

UK LIVE MUSIC YEARBOOK

# The numbers behind UK live music.

47 statistics across 7 categories, plus 3 charts – every figure sourced from a named industry body. Free to share with attribution.

Edition 01 · 2026

47

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## FOREWORD

# Why a transparent yearbook matters

UK live music is a £7.6bn industry that runs on guesswork. Bands don't know what's normal, venues don't know what's fair, and the data that does exist sits in PDFs nobody reads. This yearbook is an attempt to fix that – every stat that matters, every source named, every figure free to cite.

## WHAT'S IN THIS EDITION

- 1. Market size.** Total industry contribution, exports, employment.
- 2. Venues.** The grassroots estate, festivals, arenas, licensed pubs.
- 3. Artists & workforce.** Membership figures, earnings, mental health, gender on lineups.
- 4. Fees & pricing.** Live UK rate medians from the GigXchange Index, plus MU rate-card minimums.
- 5. Audience.** Attendance, ticket prices, music tourism.
- 6. Industry bodies.** PRS, PPL, secondary ticketing, Spotify payouts.
- 7. Trends.** Year-on-year change, festival cancellations, post-Brexit touring.

## THREE CHARTS YOU'LL FIND INSIDE

**+15%**

UK music industry GVA recovery 2022–2023, passing pre-pandemic levels.

**–16%**

Net decline in UK grassroots venues 2019–2024 despite post-COVID re-openings.

**+26%**

Rise in UK Cultural Services CPI since 2019. Live-event prices up 16% since 2022 alone.

## HOW TO USE THIS YEARBOOK

Every figure has a named source and a year. The yearbook is licensed under **CC BY 4.0** – quote any figure, reproduce any chart, with attribution to "GigXchange UK Live Music Yearbook 2026". Source URLs are listed on the Sources page so you can verify each number against its primary report.

SECTION ONE

# Market size

How big is UK live music? Six core financial, employment and export figures from the most recent UK Music annual reports.

**£7.6bn**

Total UK music industry contribution to GVA in 2023.

*UK Music, This Is Music 2024*

**£2.5bn**

UK live music sector GVA in 2023, recovering past pre-pandemic levels.

*UK Music, This Is Music 2024*

**£4.6bn**

Value of UK music exports in 2023 – recorded, live and publishing combined.

*UK Music, This Is Music 2024*

**216,000**

Full-time-equivalent jobs supported by the UK music industry in 2023.

*UK Music, This Is Music 2024*

**~62,000**

Full-time-equivalent jobs supported specifically by UK live music.

*UK Music, This Is Music 2024*

**£8.0bn**

Direct and indirect spend generated by UK live music tourism, 2023.

*UK Music, Here There and Everywhere 2024*

## Collapse and record recovery – UK music industry GVA, 2019-2023

The pandemic cut output by 46% in 2020. By 2023 the industry had not only recovered but reached a record £7.6bn – above the 2019 baseline.



Source: UK Music – This Is Music 2024. Total UK music industry contribution to UK GDP (Gross Value Added), £bn.

SECTION TWO

# Venues & spaces

How many venues, where they are, and how the estate is changing. The UK has been losing roughly one grassroots venue every three days since 2022.

**830-850**

UK grassroots music venues in the MVT network.

*MVT, 2024*

**125-150**

Grassroots venues lost per year on average since 2020.

*MVT, 2024*

**~38%**

Share of grassroots venues operating at a loss in FY 2023.

*MVT, Revive Live 2023*

**~280**

Average grassroots venue capacity across the UK network.

*MVT Network Data, 2024*

**~975**

UK music festivals held in 2023, weekenders to majors.

*AIF / UK Music, 2024*

**26**

Major UK arenas (5,000+ cap) as of 2024.

*National Arenas Assoc., 2024*

**~36%**

Share of UK grassroots venues in Greater London & South East.

*MVT Regional Data, 2024*

**~48,000**

UK pubs and bars licensed to host music under the 2003 Act.

*DCMS / BBPA, 2023*

## The ongoing decline – UK grassroots venue count 2022-2024

Active grassroots venues in the Music Venue Trust network. Roughly one venue lost every three days, and the pace continues into 2024.



*Source: Music Venue Trust annual reports. MVT-network grassroots venues active each year-end.*

## SECTION THREE

# Artists & workforce

The musicians, songwriters and workforce behind UK live music. Real earnings, member numbers, mental-health figures, plus festival lineup gender data from BBC research.

## ~175,000

Active songwriter and publisher members of PRS for Music.

*PRS Annual Report 2024*

## ~33,000

Members of the Musicians' Union, the UK trade union for pro musicians.

*MU Annual Report 2024*

## £20,700

Median self-employed pre-tax income reported by UK musicians, 2023.

*Help Musicians UK 2023*

## ~85%

Share of UK musicians describing themselves as self-employed.

*MU Member Survey 2023*

## £145- £220

MU recommended minimum: 3-hour session musician casual engagement.

*MU Rate Card 2024*

## ~50%

Share of working UK musicians whose income decreased in 2023 vs 2022.

*Help Musicians Census 2023*

## ~72%

Share of UK musicians reporting mental-health challenges from working conditions.

*Help Musicians UK*

## 13%

Share of UK festival headliners that were female or all-female (2022 sample of 50 biggest festivals).

*BBC News, 2022*

### THE 13% HEADLINE GAP

A BBC analysis of 200 headline slots across the 50 biggest UK festivals in 2022 found 13% were female or all-female acts, 12% mixed-gender acts, 0.5% non-binary, and 74.5% all-male. The Keychange pledge target of 50/50 by 2022 was missed at headline level – though parity is closer on lower-tier slots.

Two big patterns sit behind these numbers: musician earnings are stagnant or falling in real terms (50% report income down YoY), and the workforce is overwhelmingly self-employed (~85%) – meaning income volatility, no statutory sick pay, and a heavy reliance on private insurance via the MU.

## SECTION FOUR

# Fees & pricing

Live fee benchmarks from the GigXchange Index – median UK gig rates across the most common booking categories, refreshed monthly. The Index is the only public, free, UK-wide rate dataset of its kind.

## £150

Median UK pub solo acoustic gig fee (2-set, 2-hour format), April 2026.

*GigXchange Index, Apr 2026*

## £300

Median UK pub duo gig fee (2-set, 2-hour format), April 2026.

*GigXchange Index, Apr 2026*

## £600

Median UK 4-piece pub covers band (2-set, 2.5h format), April 2026.

*GigXchange Index, Apr 2026*

## £1,400

Median UK 4-piece wedding function band (full evening reception), April 2026.

*GigXchange Index, Apr 2026*

## £2,200

Median UK 5-piece corporate event function band fee, April 2026.

*GigXchange Index, Apr 2026*

## 15-25%

Typical London premium on equivalent regional gig fees, all categories.

*GX Index Regional, 2026*

## 10-20%

Typical UK booking-agent commission range on confirmed live engagements.

*MU / Agents' Assoc. UK, 2024*

## £185

MU recommended minimum: standard 3h pub gig (4-piece, per member), 2024.

*MU Rate Card 2024*

### THE LONDON PREMIUM ISN'T WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

A 15-25% London uplift on headline fee sounds attractive – but London also takes the lion's share of travel and accommodation costs, and venues there book to wider catchment competition. Net take-home for a London gig is often closer to a regional gig once expenses come out. The GX Index breaks fees down at city level so you can see what's left after the postcode.

SECTION FIVE

# Audience & consumption

Who goes to UK gigs, how many, and what they spend. The price of going to live events is rising faster than headline inflation – up 26% since 2019.

**~23m**

UK live music attendances (tickets sold) across all venue types in 2023.

*UK Music HTAE 2024*

**~40%**

Share of UK adults who attended a live music event in the past 12 months.

*Audience Agency 2023*

**£44.60**

Average price paid for a UK live music ticket (all tier types), 2023.

*UK Music This Is Music 2024*

**~14.4m**

UK music tourists (attendees travelling 1+ night for a gig) in 2023.

*UK Music HTAE 2024*

**~£326**

Average spend per UK music tourist per event (ticket + travel + food + stay).

*UK Music HTAE 2024*

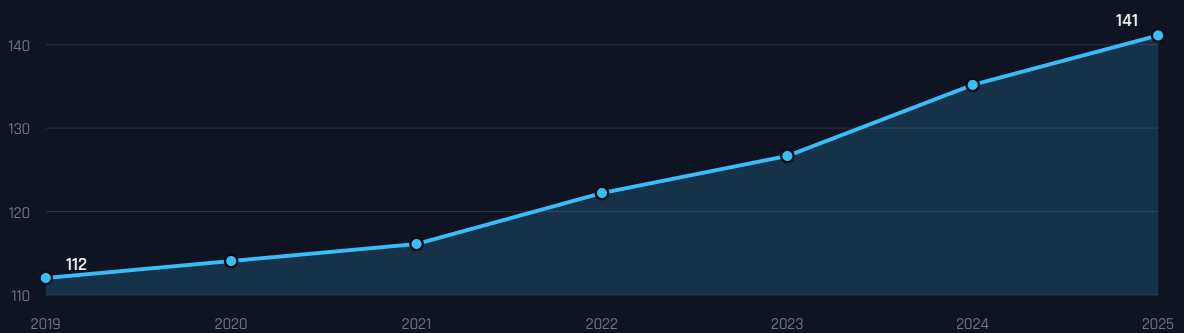
**~55%**

Share of UK live music attendances at small venues (<1,500 cap) vs arenas/festivals.

*MVT / UK Music, 2023*

## The price of going out is up 26% since 2019

ONS Cultural Services CPI (2015 = 100). This index covers admission to live music, theatre, cinema, sport and museums – ONS has confirmed live music as the dominant driver. Prices have decoupled from headline CPI, jumping 16% since 2022 alone.



Source: ONS Cultural Services CPI, series D7FI. Annual averages. Index 2015 = 100.

## SECTION SIX

# Industry bodies

The collective-rights organisations and regulatory bodies that underpin UK live music – PRS, PPL, the CMA, plus the global streaming context for UK artists.

## £964m

Total royalties distributed by PRS for Music to songwriters and publishers in 2023.

*PRS Annual Report 2024*

## £302m

Total royalties distributed by PPL to record labels and performers in 2023.

*PPL Annual Report 2024*

## £50m+

Annual PRS revenue specifically attributable to UK live music licensing.

*PRS Annual Report 2024*

## ~95%

Share of premises-licensed UK venues holding a TheMusicLicence joint cover.

*PPL PRS Ltd, 2024*

## £10m

Standard Public Liability Insurance cover included free for MU members.

*MU Member Benefits 2024*

## £350m

UK secondary ticketing market (~1.9m tickets resold annually, CMA estimate).

*CMA via Commons Library  
SN04715, 2019*

## \$10bn

Total Spotify payouts to the global music industry in 2024.

*Spotify Loud & Clear, 2024*

### WHERE SPOTIFY'S \$10BN ACTUALLY GOES

The \$10bn Spotify pays out is to **rights-holders** – labels, publishers, distributors. Artists typically see less than half of that after splits. Spotify itself refuses to publish a per-stream rate; secondary estimates put it at \$0.003-\$0.005 per stream paid to rights-holders, with the artist share roughly half of that. By contrast a single £750 pub gig would pay an artist what ~250,000 streams pays in royalties.

## SECTION SEVEN

# Trends & trajectory

How the UK live music industry is changing year-on-year. Festival cancellations doubled in 2024 and Brexit continues to bite for touring artists.

## +15%

YoY rise in UK live music GVA between 2022 and 2023.

*UK Music This Is Music 2024*

## -16%

Net decline in UK grassroots venue count 2019-2024 despite re-openings.

*MVT, 2024*

## ~30%

Real-terms rise in UK function/wedding band demand 2021-2024.

*GX Index Booking Volume*

## ~85%

Share of UK recorded music revenue from streaming vs physical/download (2023).

*BPI All About The Music 2024*

## £1

Voluntary grassroots ticket levy on UK arena bookings, MVT-led, 2024.

*MVT £1 Ticket Levy 2024*

## +8%

Estimated YoY rise in average UK live gig ticket prices 2022-2023.

*UK Music This Is Music 2024*

## 72

UK festivals postponed, cancelled or closed in 2024 – double the 2023 total.

*AIF, year-end 2024*

## 47.4%

UK musicians reporting less work in the EU since Brexit (sample 400+).

*ISM Paying the Price 2023*

### THE 2024 FESTIVAL RECKONING

AIF's year-end figure was 72 UK festivals postponed, cancelled, or closed in 2024 – roughly one in six independents. The trade body warned of "extinction-level" pressure from rising insurance costs, energy, crew costs and consumer ticket affordability. Combined with Brexit touring costs (47.4% of UK musicians report less EU work), the next 24 months will be defining.

## METHODOLOGY

# How we work it out

Every figure traces back to a named primary source – UK Music, MVT, MU, PRS, PPL, ONS, BBC, AIF, ISM, Spotify, BPI or the GigXchange Index. We don't average, smooth, project, or model – we publish what the body actually published, with the year it was published in.

**AGGREGATION****Single-source primary data only**

Every stat is sourced from one named industry body's published figure. Where a figure is reported as a range (e.g. "830-850 venues"), we keep the range. Where a figure is reported with caveats, we keep the caveats.

**NO PROJECTIONS****What's published, not what's modelled**

If a body publishes 2023 data and not 2024, we publish the 2023 figure. We don't extrapolate. The most recent published year is always shown alongside each stat.

**CHARTS****Where time-series data exists**

Only three datasets in this report have enough annual data points for a chart: UK Music GVA (5 points), MVT venue count (3 points), and ONS Cultural Services CPI (7 points). We resisted the temptation to chart anything with fewer than 3 data points.

**GIGXCHANGE INDEX****The fees-and-pricing exception**

Section 4 (Fees) draws from the GigXchange Index – our own continuously-updated rate dataset built from confirmed bookings, public rate cards, MU rates, and verified user submissions. The Index follows its own methodology, published in full at [gigxchange.app/rates](https://gigxchange.app/rates).

**REFRESH****How this yearbook stays current**

This is Edition 01 (2026). Each subsequent edition will refresh stats against the latest published reports from each named body. Some sources (UK Music, MVT) publish annually; ONS CPI updates monthly; AIF and BBC headline studies are episodic. See the Sources page for source-by-source refresh cadence.

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## SOURCES

# Named sources

Every figure in this yearbook traces back to one of the 14 named bodies below. Click each source URL to verify the original report.

<b>UK Music</b> ukmusic.org – This Is Music 2024 (Nov 2024); Here, There and Everywhere 2024	Annual
<b>Music Venue Trust (MVT)</b> musicvenuetrust.com – Annual Reports, Network Data, Revive Live	Annual / Q1
<b>Musicians' Union (MU)</b> musiciansunion.org.uk – Rate Card 2024, Annual Report, Member Survey	Annual
<b>Help Musicians UK</b> helpmusicians.org.uk – Musicians' Census 2023, Music Creators' Earnings, Can Music Make You Sick?	Episodic
<b>PRS for Music</b> prsformusic.com – Annual Report 2024 (broke £1bn in 2024)	Annual
<b>PPL</b> ppluk.com – Annual Report 2024	Annual
<b>ONS</b> ons.gov.uk – Cultural Services CPI, series D7FI	Monthly
<b>CMA / Commons Library</b> commonslibrary.parliament.uk – SN04715 (secondary ticketing 2019)	Episodic
<b>BBC News</b> bbc.co.uk – 2022 festival headliner gender study (200 slots, 50 festivals)	Episodic
<b>AIF</b> aiforg.com – year-end festival cancellation tracker	Annual
<b>ISM</b> ism.org – Paying the Price (Brexit impact on UK musicians, 2023)	Episodic
<b>Spotify Loud &amp; Clear</b> loudandclear.byspotify.com – annual industry payout figures	Annual (Q1)
<b>BPI</b> bpi.co.uk – All About The Music 2024 (UK recorded music yearbook)	Annual
<b>GigXchange Index</b> gigxchange.app/rates – UK live music rate index, monthly issue	Monthly

## CITE THIS YEARBOOK

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END OF YEARBOOK · EDITION 01

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### Extend it

Download the raw CSV at [gigxchange.app/uk-market-statistics](https://gigxchange.app/uk-market-statistics) and use it in your own analysis or dataset.