

Event Report

HAM RADIO Friedrichshafen 2022

From June 24-26, 2022, the 45th HAM RADIO took place in Friedrichshafen, Germany. Alongside the Hamvention in Dayton/Ohio, USA, and the Ham Fair in Tokyo/Japan, it is one of the largest amateur radio exhibitions in the world. Although the participant count was a bit lower than 14.300 in 2019 before Covid, more than 10.000 people from all over the world attended the event this year. Together with Silvano (IU2KWO) and Federico (IU2NUO) from the OpenRTX project, Wojciech (SP5WWP) and Mathis (DB9MAT) set up a booth at the exhibition to make people aware of both projects and to share the current status.



Besides having several modified MD-380 radios for interested visitors to try out M17, the project set up an MMDVM-based hotspot connected to the M17-M17 reflector and showcased the state and progress of Module17, a modem that can be used together with a 9600 baud

capable transceiver to create a M17 compatible radio. Two Module17s were set up at the booth, allowing people to have M17 QSOs with them which attracted much attention. While the team did not count the numbers of visitors, not many moments passed without a conversation with interested visitors. Some people were already aware of the M17 project, but for most the exhibition was the first interaction with it. Most visitors of the booth were very interested and supportive of the project, especially because of the free and open source background and the possibility of DIY-ing all components. At the same time, the need for readily available M17 capable equipment became apparent, with many people asking when Module17 or pre-modded radios would be commercially available.

The German amateur radio association, DARC, set up a so-called “HAM group” for the project, which consists of a Matrix chat instance and a mailing list, and is supposed to support the development of the project. This group was unveiled during the exhibition and Mathis, DB9MAT, held a short talk introducing the project.



Furthermore, Wojciech, SP5WWP, was invited to talk at the Software Defined Radio Academy 2022, which was co-located with the exhibition. This presentation attracted much attention and was received very well. It was live streamed and recorded on YouTube and can be watched here: https://youtu.be/j0i_bkH2lho?t=6035



The booth was fully equipped with all equipment necessary to modify MD-380 type radios to run OpenRTX and transmit and receive M17. Several radios were modified during the exhibition, allowing new users to participate in M17.

During the exhibition, the M17 and OpenRTX team spent much time discussing the project and cooperation with Jonathan, G4KLX, the founder and main developer of MMDVM, which already offers full support for the M17 mode. The results of these discussions will certainly help the further development of M17.



On the evening of the second day, the M17 and OpenRTX teams had a dinner together with the wife of Wojciech and girlfriend of Federico, and with Jonathan, G4KLX. This dinner was not only used to further discuss technical details, but mainly to further get to know each other as most of the project members hadn't met in person yet.

All in all, the exhibition was a great success. Many people were newly introduced to M17 and most were very impressed and interested. Those that already knew the project were happy to meet some of its main developers and learn about the progress of the specification, MD-380 implementation and Module17. While some are open to modifying their radios themselves and several people suggested that they would try to organize group buys for Module17 prototypes, the need for readily available M17 capable equipment became apparent. The team was very happy to meet in person and is already planning on attending next year's HAM RADIO exhibition in Friedrichshafen.