



UK recorded music revenues grew 3.8% in 2020

23.03.21

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Strong growth from streaming and vinyl, as the British public turned to music during the lockdowns, more than offsets the impact of the pandemic.

For global revenue figures, see IFPI's Global Music Report 2021 [here](#).

The **BPI**, the association of independent and major record labels, reports that **UK recorded music revenue**¹ rose by **3.8%** in 2020 to **£1.118 billion**.

This is the highest total since 2006 (£1.166bn)² and the fifth consecutive year of growth, although the rate of revenue growth slowed in 2020 (compared with the 7.3% rise in 2019), due to the effects of the pandemic.

Revenues from streaming fuelled much of the rise, growing 15.4% to £736.5 million, even as the pandemic slowed overall growth. Physical revenues decreased only marginally by 2.6% to £210.3 million - by the spirited response of independent shops and specialist chains to their loyal customers to the lockdowns. Climbing revenues from vinyl, boosted by online campaigns and purchasing, increased by nearly a third (30.5%) to £86.5 million - the highest total since 1989. This helped to cushion reduced CD sales income, which, though still rising, fell by 18.5%.

Heightened demand for music among the UK public during the lockdowns, which as reported by the BPI in January³ grew by 8.1%, under-pinned the overall growth in revenues. It also underscores the appeal and success of British artists, including a new generation of rap, hip hop and dance talent that is harnessing the reach and

Table 1: UK Recorded Music Revenue 2018 – 2020

| £'000 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | % +/- |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Streaming | | | | |
| Subscriptions | £467,558 | £566,913 | £650,292 | 14.7% |
| Ad-supported | £19,096 | £36,086 | £42,386 | 17.5% |
| Video streaming | £29,735 | £35,196 | £43,801 | 24.4% |
| Total | £516,389 | £638,195 | £736,479 | 15.4% |
| Download | | | | |
| Albums | £44,303 | £30,675 | £22,388 | -27.0% |
| Tracks | £36,931 | £27,154 | £20,900 | -23.0% |
| Total | £81,234 | £57,829 | £43,288 | -25.1% |
| Other Digital | £1,745 | £1,440 | £2,448 | 70.0% |
| Total Digital | £599,368 | £697,464 | £782,215 | 12.2% |
| Physical | | | | |
| CD | £176,781 | £141,766 | £115,602 | -18.5% |
| Vinyl LP | £57,103 | £66,285 | £86,527 | 30.5% |
| Other Physical | £6,888 | £7,817 | £8,163 | 4.4% |
| Total | £240,772 | £215,868 | £210,292 | -2.6% |
| Sync | £25,485 | £28,318 | £20,850 | -26.4% |
| Performance Rights | £131,636 | £135,915 | £105,430 | -22.4% |
| TOTAL MARKET | £997,261 | £1,077,565 | £1,118,787 | 3.8% |

immediacy of streaming to achieve tens or hundreds of millions of streams annually, and forging successful careers in music.

These revenues enable record labels' continued investment in artists in new music, and underline how in 2020 recorded music will have helped to support many artist incomes during the pandemic.

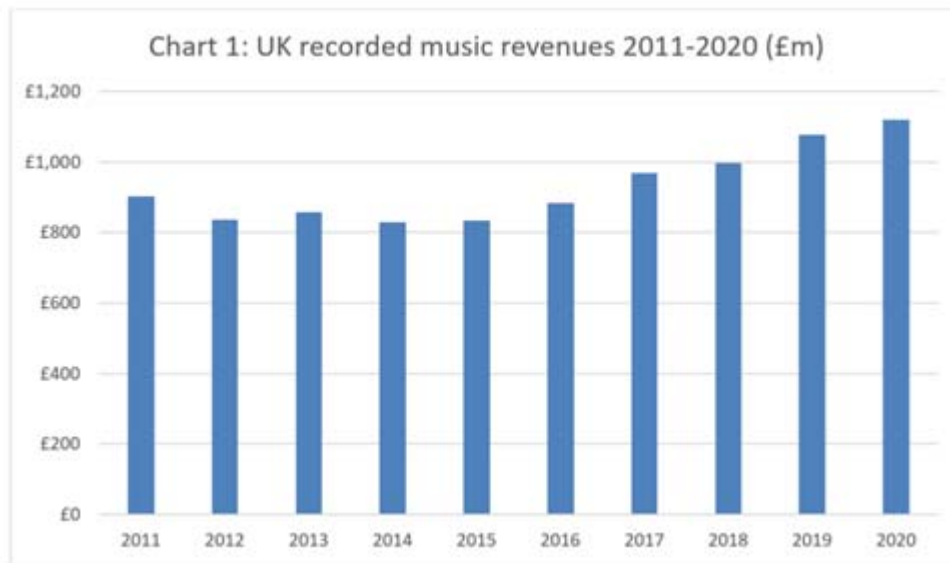
Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive BPI, BRIT Awards & Mercury Prize,

"The lockdowns inevitably affected financial results in 2020 but, other parts of our industry which were hit very hard, the seamless connectivity of streaming and the enduring love of vinyl meant that recorded music was relatively insulated from its worst effects, and still able to post growth.

"The ongoing increase in paid subscription streaming fuelled our ability to continue investing in artists. The safe and rapid reopening of live venues is the music community's critical first priority, but the resilience of recorded music demonstrates the important role it plays in people's lives even in the midst of the COVID pandemic."

Revenues from streaming & digital

Income of £736.5 million (up 15.4%) from streaming, which now accounts for 80% of UK music consumption, was shaped largely by the increase in subscriptions to streaming services (such as Spotify, Apple, Amazon Music and Deezer). This rose by 14.7% to £650.3 million to reflect the 139 billion audio streams served in 2020 (up 22% on 2019). Ad-funded streaming income grew by 17.5% to £42.4 million⁴. Income from video streaming



platforms, notably YouTube, showed some encouraging growth, r a quarter (24.4%) to £43.8 million – but remains just half the an generated by vinyl.

Revenue from downloads continues to decline as substitution acc towards streaming. It fell by 25.1%, with downloaded albums ge just £22.4 million (down -27%), and tracks contributing £20.9 m (-23%).

Revenues from physical formats: vinyl, CD & cassette

Vinyl remains a star performer, contributing £86.5 million to reve 2020, up by 30.5%. Purchasing of physical formats largely shifts in response to the lockdown challenges, with demand boosted by campaigns such as *LoveRecordStores* as well as more establishe promotions including *Record Store Day*, *National Album Day*, or *Vinyl Week*. The growing number of direct to consumer (D2C) sa physical products also added to the revenue figures.

The best-selling vinyl titles in 2020 included, in sales order, class recordings by Fleetwood Mac (*Rumours*), Oasis (*What's The Sto Morning Glory?*), and Amy Winehouse (*Back To Black*) along wi albums by Harry Styles (*Fine Line*), Kylie Minogue (*Disco*), AC/D Up), and IDLES (*Ultra Mono*).

Annual income from vinyl is now closing in on CD revenues, alth latter format, which next year celebrates its 40th anniversary, stil generated over £115 million (-18.5%) to underline its continuing resilience and importance to labels. Sales of other physical form

notably cassette, which saw over 150,000 units purchased in 2020, the highest total since 2003 – yielded £8.2 million in revenues, up 4% on the year.

Geoff Taylor further commented:

“Vinyl’s exceptional performance despite retail lockdowns confirms its role as a long-term complement to music streaming. 2021 is likely to be the year in which revenues from LPs overtake those from CDs for the first time in well over three decades – since 1987. In addition to the immediacy and convenience of streaming, fans want to get close to the artists they love by owning a tangible creation, and more and more of them are discovering how vinyl, or lovingly created CD box-sets, enhance their experience of music.”

Revenues from ‘Sync’ and Performance Rights

Sync – music used in film and other soundtracks and in advertising – has been an area of revenue growth for labels in recent years, but stalled in 2020 given the profound effects of the pandemic on film production and screenings, yielding £20.9 million (-26.4%). Income from performance rights remains substantial at £105.4 million, but, again, was unsurprisingly down by over a fifth (-22.4%) on the previous 12 months as a result of the severe impact of lockdowns on nightclubs, retail and other areas of public performance.

Geoff Taylor added:

“The long-term closure of nightclubs has attracted less media attention than festivals and live music, but they are also very important to fans and to the music community culturally and socially, contributing a valued component of artist, songwriter and label income. Their return as a vibrant part of the Night-time Economy is something we all work hard to achieve.”

UK artists benefit from label investment to help drive growth

A new wave of UK talent is rapidly joining more established British global stars to excite fans and drive music consumption. D-Block Aitch, AJ Tracey, Headie One, J Hus, KSI and Nines, plus artists Corry, Jax Jones, Gerry Cinnamon and Jorja Smith are just some names forging successful careers thanks to the global reach of streaming and in 2020 nearly 200 artists were streamed over 100 million times in the UK. Label investment in new music underpins much of this virtuous cycle of growth.

Notes to Editors

¹ Record label revenues comprise income generated through sales of purchases of music across physical and download formats, public performance rights, and ‘sync’ – music licensed for use in film & games soundtracks and advertising. The BPI figures are based on a survey of its record label members, with *Official Charts Company* share data used to account for labels who are not BPI members. The figures are verified against data collected by the IFPI. The growth is in line with the trend of recent years and is the highest annual amount that includes streaming and public performance revenue since 2006, when the combined

was £1,166.2m. Record company earnings from public performance rights are generated by the broadcast and public performance of recorded music – the figures presented represent income collected on behalf of producers (i.e. record labels and not artists).

² Please note that sync and performance revenues only go back to 2019, which means that annual revenues from sales and streams of music are still 19% less than they were at their peak of £1,232m in 2018.

³ BPI Music consumption figures for 2020 [here](#).

⁴ Ad-funded streaming income grew by 17.5% to £42.4m. 2019 figures have been re-stated (from £1.069bn reported last year to £1.071bn) in order to allow like for like comparison following additional revenue being reported in this category.

2020 Official Charts Top 10 albums (8 of the top 10 are by British artists)

1. Lewis Capaldi: *Divinely Uninspired To A Hellish Extent*
2. Harry Styles: *Fine Line*
3. Dua Lipa: *Future Nostalgia*
4. Billie Eilish: *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*
5. Stormzy: *Heavy Is The Head*
6. Pop Smoke: *Shoot For The Stars, Aim For The Moon*
7. Ed Sheeran: *No. 6 Collaborations Project*

- 8. Queen: *Greatest Hits*
- 9. Elton John: *Diamonds*
- 10. Fleetwood Mac: *50 Years – Don't Stop*

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