

# METHODOLOGY & SOURCES

## METHODOLOGICAL PRECISION AND CONSISTENCY

IFPI's work is overseen by its Global Finance and Chart Committees, which include representatives from member record labels, and are guided by IFPI's Global Governance Principles.

All revenues are reported to IFPI in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which are incorporated into the IFPI Global Market Reporting Standards 2026. IFPI continuously works with individual markets to ensure consistency and accuracy in the figures reported.

For the calculation of the number of streaming subscription accounts and users of those accounts, IFPI has agreed a methodology with global representatives from each of its major members and applied this consistently to comparative years. IFPI uses its relationships with Digital Service Providers (DSPs) to review these methodologies and ensure they are accurate and consistent globally.

The methodology for the IFPI Global Charts is developed in partnership with IFPI's member record labels and reviewed on an annual basis, ensuring that the charts reflect global commercial success. All charts are based on submissions from participating labels across the world, which are compiled and converted into chart units by IFPI, using conversion rates reflecting the relative economics (revenue per unit of consumption) of each format and region.

Employing a standardised methodology aligned with IFPI National Chart standards and using the latest conversion rates, chart compilers generate economically weighted national charts and certifications for the industry. This involves utilising consistent and detailed DSP and sales data, ensuring precision and reliability in all IFPI-affiliated, official charts.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Trade value:** also known as wholesale value. Trade value refers to record companies' revenue from the sale/licensing of recorded music products and content to DSPs, domestic retailers/intermediaries, net of discounts, returns, taxes and sales allowances. Premium sales (physical and digital) are included. Promotional goods, non-music/non-sound recording artist related income, deletions, cut-outs, distribution fees and income from legal settlements from anti-piracy cases are excluded. All analysis, growth and trends are based on trade value unless otherwise stated.
- Figures are reported by the record companies to IFPI for the respective markets and IFPI works closely with the local IFPI National Group and chart compilers in the respective markets to apply a 'coverage factor' to the figures to account for non-reporting independent labels and DIY artists, therefore representing 100% of the market. These coverage factors are calculated on a market-by-market basis for each revenue reporting category, and using deep granular chart data, capture all revenues not attributed to IFPI reporting members. Following this process ensures the IFPI reporting is as inclusive and representative of the global market as possible.
- **US\$ values:** local currency values are stated at independently sourced 2025 average exchange rates. IFPI restates all historic local currency values on an annual basis. Market values can therefore vary retrospectively as a result of foreign currency movements.
- **Digital revenues:** income from subscription streaming, ad-supported audio streaming, ad-supported video streaming, social media/short-form video platforms such as Meta and TikTok, downloads, mobile personalisation and other digital revenues. Excludes minimum guarantees.
- **Subscription streaming:** income from subscription services' premium tier (including fitness platforms) and from subscriptions bundled with other services (e.g. subscriptions to Apple Music, Spotify Premium, QQ Music, or subscriptions bundled with a mobile phone contract). Includes the sale of tethered downloads if purchased as part of a streaming subscription, where the downloads are only available during the subscription period.
- **Ad-supported audio streaming:** income from the free tier of streaming services e.g. the free and advertising-supported tier of Spotify, Deezer, or NetEase Cloud Music. This category also includes revenues from social media platforms such as Meta, TikTok, Snapchat, and YouTube Shorts. Semi-interactive digital radio service revenues (e.g. Pandora) and cloud income are also included.
- **Ad-supported video streaming:** income from the free tier of video streaming services. Includes income from video-on-demand services (e.g. YouTube official videos or Vevo).
- **Downloads and other digital:** A sale delivered online and sold under a pay-per-transaction (or use of pre-pay), including albums, single tracks, music videos and mobile personalisation (e.g. ringtones).
- **Physical:** includes sales of all physical formats, covering CD, vinyl, music video and other (e.g. platform albums, cassette, mini disc and pre-loaded physical devices). CD sales ordered via the internet (e.g. via Amazon) are reported as physical sales.
- **Performance rights revenues:** income collected by recording industry music licensing companies from third parties for the use of sound recordings and music videos in broadcasting (radio, TV and cable), public performance (nightclubs, bars, restaurants, hotels, etc.) and certain internet uses, as well as private copying levy income. Globally, performance rights revenues refer to collections by music licensing companies for the use of sound recordings and encompass performers' and record companies' shares for such collections. Performance revenues reported by IFPI refer to all revenue recognised in MLCs' accounts during the relevant year.
- In USA, **SoundExchange collections** for internet uses are reported under "Mobile personalisation and other digital". Collections from digital satellite radio and other sources are reported under "performance rights". This reflects the fact that a significant proportion of SoundExchange revenues comes from personalised or semi-interactive digital radio services (such as Pandora) that are elsewhere reported directly by the companies under "digital" revenue. As such, USA performance rights exclude SoundExchange's collections from simulcasting, webcasting, and semi-interactive digital radio services such as Pandora.
- **Synchronisation revenues:** flat fees or royalties from the use of sound recordings in TV, films, games, and adverts. Figures under this category refer to gross income to the music company generated within the territory, irrespective of repertoire source.
- **Subscriber numbers:** IFPI agreed a methodology for the calculation of the number of streaming subscription accounts and users of those accounts with global representatives from each of our major members and applied this consistently to each year. IFPI uses its relationships with DSPs to review these methodologies and ensure they are accurate and consistent globally.
- A paid subscriber is defined as someone who is signed up to and paying for a streaming service with access to the music catalogue on the service. These streaming services are predominantly music streaming platforms (such as Spotify, Apple Music and QQ Music) but also include other platforms (such as Peloton and Apple Fitness+) where recorded music is licensed. Trialists are excluded from this definition. Any comparisons between revenues and subscriber figures should be made with caution, as the subscriber figures are a snapshot as at the end of December – it is not possible to ascertain from this data at which point in the year a subscriber joined.

- Total paid subscription users and accounts figures for 2024 have been restated from those published in GMR 2025 to reflect additional DSP data availability, including data from the Chinese DSPs of BoDian, FanQie, Huawei Music, Qishui Yinyue and the Japanese DSP Rakuten. The impact on the 2024 users of subscription accounts figure was an increase of 12 million users, resulting in the global total being restated from 752 million to 764 million. These updates were made alongside the incorporation of additional data relating to the DSPs' subscription streaming revenues.
- **Top songs and top albums on country pages:** the national top songs and top albums published on country pages are supplied by the local IFPI National Group depending on the basis of the official chart available. For further details of what formats are included in each Official National Chart please contact the local IFPI National Group or chart compiler. Note: there are not currently Official Charts in Bulgaria or Hong Kong and the information displayed is based on data available to the local IFPI National Group.
- **IFPI Global Charts:** IFPI compiles six Global Charts, which rank the top artists, singles and albums of the year globally. The methodology, developed in partnership with IFPI's member record labels and reviewed on an annual basis, ensures that these charts reflect global commercial success. All charts are based on submissions from participating labels across the world, which are compiled and converted into chart units by IFPI.
- The **IFPI Global Artist Chart** and **IFPI Global Album Chart** include all Physical and Digital consumption formats, which are converted by region according to the relative economics (revenue per unit of consumption) of each. All consumption is converted into Album Equivalent Units (AEU) according to these conversion rates, the process which forms the chart rankings. Due to the sensitive nature of the data used for these conversions, chart units are not published.
- The **IFPI Global Single Chart** is produced under a similar process but only considers digital consumption formats (Streaming and Downloads). This consumption is converted into Subscription Stream Equivalent Units (SSE) by region, which form the chart rankings. From 2024 onwards, the IFPI Global Single Chart methodology was revised to more accurately represent the economics of streaming worldwide.
- The **IFPI Global Album Sales Chart** considers only physical album sales and full album downloads. Rather than being converted, these sales are counted on a unit basis, which form the chart rankings.
- The **IFPI Global Vinyl Album Chart** considers only vinyl album sales. Rather than being converted, these sales are counted on a unit basis, which form the chart rankings.
- The **IFPI Global Streaming Album Chart** considers only subscription-based and ad-supported streams. All streaming consumption is converted into Album Equivalent Units, according to the aforementioned conversion rates, and form the chart rankings. Due to the sensitive nature of the data used for these conversions, chart units are not published.
- **Rounding:** figures are subject to rounding, which may affect overall totals and percentages.
- **Revisions and updates:** some figures presented in this publication may differ from previous years due to revisions and updates or due to better information becoming available.
- IFPI figures may differ from the reports of local industry groups due to IFPI's required coverage adjustment or a different basis of reporting.

## SOURCES

- **Currency, exchange rates:** Average annual exchange rates calculated based on monthly data from [exchangeratesapi.io](https://exchangeratesapi.io).
- **Population, share of population by age group:** The World Bank ([data.worldbank.org](https://data.worldbank.org)). Except Taiwan – Dept. of Household Registration, Ministry of the Interior, Republic of China (Taiwan) ([ris.gov.tw](https://ris.gov.tw)) as not available in the World Bank dataset.
- **Total consumption expenditure per capita:** Household and NPISH (non-profit institutions serving households, for example trade unions and charities) consumption expenditure is the market value of all goods and services, including durable products (such as cars, washing machines, and home computers), purchased by households. Total consumption expenditure per capita is published by the World Bank ([data.worldbank.org](https://data.worldbank.org)). Except Taiwan – Statista ([statista.com](https://www.statista.com)) as not available in the World Bank dataset.
- **Top independent labels:** Lists are provided by IFPI National Groups based on market data available to them. Lists may include National Group members only or full market. Methodologies for compilation vary. Lists are alphabetic only and do not indicate market ranking. For further information about a specific national list, please contact the IFPI National Group directly.