

Is amateur radio growing or dying?

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By the terms *growing* and *dying* I'm going to assume that we're discussing whether the numbers are increasing and decreasing, respectively. Then again, we could also be referring to the interest level.

According to HamData.com, the number of US licensed amateurs increased from 824,753 to 838,069 between June 2020 and June 2021, so the number of licensed American hams did indeed increase by $838,069 / 824,753 = 1.61 \%$, taking into account expired licenses and silent keys.

According to the Brookings Institute, during the same period, the population of the US increased by 0.58 %. This means growth in the number of licensed amateurs exceeded that of the US population growth by 36.0 %, or in other words, the per-capita percentage of licensed amateurs actually increased. Moreover, in 2020, 22,600 US hams allowed their licenses to expire, but 36,497 Americans received new licenses, possibly indicating that new interest in the craft outweighed waning interest by more than 61 %. So, by most rational indications, the hobby is most definitely growing.

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