



Fidelman & Co.



QUESTION

Mass media access: Europe (1)

INSIGHTS

- In the UK, 95.5% of households have TV access, almost 90% have radio, and 88% have Internet; cost, age, and geography are the most common factors keeping UK citizens from getting some kind of media access.
- Since TV is available for free in Spain, 98% of the population has mass media access of some kind; geographical factors limit the remaining percentage, as rural areas like the region of Aragon lack even mobile Internet access.

OVERVIEW

In the UK, a maximum of 4.5% of people lack access to mass media of some kind. Statistics for Spain are slightly better, with just 2% of the population lacking mass access. I wasn't able to find information on the percentages in either country who can't be reached in an emergency. Below you'll find my rundown of media uptake and access statistics for radio, TV, and Internet in both countries, along with some explanation of the reasons why some populations lack access.

UK

According to a study by UK communications regulation body Ofcom, [95.5% of UK households \(1\)](#) have TV access of some kind ([94% of households \(1\)](#) have digital access). [Just under 90% \(1\)](#) have radio access. And while the UK's infrastructure could theoretically give [100% of households \(4\)](#) access to broadband Internet, in practice [only 88% \(1\)](#) of the UK population has Internet access. Put differently, 4.5% of households lack TV access, around 10% lack radio, and 12% lack Internet. All told, the percentage of the UK population that lacks access to mass media of any kind is 4.5%, since TV has the highest penetration. The actual number is likely a bit lower than this, however, as a [significant number of UK citizens \(7\)](#) use technological options to access TV broadcasts without a subscription.

The population most likely to lack Internet access is older citizens, who feel that they [don't have the skills \(2\)](#) to use an Internet connection or that an Internet connection [isn't useful to them \(2\)](#). Cost keeps [8% of those \(2\)](#) without Internet access from getting connected, and [rural areas suffer \(3\)](#) more than urban centers in terms of access. Cost is also a problem for some citizens when it comes to TV access, prompting some to opt for a [black-and-white TV license \(6\)](#), as it's £100 cheaper than a color subscription. Prices were a factor in some citizens' [decision to pirate TV \(7\)](#) instead of paying for a license as well.

SPAIN

In addition to its UK report, Ofcom also publishes a [yearly international report \(4\)](#) of media uptake and usage in various EU countries. According to the 2017 international report, [95% of Spain's population \(4\)](#) has potential access to broadband Internet (in practice, [just over 82% \(9\)](#) are regular Internet users) while [75% have a radio \(4\)](#) of some kind ([71% listen weekly \(4\)](#)). Digital television is [available for free \(8\)](#) in Spain, and [98% of the country \(8\)](#) has access to this service; as a result, just 2% of Spain's population lacks mass media access of some kind (with 18% lacking Internet and 25% lacking radio; here, too, TV has the highest penetration with just 2% of the population lacking access).

Geography seems to be the main factor keeping Spain's unreached population from getting access to mass media. While [95% \(4\)](#) of the country's population lives in areas

where fixed broadband is available, [5% of Spanish households \(4\)](#) fall outside of broadband coverage areas. This is especially true in rural areas like the [region of Aragon \(5\)](#), where many villages lack even mobile internet coverage. Since TV coverage is available for free, it seems likely that geographic factors keep the remaining 2% of people from accessing that as well.

CONCLUSION

In the UK, cost and geographical factors keep 4.5% of the population from having access to mass media of some kind. Rural areas have reduced access to broadband Internet, and cost keeps some individuals from having television access. In Spain, 98% of the population has TV access; geographical factors keep the remaining 2%, like those in the rural region of Aragon, from getting access.

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