

2018 mid-year trend in Germany's music industry:

Audio streaming overtakes CDs

Berlin, 18 July 2018 – Germany's market for recorded music has crossed a major milestone: in the first six months of 2018, audio streaming (+35.2%) now also in Germany has overtaken sales of CDs to become the largest revenue segment with a market share of 47.8 percent. From the late 1980s on, CDs enjoyed an almost 30-year reign as the dominating format of music consumption; today, however, they have a market share of 34.4 percent, with sales down by 24.5 percent compared to the first half of 2017. Music downloads also continued to decline (-23.4%) and now have a market share of just 8.5 percent. For the first time since 2006, sales of vinyl records also suffered a loss; after a drop of 13.3 percent, vinyl currently accounts for 4.4 percent of total music industry revenues. Next to audio streaming, the only other segment to show growth was video streaming, which increased by 27.2 percent and now accounts for 2.2 percent of total revenues.

These figures from the first six months of 2018 show that physical format sales and digital format sales have swapped places in Germany compared to the first half of 2017. Today, physical sound recordings (CDs, DVDs, vinyl LPs) come in at 41.1 percent, whereas digital sales are now at 58.9 percent.

Overall, the German music industry had a turnover of €727 million* in the first half of 2018, marking a two percent drop in revenue compared to the same period in the previous year (1st half of 2017: €742 million).

Florian Drücke, CEO of Germany's Federal Music Industry Association (BVMI): "Audio streaming now represents almost half of revenues and has replaced CDs as the largest sales segment. This development marks a clear change in the constellation of the music market to the benefit of online sales. This situation further reveals the necessity of establishing legal clarity with regards to digital licensing. As we all know, licenses are the lifeblood of the creative industries, and this is particularly true in the digital era. Especially, it finally has to be made clear that user uploaded content services making music available must negotiate licenses on the market. On 12 September, the European Parliament will have the tremendous opportunity to pursue a better path and to update the rules of the 'platform economy' that have developed over the past 20 years."

* Sales measured at retail prices incl. VAT

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