

# Digital Platforms and the Structural Transformation of the Global Music Industry: Revenue Growth Patterns and Regional Dynamics

Aahana Gupta

*Pathways School Gurgaon, India*

## Abstract

There has been a dramatic change in the global music industry since the late 1990s, moving from physical sales to digital platforms. The study examines whether the post-2014 recovery of revenue showcases a genuine structural transformation which is driven by the digital platforms, and how it varies across regions. Secondary data was collected from the IFPI Global Music Reports, which covered revenue by format from 1999 to 2025, and growth rates across seven different regions (Latin America, US & Canada, Australasia, MENA, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia) from 2014 to 2025. Trend analysis was used to identify visual patterns, and simple linear regression was used to test whether growth rate changed significantly over time in each region. Total revenue declined from 2002 to 2014 before recovering. This recovery was mostly entirely driven by streaming. Physical revenue fell continuously and only was able to stabilise through a small uptick because of an increase in vinyl sales. Additionally, downloads rose and fell, becoming a short lived bridge format. Performance rights and synchronisation grew steadily throughout. Regionally, Latin America, Asia, and MENA showed significant positive growth trends, and Europe was also significant, however more modest. US & Canada, Australasia, and Sub-Saharan Africa showed no statistically significant trend. Sub-Saharan Africa had a large coefficient which reflected isolated spikes rather than steady growth. Moreover, significant growth seems to be concentrated in markets that are catching up through streaming, while mature markets show smaller increases. This can help interpret that digital transformation drove recovery everywhere, but its pace depended on how developed each market already was. Overall, the recovery was uneven across all regions and formats, but had one common driving factor: streaming.

**Keywords:** Digital Transformation, Global Music Industry, Recorded Music Revenue, Regional Growth Rates, Streaming, Trend Analysis