RTÉ One heavy and serious, and would prefer more variety and diversity

RTÉ plays a unique and valuable role in Irish society. Its reach is universal, with more than 90% of adults using one or more RTÉ services every week. RTÉ's television and radio services are consumed in significant numbers across a wide range of genres, as illustrated by the top 20 programme rankings. RTÉ One and RTÉ Radio 1 are the most watched and listened to channels in the country, while RTÉ's

online and mobile services are used by almost half of Irish adults each week.

RTÉ is one of the most trusted organisations in the country, most notably for its news and current affairs content. More than 80% of adults consistently agree that RTÉ "enables me to connect with national events" and "is an important part of Irish life"⁵.

However, behind these strengths there are challenges. Younger adults lead the trends towards online, on-demand and short-form content, and particularly away from linear television. Audience profiles of RTÉ's linear services tend to skew older than the overall national population⁶.

Weekly reach for RTÉ overall among under 35s has shown some slippage over recent years and RTÉ's share on both radio and television has declined over the past decade⁷.

In RTÉ's view, the future is not about the demise of linear audiences in favour of an on-demand world. Rather it will be a blend of live viewing and listening across multiple devices complemented by anytime, anywhere, on-demand consumption. This is fuelled by demand for high-quality content, where locally produced programmes and journalism continue to have strong resonance with audiences.

⁵ Source: RTÉ Brand Tracker 2014-16

⁶ Sources: B&A Digital Tracker (July 2016), TAM Ireland Ltd (FY 2016), JNLR Ipsos MRBI, 2016/4

⁷ Sources: TAM Ireland/Nielsen TAM, Consolidated data, 24hr, Mon-Sun. JNLR Ipsos MRBI, 2016/4, 24hr weekday share

Research commissioned by RTÉ has shown that life stage is the key differentiator of the media needs of Irish people. These life stages, or phases in peoples' lives, are drivers of attitudes and behaviours. They are influenced by dependent children in the household and the age of those children, followed by a person's age, gender and social class.

Media needs vary across distinct audience segments. There is a spectrum ranging from wishing to relax, unwind and escape, to wishing to be empowered and up-to-date with the latest news, but all segments wish to be entertained. Media consumption continues to fulfil more personal needs such as offering some precious 'me time', spending time with family and providing companionship. Research also shows that RTÉ One is the single strongest influencer of the public's perception of RTÉ.

RTÉ wishes to reflect, capture and analyse the pulse of the nation through its content. It will:

- Take a more outward-looking approach to better understand audience needs beyond demographics
- Further explore what impacts their lives
- Personalise and curate how they experience RTÉ

See the Audiences Insights section on page 42 for further information.

On-air diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion is at the heart of RTÉ's vision. RTÉ aims to become a leader in diversity and inclusion, both on and off air. This will necessitate a change in RTÉ's content and output, as well as in the organisation itself and its culture. RTÉ will:

- Invest in staff training
- Measure diversity on air
- Develop a new generation of current affairs talent
- Engage with and listen to minority audiences

The population of Ireland has changed significantly over the past two decades. Almost a quarter of the population is aged over 55 and the number of children is also growing. Ireland's towns and particularly cities have become more ethnically mixed. More of us are identifying as having some form of disability. Recent social changes have increased awareness of religious diversity, sexual orientation and gender diversity, while the ongoing impact of the recession and the homelessness crisis has shown a society that has grown more unequal and polarised.

In developing this strategy, RTÉ engaged extensively with stakeholders, staff and external diversity specialists. Most fundamentally, RTÉ's programmes and content will more authentically reflect modern Irish society and appeal to Ireland's changing population.

RTÉ in the community

RTÉ is involved in a wide range of national, regional and local events that enable it to engage more directly with its audience. These range from the British Telecom Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition, the St Patrick's Day Festival, Bloom, the RTÉ All-Ireland Drama Festival, the Rose of Tralee, the National Ploughing Championships, Culture Night, the Cork Film Festival and Mojocon.

Through RTÉ's outreach scheme, 42 bespoke groups from second- and third-level education, inner-city social projects, overseas visitors and civic groups were hosted on site in 2016.

RTÉ makes its own contribution to Irish life and culture through the very successful RTÉ Supporting the Arts scheme, which promotes attendance at grassroots cultural festivals and events by providing valuable broadcast airtime and social media support. In 2016 RTÉ supported more than 100 such events, with an estimated commercial value of €1 million of airtime granted to arts organisations across the country.

RTÉ aims to strengthen its community engagement across Ireland through direct partnership, editorial reflection and participation in a diverse range of events. It will:

- Connect with and reflect the many communities of Ireland, whether they are based on geography, language or common interest
- Engage with stakeholders, the Audience Council and the public
- Provide a diverse programme of nationwide events and broadcasts
- Actively support community and civic initiatives and a national arts support strategy
- Audit its activities across the regions
- co-ordinate all community, outreach and education activities across the organisation
- Play a leadership role in terms of standards of good corporate citizenship

Audiences in education

RTÉ makes a significant contribution to learning and public education in Ireland through radio, television and online content, as well as a wide range of non-broadcast educational initiatives and partnerships. Much of this story is untold. RTÉ will conduct an audit to scope its educational activities and review how it creates and re-purposes content with education value across all genres/platforms.

RTÉ will open a two-way channel with audiences in education, both in the formal education sector and informal life-long education. It will target key younger audiences and embed RTÉ content in their daily activities to increase their awareness of RTÉ. The strategy will explore themes such as music, the Irish language, the archives, media literacy and

Audiences first

media practice. The strategy will also help fulfil RTÉ's mandate in respect of accessibility, diversity and the promotion of the Irish language.

In addition, RTÉ will establish a website (RTÉ Learn) to showcase educational content, partnerships and technologies. It will be a 'single point of contact' for educators available via desktop, mobile and tablet, and will be accessible to all members of the community.

Accessibility

In 2014, RTÉ became the first and only Irish broadcaster to introduce audio description (AD), providing AD for the blind and visually impaired to its broadcast output.

In 2016 RTÉ developed an Irish Sign Language (ISL) hub on RTÉ Player. This offers more than 100 titles at any time to the ISL community. It is both a programme catch-up and archive service that is constantly refreshed.

Over the past five years, RTÉ has met the vast majority of its access commitments, despite overall levels of curtailed investment within RTÉ.

Given Ireland's aging and increasing population, demand for access services is likely to increase. RTÉ will continue to innovate to meet the needs of RTÉ's diverse audience, including those with sensory disabilities.

RTÉ will:

- Appoint a Head of Access Services who will be responsible for auditing current levels of resource and work practices, exploring the scope for more effective use of modern technology (e.g. voice recognition) and identifying the most expedient ways to deliver access services in both linear and digital output
- Engage on an ongoing basis with relevant stakeholders and industry experts
- Demonstrate leadership in providing national media access services across a broad range of programme genres to include live content, and indigenous and acquired content.
- Enhance the dedicated ISL hub on RTÉ Player over the lifetime of the strategy.

Audiences abroad

RTÉ is mandated to deliver a television and radio service to the Irish abroad. It also fully recognises the intrinsic value in delivering this service to the many Irish people abroad who use RTÉ's services to connect to news, events and entertainment from home, as well as to those interested in Ireland.

The Irish abroad represent a diverse group of people, from emigrants who have plans to return home to the Irish people who have made a permanent home abroad. Across this spectrum, RTÉ is an important and often vital connection to home. RTÉ has a significant role to play in bringing Irish culture to the wider world and representing our achievements to global citizens everywhere, while also developing a special relationship with the Irish diaspora.

Audiences abroad have extensive access to RTÉ content through:

- RTÉ's online services (RTÉ.ie, RTÉ Player, RTÉ News Now app, RTÉ Radio Player)
- Live radio, live streamed radio and radio catch-up – while the LW radio service will be phased out, plans are underway for a UK DAB station for the Irish abroad
- RTÉ's dedicated online services for the Irish abroad (GAAGO and RTÉ Player International)
- RTÉ's social media profiles

RTÉ will be a connection to home for the Irish abroad for news, national events, entertainment and culture. It will also represent Ireland to those abroad interested in Irish culture.