

IRELAND

MARKET PROFILE

EMEE Music Market Study
2025

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1. General Context

Ireland is an island nation in the North Atlantic, separated from Great Britain to its east by the North Channel, the Irish Sea, and St George's Channel. With a landmass of 84 421 km², it boasts a diverse landscape of rolling green hills, dramatic coastal cliffs, and vibrant cities. Ireland maintains strong economic and cultural ties with its European neighbours and the United Kingdom. The country is divided into four provinces – Leinster, Munster, Connacht, and Ulster – which are further subdivided into 26 counties. While the Republic of Ireland comprises most of the island, Northern Ireland remains part of the United Kingdom.

Ireland has a rich tradition of music, literature, poetry and storytelling, with famous names like U2, Sinéad O'Connor, Bono, Enya, The Cranberries, The Pogues, Hozier, and many others, hailing from the island. Music is at the core of Ireland's national heritage, and thus international artists will find an array of opportunities and diverse cultural scenes, making Ireland a great destination for touring, gigging and collaboration opportunities.

1.1. Society, economy and communication

1.1.1. Society

As of April 2022, the Republic of Ireland had a population of 5 149 139, according to the [Census of Population 2022](#). The average age in Ireland is 38,8 years. This youthful demographic profile is further highlighted by data from [Society Measuring Ireland](#), which shows that only 15,3% of the population is over 65, compared to 25,3% aged 45-64, and a significant 19,2% under 14 years of age.

While Ireland has two official languages, Irish and English, the Census of Population 2022 indicates that only around 40% of the population can speak Irish (as Gaeilge). The number of Irish speakers is higher in the Western regions of the country, particularly in County Mayo and County Galway.

1.1.1. Economy

Ireland, using the euro (€) as its currency, has a robust economy with a GDP of €510 billion in 2023. Notably, Ireland's GDP per capita for the same year reached €92 867, placing it significantly higher than the European Union average. While traditionally known for sectors like agriculture and tourism, Ireland has witnessed substantial growth in its technology and pharmaceutical industries in recent decades. This has contributed to its position as a hub for multinational companies. ([Eurostat](#))

1.1.1. Digital & communication

Smartphone usage	95% of the population
Internet penetration	95% of the population

Ireland has a strong and rapidly improving internet infrastructure. According to the "Broadband in Ireland 2023" report by ComReg (Commission for Communications Regulation), high-speed broadband is widely available, with significant investment in fibre optic networks. As of September 2023, over 70% of premises in Ireland had access to fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) connections, and the government aims to achieve nationwide high-speed broadband availability by 2028 ([CSO](#)).

In terms of internet usage, the "Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2021" published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides insights into device preferences. Similar to trends observed in Germany and other developed countries, mobile phone usage dominates in Ireland. In 2021, 95% of internet users in Ireland accessed the internet via their mobile phone. Laptops were also popular, with 74% using them for internet access, while tablet usage stood at 55%. The survey also highlights the growing use of other devices, such as smart TVs and game consoles, for accessing the internet.

Age group	Frequency of internet usage (used within the past 3 months)
16-29	100%
30-44	99%
45-59	94%
60-74	79%
75+	50%

Table 1. usage of internet devices in Ireland. Source: [Central Statistics Office](#) (2021) *Internet Coverage and Usage in Ireland 2021*.

1.2. Geography and Getting Around



Figure 1: Map of Ireland. Source: [Nations Online Project](#)

Ireland is made up of four provinces, Leinster, Munster, Connaught (in the Republic of Ireland) and Ulster (in Northern Ireland) and 32 counties (26 in the Republic of Ireland and 6 in Northern Ireland). This report will focus primarily on the Republic of Ireland.

Main cities in Ireland and their populations

City	Population
Dublin	1 263 219
Cork	222 526
Limerick	102 287
Galway	85 910
Waterford	60 079

Table 1: Main cities in Ireland and their populations. Source: [CSO Census Data 2022](#)

Distance between main cities

Cities	Distance
Dublin - Cork	260 km
Dublin - Limerick	202 km
Dublin - Galway	207 km
Dublin- Waterford	170 km
Cork - Limerick	100 km
Cork - Galway	204 km
Cork - Waterford	121 km
Limerick - Galway	107 km
Limerick - Waterford	126 km
Galway - Waterford	230 km

Table 2: Distance between major cities in Ireland

There are international airports in Dublin, Cork, Shannon (25 km west of Limerick City) and Knock (70 km north of Galway), but most airlines primarily use Dublin as their Irish hub. Aer Lingus and Ryanair would be considered the main Irish airlines, though Ireland is also well-served by all the main European and international airlines. The main ferry ports for international travel are Dublin, Rosslare (County Wexford) and Cork.

Irish Rail operates the national train service, which has daily services linking all the main population centres. There are also frequent intercity bus services operated by Bus Eireann and a number of private operators including Aircoach and Citylink. There are also TFI Local Link bus services which connect communities throughout rural Ireland.

1.3. Artist status, copyright, tax and Legal

1.3.1. Artist status & business identity management

Based on the [Creative Unite resource](#): Ireland provides several forms of support and recognition for artists:

- **Social Security:** The "Professional Artists on Jobseeker's Allowance" scheme allows self-employed artists to receive unemployment benefits for up to a year without being required to seek other employment, provided they meet certain criteria such as income thresholds and membership in approved arts organisations.
- **Basic Income for the Arts:** A pilot scheme running from 2022 to 2025 provides a basic income of €325 per week to 2000 artists and arts workers, selected through a lottery system. This initiative aims to address income instability in the arts and research the impact of a basic income on artistic practice.

- **Aosdána:** This state-funded affiliation honours artists who have made significant contributions to the arts in Ireland. Membership is capped at 250 and offers a means-tested stipend (Cnuas) to support full-time artistic dedication.

While these initiatives provide crucial support and recognition for artists, there is no official register of artists in Ireland.

Those who work in the music industry and other creative sectors in Ireland use various legal forms to conduct business and can operate as sole traders (which is often how freelancers work and pay tax) or limited companies. Irish company law is overseen by the [Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment](#) and is outlined in the [Companies Act 2014](#). Some Irish company law derives from EU legislation. More information on setting up a business in Ireland is available [here](#).

1.3.2. Copyright and related rights

Ireland, as a member of the European Union, operates within a copyright framework that is both aligned with EU directives and informed by its own national legislation. The [Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000](#) serves as the foundation of Irish copyright law, providing comprehensive protection for various forms of creative expression. This includes literary, artistic, musical, dramatic, and audiovisual works, among others.

Irish copyright law recognises both moral and economic rights. Moral rights protect the author's connection to their work, including the right of attribution, the right to object to distortions, and the right to prevent false attribution. Economic rights grant creators exclusive control over the use of their works, including reproduction, distribution, public performance, broadcasting, and making available online.

The duration of copyright protection in Ireland generally aligns with the EU standard: the life of the author plus 70 years. For related rights, such as those of performers and producers of sound recordings, the protection period is also generally 70 years. However, it is important to notice differences in terms of sound recordings: the term is “50 years after the recording is made *or* first made available to the public *or* where a sound recording was created on or after 1 November 2013 the term of protection is 70 years after the sound recording is made” ([Enterprise.gov](#)).

Ireland is a signatory to key international copyright treaties, including:

- The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works.
- The Rome Convention.
- The WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT).
- The WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT).
- The TRIPS Agreement.

Which licences are granted collectively by the CMOs vs negotiated individually

USAGE	AUTHOR'S RIGHTS	NEIGHBOURING RIGHTS
Public performance	Collective	Collective
Broadcasting in radio and TV	Collective	Collective
Reproduction and distribution (physical)	Collective	Collective
Background music	Collective	Collective
Making available online	Collective	Individual

Licensing to film production	Individual / collective in some cases (blanket license)	Individual
Licensing to TV production	Individual / collective in some cases (blanket license)	Individual
Licensing to advertisements	Individual	Individual
Licensing to video games production	Individual	Individual

Table 3. Collective and individual licensing of author's rights and neighbouring rights in Ireland.

1.3.3. Visa and mobility info

Although Ireland is a European Union (EU) member state, it is not a member of the Schengen area. That said, citizens of the EEA (the EU, plus Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein), Switzerland and the UK can live and work in Ireland without an employment permit or visa. The US is part of the Visa Waiver Programme, meaning US citizens can travel to Ireland for leisure and business purposes, without a visa, for 90 days.

Musicians coming to Ireland to play shows who hold passports from a country outside of the EEA, Switzerland and the UK need to apply for a short stay 'C' performance visa. This will allow them to come to Ireland for up to 90 days to stage a performance. Full information on how to apply for this visa [here](#).

1.4. Music Policy

The Arts Council (*An Chomhairle Ealaíon*) is the statutory public agency for developing and funding the arts in Ireland. Its [Music Policy and Strategy Statement](#) and associated programme of actions was developed in 2022 and 2023 following widespread sectoral and public consultation and research, including direct contributions from 628 individuals and organisations in the music community, and also took into account the [2021 Arts Insight](#) research commissioned by the Council.

The purpose of the Music Policy and Strategy Statement is to provide a clear framework to guide the Council's future decision-making in its development and support of music, as well as setting out current strategic priorities. An accompanying implementation plan provides an initial framework of actions to give effect to this and outlines how the Council will plan its work in music in the coming years.

1.4.1. Main funding programmes for music

There are a number of different organisations that operate funding programmes for music in Ireland. Some of the main funding bodies include.

Arts Council/*An Chomhairle Ealaíon* - this is the main agency in the State for developing and funding the arts in Ireland. You will find a comprehensive guide (including deadlines and application forms) to the funding schemes it operates for organisations, artists, and groups working within the arts [here](#). This includes touring and festival support, artistic bursaries and residences.

Culture Ireland - operating within the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Culture Ireland supports Irish artists to present and promote their work at various strategic international festivals and venues. They operate a number of schemes,

including a Regular Grant Scheme and a Showcase Scheme. Full information on all its funding opportunities (including deadlines and application forms) [here](#).

County councils and local authorities - arts officers in each county council also fund various music projects using both funding from the Arts Council and their own individual councils. A full list of all current arts officers can be found [here](#).

Music Network - Music Network is Ireland's national music touring and development organisation which develops and runs programmes that make high-quality live music accessible to communities throughout Ireland and help musicians develop fulfilling careers. Details of its funding programmes for artists can be found [here](#).

2. Music Consumption

2.1. Music Discovery and Engagement

No official reports or studies are available regarding music discovery and engagement in Ireland. However, the Listen Up Ireland 2020 report from [Irish Research into Digital Audio Consumption & Behaviour](#) shows 71% of adults listen to digital audio on a regular basis, with 18 to 44-year-olds being the heaviest users. 80% of 18 to 34-year-olds listen to on-demand music services ([IAB, 2020](#)).

According to the music industry professionals spoken to while compiling this report; social media, streaming playlists, and radio remain key gateways for music consumption. Social media remains the most important platform for overall discovery and engagement, especially for younger music consumers.

2.2. Participation in Live Events

There's no doubt whatsoever about the primacy of live music in Ireland. According to [PWC's Ireland's Entertainment & Media Outlook 2023–2027](#), the largest segment of the Irish music market is live music, which accounted for 44% of market value in 2022—a growth rate of 107% since 2021, when revenues from live music were only starting to recover post-pandemic. Though this growth rate is expected to drop significantly, live music revenues in Ireland are expected to continue to grow at 6,1% annually, which is above the global rate of 4,6% ([Ryan, 2023](#)).

In terms of ticket sales, Pollstar figures for 2022 show Ireland's two main promoters, MCD Productions/Live Nation and Aiken Promotions, selling 3604 million tickets at the box office between the two of them ([c2c concerts, 2023](#)).

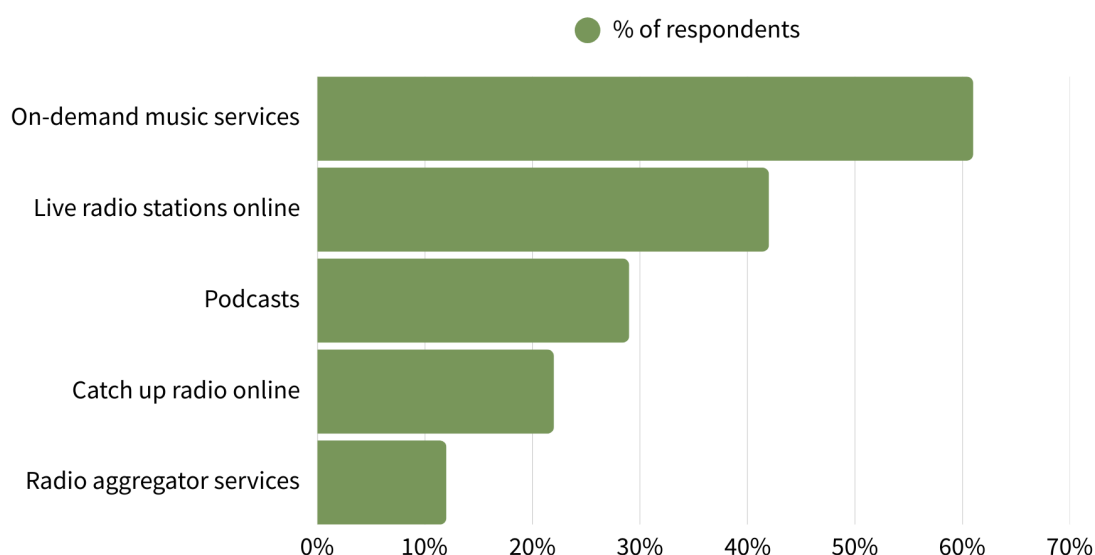
Coming out of the inertia of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns, Irish live music has recaptured a lot of lost ground across all venue sizes and sectors. While local support for Irish live music has historically been a feature of the domestic market, the number of Irish acts such as Kneecap, The Mary Wallopers, Lankum, The Scratch, etc, who are consistently selling out big rooms and venues is quite noteworthy. The local festival scene is also undergoing a sustained period of growth with new events like Beyond the Pale and Night and Day joining such long-established fixtures as All Together Now, Electric Picnic and Another Love Story.

While there are some independent ticket sellers operating in the Irish market, such as Tickets.ie and Eventbrite - and there are also direct sales by venues in the case of clubs or < 1000 capacity shows - Ticketmaster remains the number one platform for ticket sales in Ireland. The company has never disclosed how many tickets it sells in this jurisdiction, but it would be easily in excess of 80% of the available inventory. The vast majority of tickets would be sold online.

[IMRO's 2025 Music Industry Report](#) shows that large-scale music events attract over 30% of the Irish population with attendees spending about 298€ annually. Music festivals attract around 16% of Irish adults with attendees spending on average 194€ annually. The report showcased that the main barrier to entry for music events and reason that more of the population does not participate in them, comes down to cost, with 66% naming the cost as the main reason for not attending such events ([IMRO, 2025](#)).

2.3. Listening to Recorded Music

Data from IAB Ireland's Listen Up Ireland [2020 Digital Audio Survey](#) showcases that on-demand music services remain the most popular form of consuming digital audio (for 61% of respondents), with online live radio stations coming in second (at 42%) and podcasts third (at 29%) ([IAB, 2020](#)).



Format	2020	Among 18-34 yrs	Vs 2019
On-Demand Music Services	61%	80%	+9%
Live Radio Stations Online	42%		-2%
Podcasts	29%	44%	+7%
Catch Up Radio Online	22%		+2%
Radio Aggregator Services	12%		+3%

Figure 2: Digital audio listening habits of Irish users. What do digital audio users listen to on a weekly basis?
Source: [IAB 2020. Digital Audio Survey](#).

The most used streaming platform in 2019 was Spotify, with 49% of participants stating that they use the platform weekly. This was followed by the Irish Radioplayer (with 16% using it weekly), iTunes (11%) and Amazon Music (10%) ([IAB, 2020](#)).

Platform	Weekly	Monthly	Beyond monthly	Don't use
Spotify	49%	10%	13%	28%
Irish RadioPlayer	16%	12%	14%	58%
iTunes	11%	7%	18%	63%
Amazon Music	10%	7%	11%	65%

Google Play	9%	10%	16%	65%
TuneIN	8%	5%	11%	75%
Soundcloud	4%	7%	18%	72%
G	2%	3%	5%	89%
Deezer	1%	3%	10%	86%

Table 2: Frequency of usage of platforms. Source: [IAB 2020. Digital Audio Survey](#).

According to the [2022 Irish Audio Market Report](#), live radio remains the most dominant listening medium. A whopping 90% of the respondents tune into live radio weekly, followed by music streaming at 40% and YouTube Music at 35% ([Ipsos, 2022](#)).

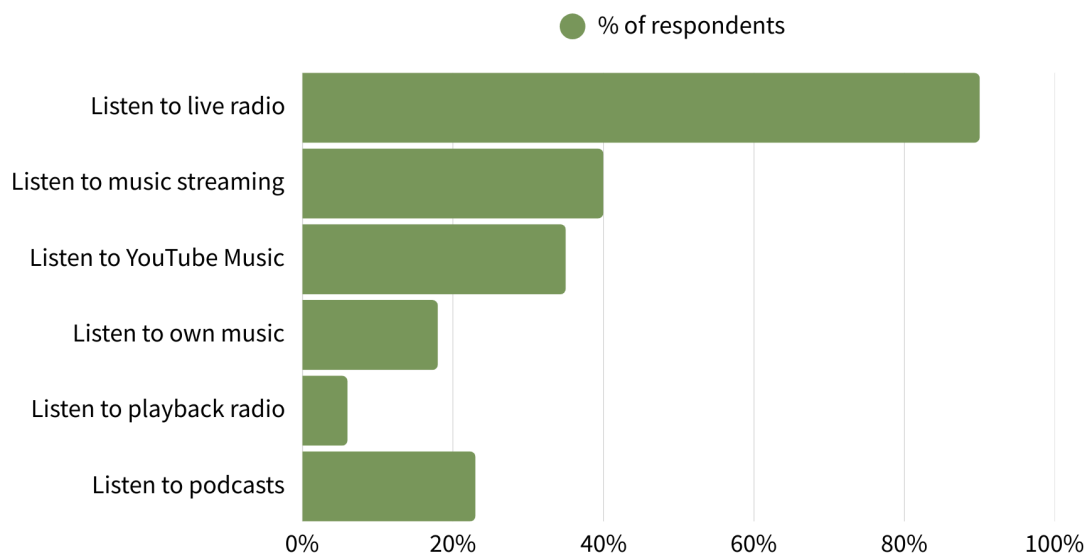
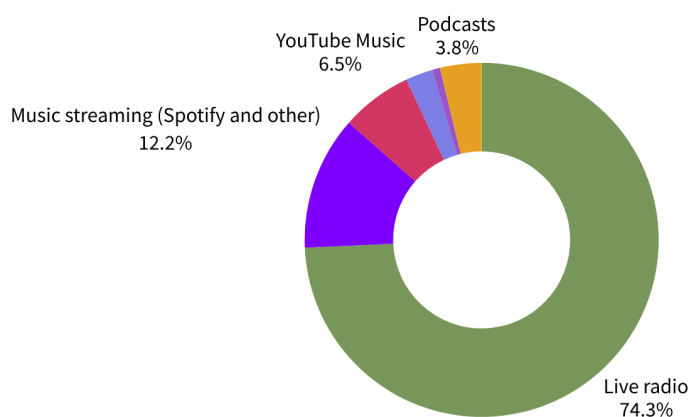


Figure 3: Weekly listening habits of the Irish population in 2022. Source: JNLR 2022-2Audio Module. Base: all 15+. [Ipsos Radio Centre Ireland \(2022\)](#). P. 24

In terms of daily listenership, live radio is also the most dominant with 74% tuning into it daily, followed by music streaming and YouTube Music. This shows that the daily listening habits of Irish people closely mirror the weekly listening habits, albeit on a smaller scale ([Ipsos, 2022](#)).



Type	Share of audio time spent daily
Live radio	74,5%
Music streaming (Spotify and other)	12,2%
YouTube Music	6,5%
Podcasts	3,8%

Own music	2,5%
Listen back to Irish radio	0,7%

Figure 4: Share of audio time spent daily in 2022. Source: JNLR 2022-2Audio Module. Base: all 15+. [Ipsos Radio Centre Ireland \(2022\)](#). P. 29

According to the [2025 Music Industry Report by IMRO](#), the most listened to genres in Ireland are Pop (64%), Rock and Classic Rock (43%) and Dance Pop (36%). Irish traditional music is enjoyed by around 30% of adults, with over 40% of those older than 55 saying they enjoy this genre. Around 53% of the population subscribe to streaming services like Spotify, YouTube Music or Amazon Music ([IMRO, 2025](#))

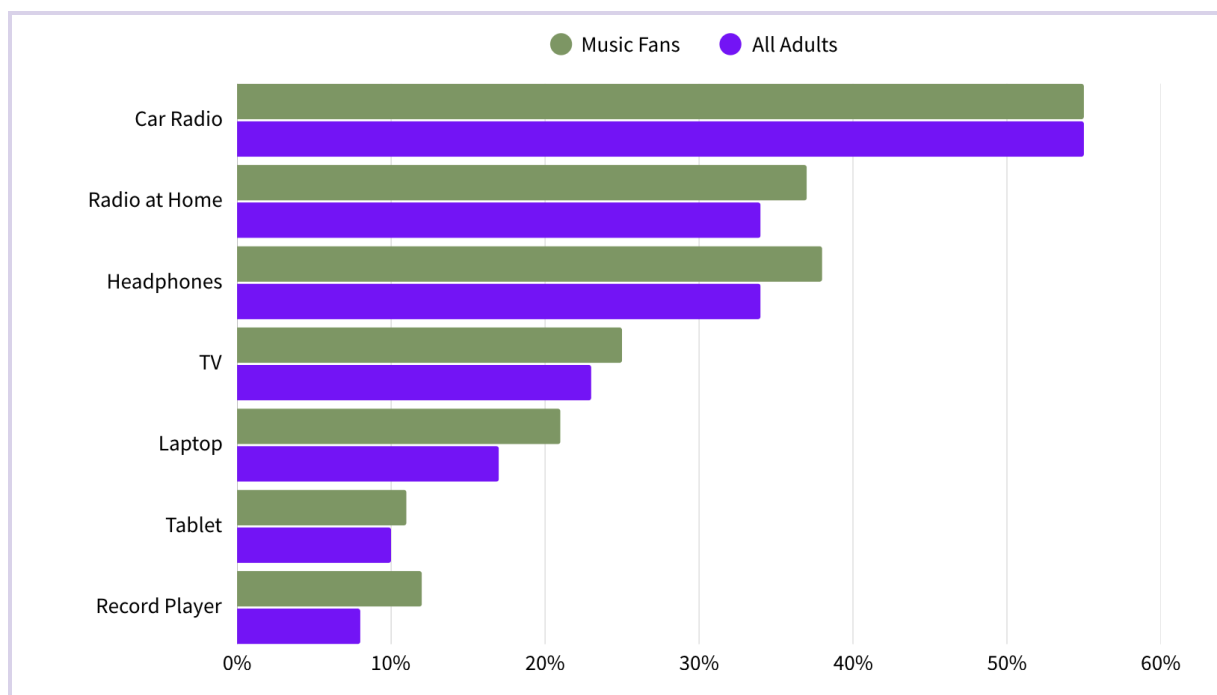


Figure 5: Where do Irish people listen to music? Source: IMRO (2025). [Music Industry Report 2025](#). P. 15.

3. Music Ecosystem

3.1. Music economy

Ireland is known for its culture, creativity and rich musical heritage encompassing both traditional music and modern acts. It is the home of many well-known artists like U2, The Chieftains, Sinéad O'Connor, Glen Hansard, The Script, Hozier and Kodaline, bringing in export revenues and enhancing Ireland's reputation as a cultural and musical hub.

Ireland's music and entertainment industry has experienced remarkable growth in recent years, with live music emerging as a key driver of revenue. According to PwC's Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2023-2027, the Irish music and radio market surged by 32% between 2021 and 2022, adding €93 million to reach a total of €379 million ([Ryan, 2023](#)). Live music alone accounted for 44% of this market, with revenues more than doubling (107% growth) as the sector rebounded from the pandemic ([BIMM, 2024](#)). Though this rapid growth is expected to slow, live music revenues are still projected to increase at a healthy 6,1% compound annual growth rate (CAGR), outpacing the global rate of 4,6% ([Ryan, 2023](#)).

Beyond the music sector, the broader Irish entertainment and media industry is on track for steady expansion, with an expected annual growth rate of 2,9% through 2028—reaching €7,6 billion, up from €6,6 billion in 2023. This growth outpaces the global rate of 2,5% and is largely fuelled by rising mobile internet services, internet advertising, and video-on-demand subscriptions. Additionally, Ireland's government continues to support the creative sector, as seen in 2024's increase in the cap on eligible film project spending from €70 million to €125 million and the extension of the film tax credit through 2028 ([Lloyd, 2024](#)).

Historically, Ireland's music industry has played a significant role in the economy (more recent data is scarce). In 2015, the sector's total contribution—including consumer spending and supply chain impacts—stood at €703 million, reflecting a 48% increase from 2012. The most revenue was generated from creative works, followed by live music playback, radio & other media; music-related consumer spending and music supply chain. Employment in the industry also grew steadily, with core music jobs increasing by 5% to 9490 and total employment rising by 14% to 13 131. Given that many professionals in the music industry work part-time and have other sources of income, the number of people making at least part of their living from music is most likely even higher (IMRO Report, 2017). With strong government support, continued digital transformation, and Ireland's well-established reputation in the global music scene, the industry is well-positioned for further growth in the coming years.

[IMRO's 2025 Music Industry Reports](#) showcases that the Irish music industry generated €1 bln in the previous year and employed over 13 400 people. The main revenue came from live music spending, generating €786 mln annually. This was followed by spend on streaming, which made up a total of €375 mln ([IMRO, 2025](#)).

3.2. Industry Events and Conferences

Ireland Music Week

Ireland's official music industry showcase and conference takes place in Dublin every October. It features showcase gigs, panels, workshops, masterclasses and keynote interviews. It's attended by over 70 international delegates and hundreds of Irish music industry professionals.

Your Roots Are Showing

Your Roots Are Showing has become a cornerstone event for Ireland's folk, roots, and traditional music community. The conference attracts a mix of local and international artists, music industry professionals, and folk music enthusiasts, all converging to share their knowledge, experience, and passion for folk music culture. Its next outing will be in Killarney, Co Kerry, in January 2025.

Choice Music Prize

Choice Music Prize is an annual event which highlights those Irish albums which deserve some extra time in the spotlight and, ultimately, to select the album which best sums up the year in Irish music. The winning album is selected by a panel of 11 media professionals at a live event held every March in Dublin's Vicar Street venue. The event also includes a day-long Choice Conversations conference featuring music business panels and keynote interviews.

Output Belfast

Located in Northern Ireland, Output Belfast is a large annual one-day music conference and showcase, presented by Belfast City Council and Belfast City of Music, and curated by Score Draw Music. Held each November, the event brings together over 750 artists, industry professionals, and students for a day of panels, workshops, and networking opportunities.

3.3. Collective Management Organisations

Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO)

IMRO administers the performing rights in copyright music on behalf of its members (songwriters, composers and music publishers) and on behalf of members of the international overseas societies that are affiliated with it. Music users such as broadcasters, venues and businesses must pay for their use of copyrighted music by way of a blanket licence fee

Mechanical Copyright Protection Society Ireland (MCPSI)

MCPSI is an organisation which represents thousands of composers and publishers of music. By way of agency agreement with MCPSI and through their reciprocal agreements with other organisations around the world, MCPSI also represents the interests of many thousands of other music copyright owners in other countries. MCPSI licences companies and individuals who record musical works and collects and distributes the royalties payable under those licences. This service is available to anybody who wants to use recorded music, including record companies, independent production companies, mobile and online companies and many others. MCPSI also licenses the importation of recordings from outside of the EU.

Recorded Artists Actors Performers (RAAP)

Recorded Artists Actors Performers (RAAP) is a not-for-profit organisation set up by performers for performers to ensure that musicians receive performance royalties from broadcast recordings.

Following the introduction of the Copyright Act, 2000 R.A.A.P. was set up to administer and distribute performance royalties to artists. It has agreements with over 50 territories globally and continues to cultivate relationships with other markets to ensure all our members are represented equally. Since launching in 2001, RAAP has collected and

distributed performance royalties in excess of €100 million to more than 80 000 performers in Ireland and abroad.

Phonographic Performance Ireland (PPI)

PPI was established in 1968 to administer record company rights in the public performance, broadcasting and reproduction of their recordings. PPI also collects royalties on behalf of performers. We control the public performance, broadcasting, and other rights in hundreds of thousands of recordings on thousands of different labels. These include not only Irish recordings but also most recordings available worldwide. PPI issues licences to thousands of businesses and organisations from all sectors across the Republic of Ireland, playing recorded music and/or music videos in public. These can range from bars, nightclubs, shops and hotels to offices, factories, gyms, universities and local authorities.

3.4. Industry Trade and Development Associations, Unions and other Music Organisations

First Music Contact (FMC)

FMC is the lead national music organisation for resourcing musicians and the independent music sector in Ireland. Funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, They deliver projects at key stages of an artist's development, helping them develop real careers. The talent development pipeline of programs run by First Music Contact include a regional development outreach and education program, a free consultancy service for artists and professionals, an online music portal Breakingtunes.com, Ireland's annual music showcase and conference IrelandMusicWeek.com and Music From Ireland, the MEO for Ireland funded by Culture Ireland

Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA)

The Irish Recorded Music Association (IRMA) is a non-profit organisation set up by record companies in the Republic of Ireland to provide members with a means to discuss matters of common interest and to provide a medium to represent the Irish record industry in negotiations with the Government and other parties. Generally, it operates to promote and protect the welfare and interests of the Irish record industry.

Music from Ireland

Music From Ireland is the Irish Music Export Office run by First Music Contact and funded by Culture Ireland, which funds and coordinates the Irish presence and promotes the Irish acts to international delegates across international showcases annually, including Eurosonic, SXSW, The Great Escape and Primavera Pro.

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE)

Founded in 1951, CCE is a non-profit cultural movement involved in the preservation and promotion of Irish traditional music. It has over 450 branches throughout Ireland and around the world.

Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA)

Founded in 1987, ITMA's mission is to be the national public archive and resource centre for Irish traditional music, song and dance, and the globally-recognised specialist advisory agency to advance appreciation, knowledge, and practice of Irish traditional music. It is home to the largest, most comprehensive collection of Irish traditional music, song, and dance in the world.

Improvised Music Company (IMC)

Improvised Music Company (IMC) is an Arts Council-funded resource for Irish musicians and a specialist music promoter for jazz and ethnic music in Ireland, which produces festivals and large-scale concerts of Irish and international jazz, experimental and world music artists, as well as touring, education and audience development.

Music Network

Music Network is Ireland's national music touring and development agency and was founded in 1986 by the Arts Council. Its mission is to make high-quality live music available and accessible to people throughout Ireland.

Association of Irish Composers (AIC)

The AIC represents contemporary music composers in Ireland and Northern Ireland. We seek to enhance the professional status of our members on local, national and international levels through four strands of activity: opportunity, discussion, promotion and advocacy/support. It receives financial support from IMRO, Culture Ireland and Arts Council Ireland.

Musicians Union of Ireland (MUI)

The Musicians' Union of Ireland is a trade union which represents musicians from every genre, along with music teachers, singers and other music professionals. Through membership of the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) the Union plays an important part in advancing, promoting and protecting the rights of musicians in a global marketplace in the digital age.

AIM Ireland

Established by First Music Contact in 2019, AIM Ireland is the Irish Association of Independent Music and the collective voice of the independent music industry in Ireland. Our mission is to promote growth, awareness and opportunities for the independent music industry at a national and international level.

Minding Creative Minds

Minding Creative Minds is an organisation established to offer a free 24/7 well-being and support programme for any individual in the creative sector based in Ireland and Irish creatives abroad.

Contemporary Music Centre (CMC)

The CMC is Ireland's archive and resource centre for new music, supporting the work of composers throughout the Republic and Northern Ireland. It works with composers, performers, musicologists, teachers, students and reaches a range of audiences, including music enthusiasts, other art forms, children and young people, in its support of Contemporary Music.

Screen Composers Guild of Ireland (SCGI)

Established in 2018 by a group of working composers, the SCGI is a not-for-profit organisation run by its members, for its members, which is the representative body for professional composers of original music for Film, TV, Animation, Advertising and Games.

Music Alliance Ireland

Music Alliance Ireland is a group of national music organisations, performance groups, concert promoters and resource organisations that have come together to establish a collective voice for the music sector in Ireland.

Music Publishers Association of Ireland (MPAI)

MPAI is a membership-based trade association representing the interests of the Irish music publishing community and the songwriters and composers signed to those publishers, both at home and internationally.

Music Generation

Music Generation is Ireland's national music education programme, initiated by Music Network and co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, together with the Department of Education and Skills and Local Music Education Partnerships. It is currently established in 20 areas of Ireland, creating some 48 500 opportunities each year for children and young people to access music tuition in their own locality.

IMRO has put together a [sheet](#) on the structure of the Irish music industry, which showcases how the industry works, and who the main unions are.

4. Live Music Sector

4.1. Live Music Industry in Figures

At first glance, the live music scene is probably the most visible and busiest manifestation of the music industry in Ireland. There are a huge number of arenas, stadiums, theatres, festivals, multi-purpose venues and smaller clubs producing a strong country-wide circuit for live bands.

That said, the live sector is quite imbalanced with the biggest share of cash and box-office tickets generated by a very small percentage of acts - and a huge portion of that income leaving the state. According to PwC's 2024 report, 69% of the total revenue from live music, which was €354 mln in 2023, came from huge international acts like Taylor Swift, Harry Styles and the like ([Lloyds, 2024](#)).

Summer months are usually full to capacity with live events taking place in sports stadiums, parks and random fields, but the box office receipts generated by four nights of Coldplay at Croke Park is not something which can be replicated in the winter.

There is also a noticeable lack of 5000-capacity indoor venues, which could provide a bridge between the 1500-capacity rooms like Vicar Street and the Olympia and the 10 000-plus arenas like the 3Arena.

In 2023, live music revenue reached €243 mln, marking a 23,5% increase from €197 mln in 2022. This accounted for 69% of Ireland's total music revenue of €354 mln, showcasing the importance of live music for the Irish music industry. The sector is projected to grow at a 2,8% compound annual growth rate (CAGR), reaching €279 mln by 2028, surpassing the global live music growth rate of 2,5% ([Ryan, 2024](#); [Healy, 2024](#)).

This boom has been driven in part by Ireland's rich live music culture, with iconic venues playing a vital role in the country's creative and social fabric. From intimate local gigs to large-scale international concerts, these spaces not only fuel economic growth but also sustain Ireland's reputation as a premier destination for live performances ([IMRO website](#)). Major acts such as Bruce Springsteen, Harry Styles, and Taylor Swift have contributed to the surge in revenue, reflecting both domestic enthusiasm for live events and Ireland's appeal to global touring artists.

As live music continues to outperform international growth rates, the sector remains a cornerstone of Ireland's entertainment and cultural landscape. With sustained investment, a strong venue network, and high audience engagement, Ireland is well-positioned to maintain its status as a leading live music hub in the coming years.

4.2. Music Festivals

Ireland has a vibrant festival scene with numerous festivals happening each summer, drawing in both local and international artists and audiences. Many of these festivals contribute strongly to towns and cities across the country. Below is a list of several well-known festivals across Ireland.

Electric Picnic *Stradbally, County Laois*

Ireland's biggest music and arts festival was founded as a one-day event in 2004 by the late promoter John Reynolds. The three-day event is now run by Live Nation offshoot Festival Republic and covers all the music bases from pop, indie and dance to electronica and folk. Also has a huge

non-music offshoot with talks, comedy, food demos, politics etc

When: August or September

Capacity: 75 000

Notable international acts: Calvin Harris (UK), Kylie Minogue (Aus), The Strokes (US), Florence & The Machine (UK), Billie Eilish (US), The 1975 (UK) etc.

All Together Now *Portlaoigh, Co Waterford*

Another innovative festival launched by the late John Reynolds, All Together Now calls itself a festival of discovery, music, art, food and wellness. It combines a number of music stages with other attractions in the beautiful surroundings of Curraghmore Estate, Co Waterford.

When: August

Capacity: 27 000

Notable international acts: The National (US), Jorja Smith (UK), The Prodigy (US), Self Esteem (UK), Barry Can't Swim (UK), Beak (UK) etc.

Another Love Story *Killybegs, Co Westmeath*

Founded in 2014 and billed as "a small festival with a huge heart", ALS is a weekend-long adventure in music and discussion in an old manor house deep in the Irish countryside. It's a festival which has built a great rep for itself on the back of a friendly, informal approach to festivaling.

When: August

Capacity: 2000

Notable international acts: James Holden (UK), The Comet Is Coming (UK), Sampa the Great (Aus), Grandbrothers (Germany), Modeselektor (Germany), Theon Cross (UK), JFDR (Iceland).

Longitude *Dublin*

Held in Marlay Park and promoted by MCD/Festival Republic/Live Nation, Longitude has been on the go since 2013 but has changed significantly since its initial indie/alternative line-up. These days, a hip-hop, R'n'B and pop line-up attracts a very young audience of school leavers and other coming-of-age revellers.

When: July

Capacity: 40 000

Notable international acts: Kendrick Lamar (US), Solange (US), Doja Cat (US), Becky Hill (UK), Megan Thee Stallion (US), A\$AP Rocky (US), Tyler the Creator (US), Travis Scott (US), Raye (UK).

Night & Day *Lough Key Forest Park, Co Roscommon*

Three years in, this independent and artist-driven festival is beginning to attract attention for its blend of homegrown music, exhibitions, and political debate set in the lush surroundings of Lough Key Forest Park outside Boyle in Ireland's west.

When: June

Capacity: 4 500

Sea Sessions *Bundoran, County Donegal*

The only festival in the country combining surfing on the mesmerising Atlantic waves and music. Dance, pop and new mainstream music dominate the line-up.

When: June

Capacity: 10 000

Notable international acts: Johnny Marr (UK), Jake Bugg (UK), Kasabian (UK), Groove Armada (UK), Sigrid (Norway), Clean Bandit (UK), Tinie Tempah (UK), Basement Jaxx (UK), Goldie (UK).

Live at the Marquee *Cork*

One of the best fixtures on the summer calendar, Live at the Marquee is an annual season of live shows organised by Aiken Promotions in a big tent in Cork city. On the go since 2005, the series has attracted huge international and Irish names across every genre imaginable.

When: May/June

Capacity: 5000

Notable international acts: Bob Dylan (US), Kanye West (US), Elton John (UK), Diana Ross (US), Paul Simon (US), Neil Young (US), Lana del Rey (US), P!nk (US), Lady Gaga (US), Jay-Z (US).

Live at the Iveagh Gardens *Dublin*

The Iveagh Gardens is the secret garden in the heart of the capital and features a bespoke series of live acts (and a comedy festival) every summer. Promoted by Aiken Promotions, the series began in 2009.

When: June/July

Capacity: 5000

Notable international acts: Pixies (US), IDLES (UK), Chic (US), Phoenix (France), Garbage (US/UK), Paloma Faith (UK)

Trinity Summer Series *Dublin*

The only music festival which can claim to be truly at the heart of the city, this MCD/Festival Republic/Live Nation-promoted event takes place over a week at Trinity College Dublin and always features a really strong line-up of standalone shows.

When: June/July

Capacity: 5 000

Notable international acts: Kraftwerk (Germany), Interpol (US), Air (France), The Specials (UK), Keane (UK), Crowded House (Australia), Beck (US), Michael Kiwanuka (UK).

Fleadh Cheoil *Wexford*

Fleadh Cheoil (music festival" in English) is an annual week-long Irish arts festival and competition showcasing the best of Irish trad and music. It takes place in a different town every year and pulls in huge crowds (over 600 000 in Mullingar in 2023) for a variety of competitions, jam sessions, street performances and concerts. Competitors and attendees come from across the whole of Ireland, as well as many European countries, the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and more.

When: August

Capacity: variable.

Forbidden Fruit *Dublin*

Held on the grounds of the Irish Museum of Modern Art at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Forbidden Fruit started in 2011. The festival usually features a wide range of cutting-edge indie, electronica and dance acts.

When: June

Capacity: 15 000

Notable international acts: Flaming Lips (US), Aphex Twin (UK), Tame Impala (Australia), Justice (France), Little Dragon (Sweden), Bon Iver (US), James Blake (UK).

When Next We Meet *Clonmel, County Tipperary*

One of the many small festivals to pop up in recent years, When Next We Meet showcases the best in alternative and Irish music.

When: June

Capacity: 600.

Open Ear *Sherkin Island, Cork*

A bijou event located on Sherkin Island off the coast of Cork (population of 111 with one pub, a bed and breakfast, a community centre and a church), Open Ear showcases avant-electronic and experimental music from home and abroad.

When: May/June

Capacity: 600

District X *Palmerstown House, County Kildare*

A new dance festival on the festival calendar, District X is promoted by well-regarded Dublin club promoters Index and District 8.

When: September

Capacity: 20 000

Notable international acts: Kerri Chandler (US), Skepta (UK), Sherrille (UK)

Beyond the Pale *Glendalough, County Wicklow*

It's only taken Beyond the Pale to make itself a fixture on the summer festival scene. It's located in the heart of Co Wicklow, a short drive from the capital, and promoted by the experienced Declan Forde from Selective Memory. As with most new-school Irish fests, it's a blend of music (club and club-friendly acts to the fore), talks, discussions, well-being and food sideshows.

When: June

Capacity: 12 500

Notable international acts: Orbital (UK), Grace Jones (Jamaica), Jessie Ware (UK), Marc Rebillet (US), Jon Hopkins (UK), Candi Staton (US), Leftfield (UK).

Kaleidoscope *Blessington, County Wicklow*

A family-friendly music and arts festival from MCD/Festival Republic/Live Nation in the grounds of Russborough House just outside Blessington, Kaleidoscope kicked off in 2019 before the pandemic called a halt to its gallop.

When: June

Capacity: 25 000

Notable international acts: Basement Jaxx (UK), Chic (US), The Kooks (UK), Feeder (UK), James Morrison (UK), Tom Odell (UK).

Mother Pride Block Party *Dublin*

The biggest annual Pride Party on the island, the Block Party is a big old giddy day out in the grounds of the National Museum Collins Barracks. Aside from music and DJ sets, there's also quality drag performances and appearances.

When: June

Capacity: 25 000

Notable international acts: Robin S (US), Princess Superstar (US), Self Esteem (UK), Peaches (Canada).

Sounds from a Safe Harbour *Cork*

Sounds from A Safe Harbour is a biennial festival of music, dance, art and conversation curated by Bryce and Aaron Dessner of The National, Oscar-winning actor Cillian Murphy, playwright Enda Walsh and curator Mary Hickson. With a particular focus on new works, collaborations and shared experiences, the festival takes place in various venues across Cork City.

When: September

Capacity: Varies by venue

Notable international acts: Bon Iver (US), Feist (Canada), Wilco (US), Kara Jackson (US), Ólafur Arnalds (Iceland), Bonnie Light Horseman (US), Efterklang, (Denmark).

Cork Jazz Festival *Cork*

The biggest jazz event in the country has been on the go since 1978 and attracts thousands of jazz fans to venues across the city from theatres to pubs. It has some starry acts on its back pages including Ella Fitzgerald, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea and Sonny Rollins. The festival has moved from its traditional jazz leanings in recent years to include more non-jazz performers

When: October

Capacity: varies by venue

Notable international acts: Kamasi Washington (US), Gregory Porter (US), Corrine Bailey Rae (UK), Hypnotic Brass Ensemble (US), Gilles Peterson (UK), Orchestra Baobab (Senegal).

Forest Fest *Emo, Co Laois*

An award-winning music festival showcasing the best of rock, pop, trad and folk, Forest Fest features over 80 acts across four stages in a forest (as the name suggests).

When: July

Capacity: 5000

Notable international acts: Suede (UK), Big Country (UK), The Human League (UK), Suzanne Vega (US), The Cult (UK), Stereo MCs (UK).

Body & Soul *Ballinlough, County Westmeath*

The festival took a break in 2024 after a 13-year run and plans to return in 2025. This independent festival grew out of a stage of the same name at the Electric Picnic and built a reputation for excellent curation, a fine mix of musical styles and a gathering for a good crew of buzzers.

When: June

Capacity: 5000

Notable international acts: Fever Ray (Sweden), The Blaze (France), Santigold (US), James Holden (UK), Arca (Venezuela).

Wider than Pictures *Dublin*

Wider than Pictures is an annual summer series of standalone shows on the grounds of the National Museum in Collins Barracks. Three years in, it has proven to be a success story thanks to a smart booking policy of Irish and international indie, rock and pop acts.

When: August

Capacity: 5,000

Notable international acts: Gossip (US), Fleet Foxes (US), James Blunt (UK), James (UK), Simply Red (UK), Future Islands (US).

Borderline *Dublin*

A showcase festival highlighting Irish and international breakthrough acts, Borderline began in 2024 in the Workman's Club and will return in Feb 2025.

When: February

Capacity: 300

Notable international acts: Antony Szmierek (UK), Fat Dog (UK), Lambrini Girls (UK), Maruja (UK).

Kilkenny Roots Festival *Kilkenny*

The festival has attracted some of the finest names in the Americana/Roots canon since its launch in 1998, including Calexico, Giant Sand, Drive-By Truckers, Jason Isbell, Alejandro Escovedo, Guy Clark, Chuck Prophet, Ray LaMontagne, Richmond Fontaine, Sturgill Simpson and Alabama Shakes. Audiences wind their way through the medieval streets sampling the huge range of music in the 30-plus venues, hosting over 40 Irish and international acts, with over 90 ticketed and free shows from early afternoon until late into the night. There's a mixture of old and new acts on the free pub gig trail and all styles are catered for, from swing to bluegrass, rockabilly to cajun, folk, blues and beyond.

When: May

Haunted Dancehall *National Concert Hall, Dublin*

An innovative event from the Foggy Notions team, Haunted Dancehall features 40-plus live performances and DJ sets from electronic, experimental, noise, ambient and contemporary classic acts over various rooms in the National Concert Hall.

When: October

Capacity: 1200

Notable international acts: Oneohtrix Point Never (US), Lonnie Holley (US), Tirzah (UK), Oneohtrix Point Never (US), Caterina Barbieri (Italy).

The Road to the Great Escape *Dublin*

With a sister event in Glasgow, The Road to the Great Escape blends the best of rising Irish talent with some of the most exciting newcomers from across the world across a number of Dublin venues.

When: May

Capacity: varies by venue

Notable international acts: Cat & Calmell (Australia), Jianbo (China), Overpass (UK).

Sligo Live *Sligo*

The premier music festival in the northwest, Sligo Live is a community-centred festival created by musicians and music lovers to showcase the very best of talent, both internationally established and emerging.

When: October

Capacity: varies by venue

Notable international acts: Robert Plant (UK), John Grant (US), Jools Holland (UK), Indigo Girls (US), Rhianon Giddens (US).

Other Voices *Dingle, County Kerry*

Launched in 2001, this long-running festival is unique in an Irish and international context. Shows in the tiny 100-capacity Church of St James for later TV transmission (which means they've attracted acts like Amy Winehouse and The National over the years), while a gig trail around the town keeps the thousands of visitors happy.

When: November/December

Capacity: varies by venue

Notable international acts: David Gray (UK), The National (US), Kae Tempest (UK), Paolo Nutini (UK), Young Fathers (UK), Little Simz (UK), Loyle Carner (UK), Elbow (UK), Sigrid (Sweden)

4.3. Music Venues and Clubs

Ireland has a rich tradition of live music which is deeply embedded in the country's social and cultural fabric. Live music isn't just confined to concert halls and arenas—many of the most memorable performances take place in intimate pubs, including traditional music sessions, open mic nights and grassroots gigs.

Below is a list of venues (ordered from largest capacity to smallest) in different cities and regions across Ireland.

DUBLIN

Croke Park

Home of Gaelic games, the biggest stadium in the city and the fourth biggest in Europe.

Capacity: 80 000

Notable international acts: Bruce Springsteen, Ed Sheeran, Coldplay, Oasis, AC/DC.

Aviva Stadium

Rugby and football stadium in the south of the city which has been long used for live music.

Capacity: 51 700

Notable international acts: Billy Joel, Taylor Swift, P!nk, Neil Diamond.

RDS

The Royal Dublin Society comes with a number of indoor and outdoor options.

Capacity: 38 000 (Arena outdoors)/10,000 (Simmons Court indoors)/3,000-5,000 (Main Hall)/900 (concert hall)

Notable international acts: Rammstein, Pixies, Bruce Springsteen, Bon Jovi, Paul Simon.

3Arena

Live Nation-ran arena in Dublin's docklands formerly known as the Point Depot.

Capacity: 13 000

Notable international acts: Beyoncé, Stevie Nicks, Diana Ross, Mitski, SZA, Scooter, Lauryn Hill, Interpol.

The Helix

Located on the DCU campus in Glasnevin in the north of the city, The Helix has a number of different venue options for promoters.

Capacity: 1300 standing/1070 seated (Mahony Hall)/433 seated (Theatre)

Notable international acts: Sufjan Stevens, The Stylistics, Caexico, Iron & Wine, Midge Ure, Biffy Clyro.

Bord Gáis Energy Theatre

While best known for musicals, the Daniel Libeskind-designed and Live Nation-operated theatre is also used on occasions for live music.

Capacity: 2111

Notable international acts: Bon Iver, Brian Wilson, Tori Amos, The Proclaimers, Suede.

National Stadium

Home of Irish boxing and also home to some really special live shows over the years.

Capacity: 2000

Notable international acts: Confidence Man, Leftfield, Feist, Gojira, PiL.

3Olympia Theatre

First operated as Dan Lowrey's Star of Erin Music Hall back in 1879, the Olympia is the grand starry dame of Dublin venues (and it has annual pantomimes).

Capacity: 1247 (fully seated)/1600 (standing/seated)

Notable international acts: REM, Chappell Roan, The Waterboys, Ride, Nas, The Last Dinner Party, Ezra Collective.

Vicar Street

The undisputed best live room in the city and country.

Capacity: 1050 (seated)/1500 (standing)

Notable international acts: Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Patti Smith, The Flaming Lips, Kanye West, Justin Timberlake, Idles, Flying Lotus.

The Academy

Three-roomed venue which houses a wide selection of live gigs and club nights.

Capacity: 850 (main)/450 (Green Room)/250 (Academy 2)

Notable international acts: Foals, Mumford & Sons, Bastille, The Killers, Macklemore, Deadmau5, Iggy Pop.

Button Factory

Located in the heart of Temple Bar, a buzzy space for live events and club nights.

Capacity: 550 (main room)

Notable international acts: Thurston Moore, Darkside, The Comet Is Coming, NIA Archives, Channel Tres, The Magic Numbers, Stereo MC's.

Whelan's

Open as a live venue since 1989, everyone and anyone has played in this Wexford Street favourite.

Capacity: 450 (main room)/120 (Upstairs at Whelan's)

Notable international acts: Nick Cave, Bonnie Prince Billy, Bloc Party, Arctic Monkeys, Arcade Fire.

Liberty Hall Theatre

A theatre located in the iconic Liberty Hall was originally used for trade union meetings but now hosts various folk and rock gigs.

Capacity: 411

Notable international acts: Dustin O'Halloran, The Delines, Ron Sexsmith, Tangerine Dream, Soft Machine, Indigo Girls.

Workman's Club

This former workingman's club is now one of the best live venues in the country with two live rooms.

Capacity: 300 (main room)/170 (cellar)

Notable international acts: Future Islands, Royal Blood, Anna Calvi, Dan Le Sac vs Scroobius Pip, Loyle Carner, Father John Misty.

CORK

Páirc Uí Chaoimh

The home of hurling and Gaelic football in Cork is also a pretty spectacular venue for large-scale live shows.

Capacity: 45 000

Notable international acts: Bruce Springsteen, Ed Sheeran, Oasis, Westlife, Elton John

Virgin Media Park

The Cork home of Munster rugby is pressed into service as a live concert venue every summer.

Capacity: 15 000

Notable international acts: Sting, Take That, Shania Twain.

The Sugar Club

Formerly the Irish Film Theatre, the Sugar Club has been putting on gigs in this room with plush-tiered banquet seating since 1998.

Capacity: 350

Notable international acts: Erykah Badu, Roy Ayers, Badbadnotgood, Snarky Puppy, Mr Scruff, Lee Fields, St Vincent.

Lost Lane

Intimate venue hosting live shows, club nights and the Irish Music Week conference.

Capacity: 300 (main room).

The Grand Social

Lovely venue located on the north quays overlooking the Liffey with 3 event spaces in all, including a 300 cap live room.

Capacity: up to 300 people

Notable international acts: Michael Kiwanuka, Django Django, Keivn Rowland, Gruff Rhys, Titus Andronicus, Mahalia.

The Cobblestone

Traditional Irish music bar and live music room located in the old Smithfield market area of the city catering to folk and trad music.

Capacity: 80

Live at the Marquee

Live at the Marquee is an annual season of live shows organised by Aiken Promotions in a big tent in Cork city.

Capacity: 5000

Notable international acts: Bob Dylan (US), Kanye West (US), Elton John (UK), Diana Ross (US), Paul Simon (US), Neil Young (US), Lana del Rey (US), P!nk (US), Lady Gaga (US), Jay-Z (US).

Opera House

Dating back to the 1850s, the Opera House is a Cork cultural institution.

Capacity: 1000

Notable international acts: Macy Gray, The Pharcyde, Corrine Bailey Rae, Richard Hawley, Tori Amos.

Cyprus Avenue

The southern capital's premier live venue is located bang in the middle of the city.

Capacity: 500

Notable international acts: Ride, Jake Bugg, Bob Mould, Big Country, Basshunter, DJ Shadow.

GALWAY

Big Top at Fisheries Field

A large tent in a large field and a landmark venue for the annual Galway International Arts Festival.

Capacity: 3500 (standing)/1000 (seated)

Notable international acts: Chic, Pavement, Kaiser Chiefs, Stewart Copeland.

Leisureland

Gigs and concerts out by the Atlantic Ocean in the seaside suburb of Salthill.

Capacity: 1200 (standing)/1000 (seated)

Notable international acts: The Waterboys, Josh Ritter, Gabrielle, Morrissey, Counting Crows.

Black Box

A multi-purpose venue used for everything from international theatre to visiting touring acts.

LIMERICK

Thomond Park

The iconic home of the Munster team swaps the boys in red for a selection of top-notch gigs.

Capacity: 25 600

Notable international acts: Ed Sheeran, Bruce Springsteen, Liam Gallagher, Paolo Nutini.

Live at the Castle

The medieval King John's Castle in the heart of the old city becomes a very special summer concert venue.

Capacity: 2000

Notable international acts: Kasabian, Paul Weller, Kraftwerk, Madness, Johnny Marr.

Connolly's of Leap

Located in the wilds of west Cork, this tiny venue has attracted acts from all over the world to play to fervent audiences.

Capacity: 150

Notable international acts: Kevin Drew, David Holmes, Acid Mothers Temple, Teddy Thompson, Lightning Bolt, Alexis Taylor.

Capacity: 500 (seated)/750 (standing)

Notable international acts: Gogol Bordello, Jake Bugg, Janelle Monae, Human League.

Town Hall Theatre

Formerly a courthouse, town hall and a cinema, the venue is now a popular staging post for Irish and international acts.

Capacity: 400

Notable international acts: Robert Plant, Richard Thompson, Gruff Rhys.

Roisin Dubh

A superb live room in the heart of Galway makes it one of the best places to go to see Irish and international acts.

Capacity: 280

Notable international acts: Franz Ferdinand, Dinosaur Jr, The Magic Numbers, The xx, Seasick Steve, Grandmaster Flash.

Live at the Big Top

Series of shows held in a tent pitched at the city's historic Milk Market.

Capacity: 1500

Notable international acts: George Ezra, Orbital, Primal Scream, Kasabian, The Stranglers, Paolo Nutini.

University College Hall

An excellent theatre venue on the campus of the University of Limerick on the outskirts of the city.

Capacity: 1038 (seated)

Notable international acts: David Gray, Paul Young, Amanda Palmer, Emmylou Harris, Morrissey, The Kelly Family.

Dolan's Warehouse

An atmospheric live venue which has hosted a veritable who's who of Irish and international acts.

Capacity: main room 280 (standing)/Kasbah 120 (standing)/Upstairs 120 (standing)

KILKENNY

The Set

A state of the art venue with stunning interiors in Langton's landmark hotel.

Capacity: 252 (seated)/380 (standing/seated)

Notable international acts: Alabama Shakes, John Cooper Clarke, Dustin O'Halloran, Ron Sexsmith, Tom Baxter.

KERRY

Gleneagle INEC Arena Killarney

The biggest venue in the country outside Dublin.

Capacity: 4142

Notable international acts: George Ezra, Cliff Richard, Gary Barlow, Jools Holland, Lloyd Cole.

WEXFORD

National Opera House

Landmark venue in the heart of Wexford town which is home to the town's acclaimed annual international opera festival.

Capacity: 855 seats (main room), 172 seats (Jerome Hynes Theatre)

Notable international acts: The Waterboys, David Gray.

DUNDALK

Spirit Store

One of the sweetest live rooms in the country located by the side of the harbour in Dundalk.

Capacity: 200

Notable international acts: Kristen Hersch, Josh Ritter, The Unthanks, Jake Clemons, Frightened Rabbit.

Notable international acts: The Pretenders, Helmet, Josh Ritter, Grant-Lee Phillips, Richard Hawley, Durand Jones.

Cleere's

A gem of a little venue in the Marble City welcoming Irish and international acts.

Capacity: 100

Notable international acts: M Ward, James Yorkston, Kristen Hersch, Joan Shelley, Jim White

Mike the Pies

The best-named venue in Europe, Mike the Pies is a lively spot in the town of Listowel which also has a good line in striking merchandise.

Capacity: 100

Notable international acts: Richie Ramone

Wexford Spiegeltent Festival

A multi-genre annual festival which takes place in one of those iconic travelling spiegeltents.

Capacity: 500

Notable international acts: Robert Plant (UK), Albert Hammond (US), Donovan (UK), Jools Holland (UK), Squeeze (UK), Paul Young (UK).

COUNTY MEATH

Slane Castle

The granddaddy of Irish outdoor venues, Slane has been welcoming the hordes to the banks of the Boyne since 1981.

Capacity: 80 000

Notable international acts: Metallica, Harry Styles, Guns N Roses, Madonna, Eminem, Kings of Leon, Stereophonics, Foo Fighters.

CASTLEBAR

TF Royal Theatre

The venue which began in 1961 as the Royal Ballroom is still pulling in punters from all around the west and northwest.

Capacity: 2200 (seated)/4000 (standing)

Notable international acts: The Mavericks, Kris Kristofferson, Coolio, Bananarama, UB40, The Beach Bo

4.4. Promoters and Booking Agents

There are a variety of promoters who work in the Irish sector. The Big Two in the market are the Live Nation-affiliated MCD and independent Aiken Promotions. Then, there are a slew of Dublin-based smaller independent promoters like Foggy Notions, Singular Artists, Selective Memory, etc who work across different venues and events. You will also have venues like Whelan's (Dublin) or Roisín Dubh (Galway), etc, who will also independently book and promote Irish and international artists. All promoters work with UK, US or Europe-based agents, though many will also be happy to work directly with acts.

Aiken Promotions

One of the most established and best respected independent promotions companies in Europe, Aiken Promotions was initially established by the late Jim Aiken and is now run by his son Peter. Besides running Dublin venue Vicar Street, Aikens promote a huge variety of acts at various indoor and outdoor venues nationwide.

Notable international acts: Bruce Springsteen, Ed Sheeran, Bob Dylan, Garth Brooks, Rod Stewart

Dolans Presents

The team behind the Limerick venue Dolans also run events around the city under the Live at the Docklands, Live at the Castle and Live at the Big Top banners.

Notable international acts: Kraftwerk, The Libertines, Paul Weller, Johnny Marr

Enthusiastic Eunuch

Vincent Dermody (The Jimmy Cake) is the promoter behind Enthusiastic Eunuch who has brought a huge number of international alternative acts to the city, as well as promoting local acts like Landless, Oxn and Brigid Mae Power.

Notable international acts: Richard Dawson, Irreversible Entanglements/Moor Mother, Xylouris White, Lau, Jim White, Big Brave

Foggy Notions

Set up by former music writer and TV presenter League O'Toole, Foggy Notions grew out of a music magazine of the same name. These days, the company is responsible for promoting a string of great indie, alternative and electronica shows at venues throughout Dublin and Ireland. Foggy Notions also curates and promotes the annual Haunted Dancehall festival at the National Concert Hall.

Notable international acts: Patti Smith, Bonnie Prince Billy, Mitski, Aldous Harding, Arab Strap, Darkside

MCD

The biggest promoter in the country, MCD was established originally in the late 1970s by Denis Desmond and Eamon McCann (the latter is no longer involved) and the company is now owned by Live Nation. MCD are involved in promoting everything from small club shows to the biggest festivals and arena shows in the country.

Notable international acts: AC/DC, Oasis, P!nk, Coldplay, Taylor Swift, Arctic Monkeys

POD Concerts

Founded by the late John Reynolds, POD emerged from the groundbreaking Dublin nightclub of the same name. These days, POD is best known for promoting and co-promoting festivals like All Together Now and Forbidden Fruit, as well as some standalone shows.

Notable international acts: Joe Goddard, Iggy Pop, Chic

Roisin Dubh Presents

The Galway venue of the same name, which is booked by Gugai McNamara, is also responsible for a wide range of other shows around the city. They also book and promote the music acts at the annual Galway International Arts Festival Big Top.

Notable international acts: Pavement, Fat Freddy's Drop, Kaiser Chiefs, Pixies, Flaming Lips

Selective Memory

Set up by the highly experienced Declan Forde (POD, Electric Picnic, Neon Lights, etc), Selective Memory is the company behind the Beyond the Pale festival and a large number of standalone shows.

Notable international acts: Orbital, Confidence Man, Nouvelle Vague, Joan As Policewoman, Broken Social Scene

Singular Artists

Established in 2020, Singular Artists is a joint venture between Kilimanjaro, the UK subsidiary of Deutsche Entertainment AG (Germany), and ex-Aiken promoters Fin O'Leary, Brian Hand and Simon Merriman. The company run the Wider Than Pictures and Borderline festivals in the capital and also promote a variety of standalone shows.

Notable international acts: James Blunt, Khruangbin, Fleet Foxes, John Cale, Iron & Wine, Simply Red, Gossip

Umack

Timo has been putting on alternative, indie and hardcore gigs and club nights in Dublin under the Umack banner for over 30 years now.

Notable international acts: Jesus Lizard, Godspeed You! Black Emperor, Moderat, Plaid

4.5. Organising a Tour or Gig

In Focus: Organising a tour or gig in Ireland

How can an international artist arrange a tour, book a show or gig?

It really depends on what stage an act is at. All of the major and independent promoters (see *chapter 4.4*) work largely with agents, so acts with pre-existing agents have a number of options when it comes to promotion partners.

There is also the option of working directly with venues which are often happy to promote the act. There's a good circuit of small club venues in towns and cities like Cork, Galway, Limerick, Dundalk, etc (see *chapter 4.3*) where an act could turn a combination of shows into a tour. Festivals are another option (see *chapter 4.2*) to keep in mind, depending on the time of year.

What do they need to prepare? What do they need to keep in mind?

One of the first things to bear in mind is costs. Ireland is expensive, especially when it comes to accommodation and cost of living. For new or debuting acts, fees may be low so the band need to make sure their budget adds up. Do they have merch to sell? Can they combine transport and costs with another act? Beyond economic viability, is the tour geographically viable? Make sure you're looking at distances between towns as well as accommodation.

One other issue to bear in mind is visas, especially if the act is non-EU or UK. This is something which should be sorted long before the act lands in Ireland.

What kind of local partners do they need? Booker? Promoter?

It depends on what level the band are at. The vast majority of acts who tour Ireland will work with a promoter rather than a booker, but there are often cases where the promoter will act as a booker too in terms of other shows and cities. The Irish live ecosystem is quite small, so the main players tend to know each other and co-operate quite freely and often.

If you have a label, it's worth checking to see if there's a local PR or plugger who works with that label and then contacting them. They will be able to provide you with an overview of what to expect in terms of promotion, PR, marketing, etc. Your local will also be able to put you in touch with your Irish distributor, etc.

Unless you intend to use Ireland as a launchpad for a new record or project, it's probably not worth spending money on a local PR campaign.

5. Recorded Music Sector

5.1. Recorded Music Industry in Figures

There are no publicly available figures on the Irish recorded music market. While IRMA collects data from its members and compiles statistics, the results are not published.

However, newly filed accounts by Universal Music Ireland Ltd show revenue at the company rose to €31,7 mln in the twelve months ending in December 2023, up from €27,3 mln in the previous year. The revival of vinyl records and continued positive growth in subscribers to legal streaming platforms were key drivers of rising revenue at the Irish arm of Universal Music Group, which increased by more than 15% in 2023 ([Walsh, 2024](#)).

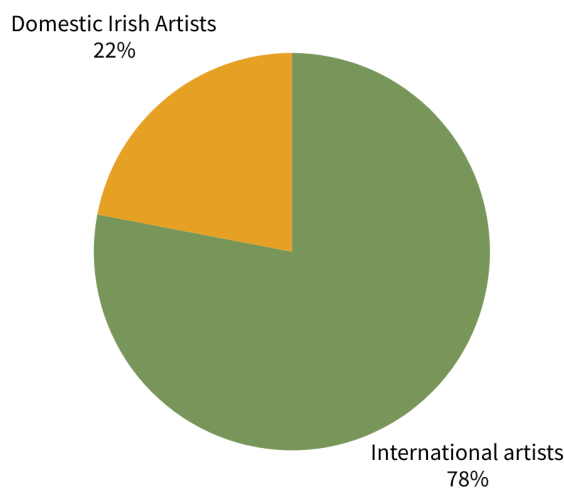


Figure 5. Irish Radio in 2023: Artist Breakdown . Source: [Irish Times](#), 2023.

A recent analysis of the top 100 most-played songs on Irish radio, covering January to June 2023, shows a clear distribution between international and domestic artists. Irish artists represent 22% of the top 100, a slight increase from the previous year. International artists account for the remaining 78%. This 22% figure for Irish artists includes a small percentage of collaborations with international acts ([Irish Times](#)). This showcases that Irish audiences are receptive to international artists.

5.2. Main Actors in the Recorded Music Industry

By virtue of geography and language, the major labels dominate the Irish record label ecosystem. Universal Music, Sony Music and Warner Music have offices in the country (all Dublin-based) with small staffs. While largely marketing and sales operations, they do have some A&R functions, albeit the main signings tend to be run from London offices.

One of the major failings of the Irish music industry has been the lack of a strong independent label sector. Many major international acts have emerged from Ireland over the decades – from Clannad and U2 in the 1970s to Sinéad O’Connor and The Pogues in the 1980s to Fontaines DC, Lankum and CMAT today - yet none achieved their breakthrough while signed to an Irish label. One exception to this general rule is Hozier, who is signed to Rubyworks, albeit with international licensing deals.

That said, there is a small but healthy independent sector which are largely one-act set-ups. There are very few labels who work on signing and developing a number of different acts.

Major labels

- [Warner Music Ireland](#)
- [Sony Music Ireland](#)
- [Universal Ireland](#)

Independent Labels

All City

Based out of the Dublin city-centre record shop of the same name, Olan O'Brien, All City was inspired by James Lavelle's Mo Wax's interest in outsider music. All City put out early releases by Hudson Mohawke, Onra and Knxwledge. All City operates a number of different offshoots specialising in hip-hop, reggae, experimental electronics, jazz, dance (Jheri Tracks) and reissues (Allchival).

Chamomile

The Chamomile collective came together in 2020 during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. Established by rising musicians Monjola, Aby Coulibaly, producer Moyo and artist Thomas Kettle, notable tracks from the soul, urban and pop label to date include "Smile" by Monjola and "Taurus" by Aby Coulibaly.

Notable Artists: Monjola, Aby Coulibaly, producer Moyo and artist Thomas Kettle

Claddagh Records

One of the most famous names in Irish music, Claddagh Records, was founded in 1959 by the late Garech De Brún and his friend, Ivor Browne, to record and preserve Irish cultural heritage. After a number of years of inactivity, the label signed a global licensing agreement with Universal Music in 2020 and has released records of late by artists like Oxn, Niamh Bury and Lemoncello.

Notable Artists: Oxn, Niamh Bury and Lemoncello

Diatrobe

Founded in Dublin in 2007, Diatrobe is an independent Irish record label for new music, with a catalogue featuring over 50 critically-acclaimed recordings, representing 200+ performers and 100+ composers. Acts associated with Nick Roth and Matthew Jacobson's label include Niwel Tsumbu, Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, Spring & Asura, Shane Latimer, Roamer and many more.

Notable Artists: Niwel Tsumbu, Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, Spring & Asura, Shane Latimer, Roamer

Ergodos

A music production company and record label based in Dublin, run by composers Garrett Sholdice and Benedict Schlepper-Connolly. Since 2006, Ergodos has produced numerous concerts and festivals in Dublin, and abroad in Amsterdam, New York and Berlin. As a record label, Ergodos has produced more than a dozen recordings across many different genres, including contemporary Irish music from artists like Katie Kim, Seán Mac Erlaine, Finco Ensemble and others.

Notable Artists: Katie Kim, Seán Mac Erlaine, Finco Ensemble

Faction

Aside from being a record label, Faction's Ken Allen and Mick Roe are also involved in artist management and music publishing consultancy. Acts associated with the label include Sorchá Richardson, James Vincent McMorrow, Jape and Martin Hayes.

Notable Artists: Sorchá Richardson, James Vincent McMorrow, Jape and Martin Hayes.

Farpoint Recordings

Established in 2004 by Anthony Kelly and David Stalling initially as an outlet for their own creative activities, Farpoint Recordings has now developed into an artist-run creative project that seeks to release works from the margins that intersect in some way with contemporary sound and audio-visual practices. Releases on Farpoint to date include work by Quiet Music Ensemble, Benjamin Dwyer & Alison Grace Koehler, Victor Lazzarini and Ian Wilson.

Notable Artists: Quiet Music Ensemble, Benjamin Dwyer & Alison Grace Koehler, Victor Lazzarini and Ian Wilson

FIFA Music

FIFA Music (Forever In Financial Arrears) is an independent label based in Cork City, which was set up by Eddie Kiely and The Frank & Walters' Ashley Keating. It deals with quality rock and pop and its 100-plus releases, including work by One Morning In August, The Frank & Walters, Klubber Lang, Cat Dowling, Emperor of Ice Cream and Driven Snow.

Notable Artists: One Morning In August, The Frank & Walters, Klubber Lang, Cat Dowling, Emperor of Ice Cream and Driven Snow

Forwind

A multi-genre label operating from Wexford, Waterford and Berlin, Forwind was set up by Conor J Curran and Shane Lawlor in 2008 to highlight "experimental ambience, erratic rhythms and reclaimed reverberations under the global floorboards". Artists who've worked with the label include Snowdrops, Conflux Coldwell, Erik Levander, Martina Claussen, Jakob Schauer and others.

Notable Artists: Snowdrops, Conflux Coldwell, Erik Levander, Martina Claussen, Jakob Schauer

Heresy Records

An independent classical music label based in Dublin, Heresy was established by American opera director and producer Eric Fraad. Specialising in early music, world music, traditional Irish and contemporary music, the label's releases include a recording of *The Wexford Carols*, produced by Joe Henry and featuring singers Caitríona O'Leary, Tom Jones, Rosanne Cash and Rhiannon Giddens reached Number One on the Billboard World Music Chart in 2015.

Notable Artists: Caitríona O'Leary, Tom Jones, Rosanne Cash and Rhiannon Giddens

Nyahh Records

"A home for sound collectors, noise makers and music builders who love a good Nyahh", Willie Stewart's Co Leitrim label has released music by a host of underground acts and artists, including Natalia Beylis, Eimear Reidy, Lankum's Ian Lynch (AKA One Leg One Eye) and Ireland-based Syrian/Kurdish artist Mohammad Syfkhan's debut album "I Am Kurdish".

Notable Artists: Natalia Beylis, Eimear Reidy, Lankum's Ian Lynch (AKA One Leg One Eye), Mohammad Syfkhan

Out on a Limb

Long-longing independent record label based in Limerick City, the label has been in business since 2003. Recent releases come from Anna's Anchor, PowPig and King Pallas.

Notable Artists: Anna's Anchor, PowPig and King Pallas

Paragon Records

Set up by Brian Scally and Ciaran Conroy and funded through private equity and venture capital funding, Paragon is working with such artists as Pa Sheehy, The Sei and Sick Love.

Notable Artists: Pa Sheehy, The Sei and Sick Love

Pizza Pizza Records

An independent artist-led label based in Dundalk, Shane Byrne's bustling Pizza Pizza imprint has worked with The Altered Hours, Just Mustard, Clara Treacy and many others.

Notable Artists: The Altered Hours, Just Mustard, Clara Treacy

Raelach Records

An artist-run label in Co Clare specialising in Irish traditional and folk music, Raelach was founded in 2011 by musician and producer Jack Talty. To date, it has released records by Ensemble Ériu, Fidil, Tony Mac Mahon, Shane Mulchrone, Geraldine Cotter and others.

Notable Artists: Ensemble Ériu, Fidil, Tony Mac Mahon, Shane Mulchrone, Geraldine Cotter

Reckless Record

Established by the CWB entertainment company, Reckless Records is a fast-growing independent record label that combines the personalised attention of a small label with the vision and expertise of a major label. Acts who've worked with the labels' Joe Clarke, Paul Boland and Brian Barnes to date include The 2 Johnnies, Bitch Falcon, Thumper and Zen Arcade.

Notable Artists: The 2 Johnnies, Bitch Falcon, Thumper and Zen Arcade

Rua Sound

Operating out of Galway and Belgium, Rua Sound specialises in high-velocity electronic music aimed squarely at the dancefloor. Run by Welfare & Rob DC, the label has worked with artists such as Earl Grey, Sun People and Russ Brooker.

Notable Artists: Earl Grey, Sun People and Russ Brooker

Rubyworks

With international success stories like iconic singer-songwriter Hozier, Grammy-winners Rodrigo y Gabriela, Hudson Taylor and LYRA, Rubyworks continues to develop talent on the principles originally identified by founder Niall Muckian: charismatic artists performing unforgettable songs with the ability to thrill concert audiences from Dublin to Denver and beyond.

Notable Artists: Hozier, Rodrigo y Gabriela, Hudson Taylor and LYRA

Rusted Rail

Longstanding micro-independent label specialising in bespoke alt-folk and electronic music, Rusted Rail is based in Galway and run by Keith Wallace. Over its long run, it has released dozens of albums, including releases by Loner Deluxe, A Light Decline, Phantom Dog Beneath the Moon, Songs of Green Pheasant and many more.

Notable Artists: Loner Deluxe, A Light Decline, Phantom Dog Beneath the Moon, Songs of Green Pheasant

Strange Brew

Set up by Gugai McNamara from the Roisin Dublin in Galway, Strange Brew has worked with a slew of artists in recent years. Its list of releases includes records by Daithi, Junior Brother, Paddy Hanna, Squarehead, Slow Place Like Home and others.

Notable Artists: Daithi, Junior Brother, Paddy Hanna, Squarehead, Slow Place Like Home

Trust It Entertainment

Trust It Entertainment was founded by Solomon Adesiyen in 2016, and they've worked with and developed a range of rap, hip-hop and drill artists, including AV9, Alicia Raye, Andre Fazaz, BoyW1DR, Chuks, Evans Junior, J.B2 and Offica. The label signed a joint venture deal with Atlantic Records in 2021.

Notable Artists: AV9, Alicia Raye, Andre Fazaz, BoyW1DR, Chuks, Evans Junior

5.3. Digital and Physical Distribution

In terms of digital distribution, the main DSPs used worldwide are also used in Ireland, including Spotify, YouTube Music, Amazon Music, and iTunes. Data shown in chapter 2.3 showcases that Spotify is the most used international streaming platform in Ireland, followed by Amazon Music and iTunes. YouTube Music is also widely used.

Despite the dominance of digital media, physical music formats, particularly vinyl records, have experienced a resurgence. In the UK, 5.9 mln vinyl records were sold in 2023, the highest figure since 1990, indicating a similar trend in Ireland ([BIMM](#)). International artists can consider incorporating physical distribution into their strategy when targeting the Irish market. This can include establishing relationships with local record stores and distributors, as well as selling merchandise and physical albums during live performances.

List of record stores in Ireland

All City Records *Dublin*

Located in Dublin's Temple Bar, All City Records has been a hub for hip-hop and electronic music enthusiasts since 2001. The store also operates its own label and sub-labels, fostering a vibrant community of local DJs and artists.

Bunker Vinyl *Cork*

Situated in a basement on Camden Place in Cork, Bunker Vinyl offers a diverse collection of records, from classic hits to unique finds. Owned by John Dwyer, it's a haven for dedicated crate-diggers.

Dingle Record Shop *Dingle, County Kerry*

Dubbed the "smallest record shop in Ireland," this quaint store in Dingle, County Kerry, is managed by Mazz O'Flaherty. While primarily selling CDs, it boasts a curated selection of traditional Irish vinyl, making it a must-visit for enthusiasts.

Plugd Records *Cork*

A cornerstone of Cork's independent music scene, Plugd Records offers a wide range of underground, electronic, and local music. Beyond selling records, it serves as a venue for DIY events and operates as a coffee shop, enhancing its community-centric atmosphere.

Rollercoaster Records *Kilkenny*

Located in Kilkenny, Rollercoaster Records began as Top Twenty in 1990. Renamed in 2004 under the late Willie Meighan, the store continues to provide niche releases and supports independent Irish artists through its in-house label.

5.5. Releasing and Distributing Your Music

In Focus: Releasing and Distributing Music in Ireland as an International Artist

How can an international artist get their recorded music distributed and promoted in this market?

To release your music digitally in Ireland, you can contact a local digital distributor or do it yourself via one of the subscription services, like Tunecore. If you want to release a physical CD in Ireland, there are still a few physical independent distributors operating, but you would likely need to manufacture the CDs yourself.

There are also still some great independent record stores that support Irish music, so it's worth trying to get a physical deal of some sort for the visibility, even if the financial return is not significant. Experience shows that artists who commit to touring in Ireland and building a fanbase can sell enough physical CDs or LPs at their shows to make it worthwhile.

To publicise a music release in Ireland, it's definitely worth taking on local PR at an early stage so they can advise on the overall strategy and timing of your release.

What's the rough percentage split between physical and digital in Ireland? Is physical product still a big aspect of sales, or just for some acts?

In 2023, physical albums accounted for just under 16% of sales in Ireland. Permanent downloads, by comparison, are a tiny share of the market (about 1%) because the majority of consumer activity is in the form of album streaming. Also, sales 'units' versus 'revenue' skews very differently. For example, 16% of physical album sales accounted for about 97% of sales value in 2023.

The issue is that they're not really like-for-like formats, and streaming ratios are applied to streams to convert them to 'album-equivalent sales', and these ratios change over the lifetime of a release.

It can be true that some formats better suit some acts, and acts with younger fans tend to be listened to digitally. On the other hand, there has been an increase in LP sales as these can be perceived as collectors' items, especially if they are signed at a gig. A physical product is a better memento of the 'event' of being at a gig.

Do international acts need a local label or distributor, or can they rely on international partners?

A local distributor or label, or PR company can help to provide the structure and local knowledge that is definitely beneficial. Relying on international partners in the digital age may result in an automatic release in any territory – it can be done with the click of a mouse - without the supporting campaign around it, or with a campaign that is presented but not enforced.

How are deals usually structured (very broad details only)?

A local distributor will work on a fee basis – either per sale for physical or on net revenue for digital. Physical distribution would be on consignment, whereby you supply the distributor with a certain amount of stock 'free of charge' and you are only paid when a shipped CD becomes a firm sale at retail. For a record label deal, it varies and would depend on many factors.

6. Music Publishing & Synch Sector

6.1. Music Publishing Industry in Figures

The Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO) reported record revenues of €45,81 million in 2023, marking an 8% increase from the previous year. €31,5 mln of that was collected in Ireland, €2,9 mln from the UK, €7,5 mln from other EU countries, €2 mln from the US and nearly €2 mln from the rest of the world. €37,7 million was distributed to IMRO’s members and international affiliates in 2023, up 31% from the previous year. IMRO’s membership also grew to 25 000 in 2023 ([IMRO, 2023](#); [Deegan, 2024](#)). The direct earnings of music publishers are not known.

Territory	Revenues collected in 2023
Ireland	€31,5 mln
UK	€2,9 mln
Other EU countries	€7,5 mln
US	€2 mln
Rest of the world	€2 mln
TOTAL	€45,81 mln

Table 3: IMRO revenues in 2023 by territory. Source: [IMRO annual report, 2023](#); [The Independent, 2024](#)

6.2. Main Actors in the Music Publishing Industry

International players who are active in Ireland include Peer Music (who’ve acquired a number of domestic operators including Asdee Music), BMG Music, Bucks Music Group, Concord, Sentric Music, Sony Music Publishing, Universal Music Publishing, Warner-Chappell, and Kobalt Music.

Below is a list of Irish music publishers.

Bardis Music

Established in 1973, Bardis Music’s client roster includes Ronan Hardiman, Stephen McKeon and Nathan Carter.

Crashed Music

Crashed Music is a music publishing company based in Dublin, managing the catalogue of Irish writers and artists since 1977. Crashed Music’s publishing catalogue includes Irish artists such as Horslips, Joe Chester, Brian Branigan, as well as administering catalogues for Paddy Reilly and Gael Linn.

Elevate Music

Elevate Music was established in 2004 by experienced music publisher Steve Lindsey. Elevate Music’s growing catalogue represents a comprehensive roster of contemporary songwriting talent ranging from composer Niall Byrne to bands such as Walking on Cars and Westlife.

Evolving Music

Established in the early 1990s by MCD/Live Nation's Denis Desmond and Caroline Downey, Evolving's catalogue includes Hozier, Rodrigo y Gabriela, Wyvern Lingo, Talos and Hudson Taylor, to name but a few of their current roster.

Faction Music

Part of the Faction music group, which also includes a record label and management company. Acts associated with the group include SORCHA Richardson, James Vincent McMorrow, Jape and Martin Hayes.

Foxrock Music Productions

Long-established Irish publishing company formed in the 1970s and run by Johnny Lappin, who specialises in administering publishing rights on behalf of client companies. Past songwriter client companies include Grammy award winners Clannad & the Evolving Music Co, as well as Liffey Publishing Ltd, whose artists include Celtic Woman & The High Kings. Foxrock have recently signed an administration deal with Belfast singer-songwriter Dom Martin.

Kila Music

Kila Music is the publishing company set up to look after the publishing affairs of Irish folk music/world music group Kila.

Little Rox Music

Little Rox Music is the publishing division of Dolphin Music Group, a leading independent Irish record label established in 1955. They have a large roster of artists, including Mary Black, Paddy Reilly, and the Wolf Tones.

McGuinness Whelan Publishing Ltd

McGuinness Whelan Music Publishing was set up in the 1980s by former U2 manager Paul McGuinness and composer Bill Whelan. It publishes much of Whelan's catalogue, including the copyrights from his world-renowned show Riverdance.

Sticky Songs

Sticky Songs is an independent, proactive global music publisher based in Dublin, Ireland. The company specialises in music publishing, rights management, royalty administration and sync opportunities for our writers, composers, clients and their repertoire. Its roster includes Trophy Wife, Neosupervital and Xona.

Silverstream Music Publishing

Silverstream Music was established in 2008 by Juliet Martin and currently represents a diverse range of contemporary Irish acts, including Zali and Rocstrong, as well as an award-winning roster of some of Ireland's foremost composers for film, TV and advertising. The company offers a full representation/agency service to composers as well as a specialist service of worldwide copyright administration to composers and production companies of audiovisual content. Composers they work with include Stephen McKeon (Black Mirror, Evil Dead Rise) and Sarah Lynch (The Dry). Juliet also provides music supervision services for some of Europe's biggest production companies, including Element Pictures (Poor Things, Normal People) and Two Brothers Pictures (Fleabag, The Tourist).

Tremolo Music Publishing

Tremolo Music Publishing was established in 2015 by Music publishers Dina Coughlan and Rory McPartland. Their mission was to create a 'top quality and diverse catalogue of new

music' and they represent a distinctive roster of contemporary songwriters, ranging from bands such as Winter Aid and The Shaker Hymn to artists such as Katie Kim and James Darkin.

Associations

The first Music Publishers' Association in Ireland was called RIMPA (Republic of Ireland Music Publishers Association). This company was incorporated in 1976 and was made up of a small number of locally Irish-based music publishers, as well as several well-known writers/publishers. In order to grow the publishing community and attract International publishers, the company's name was changed to the [Music Publishers Association of Ireland \(MPAI\)](#) and the memorandum & articles of the company were completely revamped in 1996, which allowed for membership of UK-based music publishing companies. MPAI membership has grown steadily since that time and now includes many of the top worldwide music publishing companies, including Peer Music (often referred to as the biggest Independent publisher in the world), Bucks Music Group, along with four of the majors, Sony Music Publishing, Universal Music Publishing, Warner Chappell and BMG Music Rights.

MPAI is also a valued member of the Brussels-based International Confederation of Music Publishers (ICMP) the global trade body for the music publishing industry, and together with ICMP, continues to lobby the Irish Government on the all-important copyright legislation that will affect local Irish songwriters and publishers in the exciting new 'digital' era.

MPAI is the parent company of MCPS (Ire) Ltd, which, through an Agency agreement with MCPS Ltd. in London, oversees the administration of the mechanical rights in musical works in Ireland.

[A list of MPAI members](#)

6.3. Distributing your Catalogue

In Focus: Distributing Your Catalogue in Ireland

In your opinion, what's the best way for an international artist/company to distribute their publishing catalogues in the Irish market?

Ideally, a catalogue should have an office or some sort of presence in the territory. Local knowledge is very valuable. Obviously, a local network of contacts would enable many more exploitation opportunities than working in a vacuum.

Do they need a sub-publisher?

Yes. A local sub-publisher would fulfil the role as described above.

When it comes to local sub-publishers, what's the best way to find one and how are these deals structured?

The Independent Music Publishers Forum (IMPF) is an international association that exists to promote and develop the interests of independent publishers worldwide. There are several events and gatherings per year during which new contacts are forged and deals done. The annual summit each year in October has become the "marketplace" that Midem was.

What options exist for creative partnerships, collaborations and songwriting camps?

There are many songwriting camps all over the world each year. They are often sponsored by local PROs or the likes of IMPF. Publishers, managers and recording studios sometimes hold events too.

6.4. A Brief Overview of the Synch Sector and Creative Collaborations

In focus: An overview of publishing and sync in Ireland.

Interview with Rory McPartland from [Tremolo Songs](#) and [Planet of Sound](#)

Rory McPartland is the owner of the music publishing company Tremolo Songs and its sister company for music supervision, Planet of Sound. Together with his business partner, Dina Coughlan, they represent a catalogue of mostly Irish artists for publishing with a focus on sync. They also have a music supervision company that works with film and television productions. Most of these productions are either Irish productions or co-productions with Ireland and another country. Additionally, they've also worked on a few games like Saints Row IV and Dead Island 2. Currently, though, they mainly work on films and multi-episode series for streaming platforms.¹

What is the market like in Ireland in general? Are there many music supervisors?

The music supervision community in Ireland is small, with just a few supervisors working in the space. Some specialise more in films/TV, some more in advertisements. Everyone tends to know each other.

What about sync agencies? Are there many sync agencies? And music publishers? Are they active in sync or just passively kind of waiting for sync requests to come in, and them?

In terms of sync agents, Rory mentioned John McCallion, who represents many Irish artists for sync. There are many legacy publishers with important works but who may not be actively pitching their catalogues for sync. Some may use sub-publishers to manage their collections and licensing. There aren't too many publishers who take an active approach to sync, pitching songs, and more proactively seeking opportunities.

Which sectors do the opportunities lie in? Are there more opportunities for advertisements, TV, film, and games?

Film and TV tends to have the most opportunities and generally needs the most music. Hence, why they focus mainly on Film and TV at his company. Advertising, in contrast, seems to have fewer creative opportunities, especially for smaller, less established artists. However, when they do happen, they can be the most lucrative especially when used in a bigger branding campaign. Gaming is another sector where sync opportunities can be found.

A lot of productions are moving away from blanket licenses for broadcast TV and toward content that is geared toward streaming platforms from the start. This gives sync agents, artists, publishers and music supervisors a chance to place songs for more competitive sync fees.

Have you found that you tend to license more music from Irish artists or international, or it kind of on a case by case basis?

¹ In this context television refers to series produced for VOD streaming-platforms with worldwide licenses, not series for Irish broadcast TV, since those are covered by blanket licenses.

It depends on the production. For some productions, especially those based in Ireland, there may be a need or preference for Irish music, otherwise, there are no restrictions. Rory believes that there absolutely are opportunities for international artists to get their music into Irish productions. Sometimes, they might be looking for something very specific that will need to come from international artists, and in general, they are just searching for the best track for the spot.

How can international artists break into the Irish sync market? What do they need?

It's good for artists to make music supervisors aware of the music, whether that's through pitching it directly, or working with a publisher or sync agent in their country who has connections to Ireland. Artists can also have a look at what different music supervisors are currently working on and try to pitch their music strategically. Either way, the most important thing is for that music to reach music supervisors in Ireland.

Do you have any industry events for the sync industry?

Rory is a member of the Guild of Music Supervisors. Tremolo Songs is also a member of the Music Publishers Association Ireland (MPAI), who also organise different events for industry professionals. Rory and his business partner Dina have also taken part in masterclasses with IMRO, talking about sync, as well as with other organisations. One notable event that they go to every year and are involved in is [Output Belfast](#).

Have you also organised any sync camps or songwriting camps? Is this something that's common in Ireland?

Tremolo Songs have organised several songwriting camps in collaboration with their sub-publisher, Peer Music, and are continuing to do so.

There are a few other companies and people who organise songwriting camps in Ireland, but not many. Instead, Ireland is often used as a location to host songwriting camps organised by other international publishers.

How often do you collaborate cross-border as well for sessions, etc?

Many of the writers in Tremolo also produce their own recordings, and when they collaborate, they sometimes find the collaborators on their own, and it typically happens organically. "We have a producer who does stuff with various UK based writers and a couple of German writers. There's a Dutch-based writer that one of our guys did a song with." We also try to foster these relationships, both within our catalog of writers as well as from outside, especially through our regular songwriting camps.

7. Media and PR

7.1. Social Media

[The Digital News Report Ireland 2023](#) conducted by Coimisiún na Meán on the social media usage from 2020-2023 in Ireland, showcases that WhatsApp is the most commonly used platform (being used by 72% of respondents in 2023), followed by Facebook (61%), YouTube (59%), Instagram (43%) and Facebook Messenger (38%) ([Murrell et al, 2023](#)).

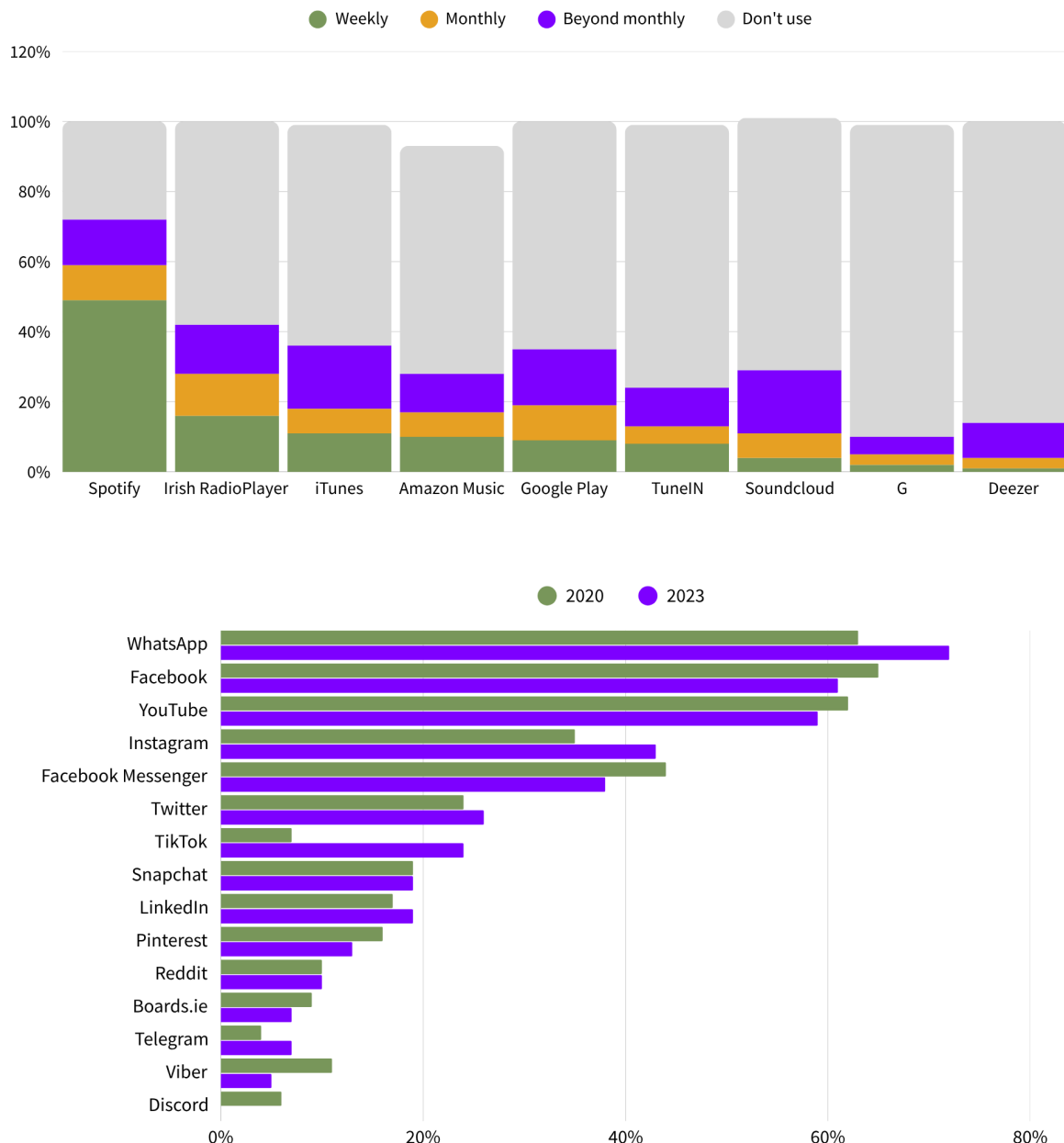


Figure 6: Social media usage in the past week. Source: [Digital News Report Ireland 2023](#), p. 69

Perhaps worthy of note, according to [Datareportal](#), Meta's own tools indicate that the potential ad reach on Facebook in Ireland is down -4% between January 2023 and January 2024. Likewise, YouTube's potential ad reach decreased by -0,2% during the same timeframe. Instagram's ad reach,

however, increased by +4,3% during that time. TikTok has experienced the most growth, with ad reach increasing by +11,2% ([Kemp, 2024](#)).

Below is a table with other figures from Datareportal. The figures are estimates and aggregated from multiple data sources.

Platform	Estimated number of users in early 2024	Change between January 2023 and 2024 in ad reach
Facebook	47,3% of the population	-4%
YouTube	4,01 mln users, ca 79,8% of the population	-0,2%
Instagram	2,4 mln users, ca 47,3% of the population	+4,3%
TikTok	2,37 mln users, ca 47,1% of the population	+11,2%
LinkedIn	3 mln users, ca 59,1% of the population	+11,1%
Snapchat	2,04 mln users, ca 40,2% of the population	-0,5%
Twitter (X)	1,80 million users, ca 35,5% of the population	+6,0%
Pinterest	1,03 million users, ca 20,2% of the population	+58,9%

Table 4: Estimated number of users of social media platforms in Ireland. Source: [Datareportal 2024](#).

It’s important to note that these are based on the platforms’ own reports of the number of users their ads reached. The numbers are also based on the total internet population, not taking into account that many platforms have age restrictions.

7.2. Written Media – Print and Online

The Irish print media sector comprises over 16 national daily and Sunday newspapers, alongside approximately 70 local newspapers. Notable national publications include The Irish Times, the Irish Independent, and the Irish Examiner. Despite challenges such as declining readership and advertising revenue, print media remains influential, with 65% of Irish individuals aged 16 and above reading a print newspaper at least once a week, equating to 2,58 million people ([Media Ownership Monitor Ireland, 2023](#)).

While specific statistics on the number of music journalists in Ireland are not readily available, the presence of dedicated music sections in major newspapers and specialised online platforms indicates an active community of professionals covering the music scene.

Main media outlets in Ireland

The Irish Times

National Dublin-based daily newspaper with excellent arts and culture coverage, including album and gig reviews, selected listings, music features and interviews. While most of the coverage is online, the paper’s Friday and Saturday print editions provide a lot of local and international music coverage.

The Irish Independent

National Dublin-based daily publication with a sizeable amount of music coverage between interviews, features and reviews. John Meagher is the main music contact at the title, but online and print editions also use a number of prominent freelancers.

The Irish Examiner

National Cork-based daily newspaper with a strong readership in the Munster area. Arts editor Des O'Driscoll oversees a good crop of writers who provide strong music coverage, especially for any gigs or events happening in the Greater Cork area.

The Sunday Times

The Irish edition of the UK title covers Irish acts and events with a range of previews, interviews and features.

Nialler9

Niall Byrne has been running Ireland's most-read music site since 2005. The site's main strengths are early coverage of breaking Irish and international acts, as well as an excellent gig guide to shows all around the country. Byrne is also a DJ, gig producer and podcast host.

Golden Plec

On the go since 2002, Golden Plec covers Irish and international music in great depth through news stories, reviews and features/interviews.

RTÉ.ie Culture

The culture outlet of the national broadcaster's website provides excellent coverage of music events and new releases from Irish and international acts.

The Journal of Music

Online monthly music magazine publishing news, reviews and opinion pieces as well as a very comprehensive listings service. Funded by the Arts Council/An Choimhairle Ealaíon, it provides in-depth coverage of a broad range of genres, including trad, folk, classical, contemporary, popular music and opera.

Hot Press

Long-established music title which has gone from fortnightly to monthly print editions in recent years. Most closely associated with U2's emergence in the late 1970s (and has published many books on the band in the interim), the magazine covers both Irish and international acts.

The Goo

The new kid on the block, The Goo is a Dublin-based free print publication covering music in the city with a comprehensive What's On listings guide along with an array of features, interviews, reviews, previews and columns.

Totally Dublin

Monthly Dublin-based what's-going-on print magazine which features a number of music features and reviews every issue. Mostly covers Irish music but does some international coverage too.

District

Covering music, art, food and entertainment in Ireland with excellent features, interviews, reviews, news stories and curated gig listings.

Entertainment.ie

Online platform with music news, listings and reviews from all over the country

The Thin Air

Independent magazine and website exploring Ireland's cultural undercurrents with music news, features, interviews and reviews.

GCN

GCN (Gay Community News) is Ireland's national free LGBTQ+ press and has been running since 1988. Besides a monthly magazine, its website also covers music events and artists.

7.3. Radio

Radio remains an important platform for reaching and building an audience in Ireland. According to the studies done by [Radio Centre Ireland](#) (2022) and [IAB](#) (2020), a large percentage of the Irish population tune into the radio at least weekly, if not daily. There are also a couple of relevant music podcasts.

List of the main radio channels in Ireland

RTÉ Radio 1

Ireland's most listened to radio station, RTÉ Radio 1 is the flagship station from national public service broadcaster RTÉ. Content is a mixture of current affairs, talk radio, entertainment and a number of hugely popular daily and specialist music shows from such DJs as Louise Duffy, John Creedon, Cathal Murray, Lilian Smith, Shay Byrne, Philip King, Aoife Nic Cormaic, Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh and Neil Doherty.

RTÉ 2fm

Long-running Irish pop, chart and specialist music station also operated by RTÉ. The station's output is a mixture of international and Irish music, with evening and weekend specialist shows covering new bands and dance music.

Today FM

Ireland's biggest national and independent radio station has been operating here since 1997 when it was launched as Radio Ireland. One of the stations operated by Bauer Media in the country, it features a mixture of chart music, breezy entertainment and talk shows like The Last Word.

RTÉ Lyric FM

Ireland's classical music and arts station is home to award-winning alternative music

shows like The Blue of the Night (Bernard Clarke), Vespertine (Ellen Cranitch), Ambient Orbit (Peter Curtin and Áine Gallagher) and Mystery Train (John Kelly)

Radio Nova

On air since 2010, Nova is now firmly established as the leading station for rock, alternative and guitar-based music in Dublin city and the surrounding areas

SPIN 1038

Dublin-based radio station also owned by Bauer Media, with a focus on Top 40 chart music aimed at a 15 to 34-year-old audience. Has a sister station in [Spin Southwest](#) which broadcasts to Limerick and surrounding areas.

8Radio

Online radio station playing a wide selection of indie and alternative music. 8Radio occasionally operates as a temporary FM station in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway

Dublin Digital Radio

Online community radio station representing a wealth of alternative music, art and politics across Ireland which has been broadcasting since 2016. Covers a huge swathe of music from experimental, electronic and folk to psych-beat, jazz and pop.

PODCASTS

The Point of Everything

Journalist Eoghan O'Sullivan's Cork-based music podcast covers a broad spectrum of issues, from in-depth interviews with Irish musicians to various issues affecting Irish musicians and artists.

No Encore

Colourful weekly podcast from journalist Dave Hanratty which covers all the comings and goings in Irish and international music.

The Last Mixed Tape

Podcast from Irish music reviewer and photographer Stephen White looks at stories around the music scene both at home and abroad, as well as reviews of new releases

7.4. Television

Like many other markets, there are very few dedicated regular music shows on Irish TV channels. Instead, you will find some weekly and seasonal shows providing important primetime slots for Irish and international acts. Music will also feature on TV shows around such calendar events as Culture Night (September), festivals and other events.

Notable Irish TV shows for music

Other Voices

Probably the premier TV show for Irish and international acts, Other Voices broadcasts on RTÉ 2 and RTÉ Player (catchup service) weekly over the winter months. It features acts recorded live at Other Voices events at venues like the Church of St James, Dingle, County Kerry and is presented by Annie Macmanus, Huw Stephens and MayKay. The show is produced by [South Wind Blows](#).

The Late Late Show

Currently presented by Patrick Kielty, this is the world's second longest-running late-night talk show and has been consistently one of the most viewed TV shows in Ireland over the past seven decades. Broadcast on RTÉ 1, the Late Late regularly has music specials as well as regular weekly music slots.

The Tommy Tiernan Show

Presented by comedian Tommy Tiernan, the show is a mix of in-depth interviews (where the host doesn't know who the guests will be before they walk on) and music performances by Irish and international acts. The show is usually broadcast from January to April each year.

Fanning at Whelan's

Presented by legendary Irish broadcaster Dave Fanning, the show consists of five to six live music performances per episode, all recorded at Dublin venue Whelan's. Broadcast on Virgin Media, the show has run for three seasons to date.

7.5. Developing a Marketing and PR Strategy

In Focus: Developing a Marketing and PR Strategy for Ireland

What would a good PR and promotion strategy look like for an international artist? Which components should it include? Press, radio, TV, social media, etc?

The best PR strategy really depends on the level the artist is on and is probably a mix of all of these: there is no one gold standard component. For example, there is very little music coverage on Irish TV so it may be more worthwhile to concentrate on another promotional element. While Irish radio plays an important part in breaking acts, the majority of shows tend to be heavily playlist-driven rather than about discovery.

For international acts, social media may well be the best and most efficient in terms of time and money. As it allows acts to connect directly with fans, it may be the best way to immediately identify demand and a fan base in a new territory such as Ireland.

Is it necessary to find a local partner for PR and promotion, or can artists potentially work directly with promoters, labels, etc?

There are arguments for and against both approaches. Much of this depends on what you're seeking to achieve: are you looking at Ireland as a launchpad for your act (which is how David Gray used Ireland)? Or is this a one-off tour/release in conjunction with similar campaigns in other territories?

If an act is already working with labels in other territories, it would be wise to talk to them about the Irish market and their preferred partners there rather than embarking on a separate hiring process.

What is the typical timeline like? How long before a release, a concert, etc. would the international artist need to find a local partner and start working?

Most PRs and pluggers would advise 'as soon as possible'. This would be to gauge and assess availability, costs, timelines, etc. You would want to be approaching potential partners at the same time as you're planning the tour, and certainly before you announce anything. It would even be worth having a conversation with Irish partners before you start booking venues or dates.

Are the deals mainly campaign-based or month-based, or based on some other logic? Are there well-established market prices, or is the range very varied and based on negotiation?

Again, this would vary from act to act. Many acts would be looking to hire a PR to deal with an album release, so that would be a block of time over a period of months, including set-up singles, etc. Other acts may be very focused on just a number of live dates as part of a longer touring stretch. Fees would vary depending on the level the act is at and also if the PR wants to work towards a longer-term relationship.

What are the important social media platforms for artists?

For some acts, Twitter is still where they go and build an audience, though others are finding that platform to be toxic and useless in terms of engagement and results. Certain acts feel more comfortable and 'natural' on video and visual-led platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, so that's where they go. It's worth remembering that Facebook, too, has its uses, again depending on the target audience.

What would be a good social media strategy for international artists entering your market?

Look at your Spotify, Shazam and existing social media stats to identify if there's already a potential market here in terms of Irish users. Talk to your promoter, agent, labels, bookers, etc and see if this chimes with their findings. Experiment and find which social media platform or strategy you're most comfortable with.

Should the content be in the local language?

In terms of language, English is the way to go in Ireland.

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