



A short overview of the panels held during the Assemblies in Dublin

IMPF hosted its 2024 General Assemblies in Dublin on April 25 - 26. The event saw independent music publisher members and related partners from around the world gather to discuss business and hear from some of the industry's leading figures on a range of matters across a programme of panels and speeches.

Annette Barrett, President of IMPF and **Victor Finn, CEO** of Irish Music Rights Organisation (**IMRO**) welcomed the IMPF community to Dublin.

“Our country values its reputation for culture and creativity,” said Finn. “Successive Irish governments over the past four decades have maintained a special income tax for creators that enables them to earn 50,000 (euro) before they pay any tax. Our government has always recognised the importance of culture and the intrinsic value that it brings to our country, our society, and our economy.

“Having said that, we are also host to a large number of multinational tech companies, which gives them a lot of influence over government - so our advocacy efforts are vitally important both at home and in Europe, where much of our copyright laws emanate.”

Finn argued that it was important that music rights-holders find a way of collaborating with technology companies, given the development of AI. “There’s no way we can put that genie back in the bottle - we have to find solutions that allow us to license and monetise the use of our copyright works in new AI systems.”

IMPF’s **2024 Global Market View Independent Music Publishing**, sponsored by **Musixmatch**, was launched in Dublin by the report’s author **Emmanuel Legrand for IMPF**.

The data presented in the latest Global Market View covers a number of key findings. The independent music publishing sector continued to grow with a rate of 16.8% in value to €2.43bn, despite a slight drop in market share; taken as a whole, the independent music publishing sector remains bigger than the biggest music publishing company; the sector’s revenue doubled in the five years up to 2022, from €1.25bn to €2.43bn; and estimates for 2023 suggest that the growth rate of the sector is going to be at minimum 8-12%.

Legrand, however, stressed that a key takeaway from the report should be that independent publishers are more than their collective market share. “You are key agents of diversity in the music ecosystem,” he

said. “What I would like to see is the data to back it up. I could guarantee you, if you added up [data] on jobs, money, taxes, the people you sign etc., you would have a picture of a community that is actively participating in local culture and global culture. That is the beauty of your network of publishers and sub publishers - cross pollination.”

Legrand also flagged the need to put data driven information in front of policy makers. “What is in this report is a good start,” he suggested. “Go to the European Commission, go to your government, and say, ‘This is who we are, this is who we represent... we need more,’ suggesting that policies like tax breaks, as seen in France and Ireland, should be pushed on a pan-European level.

Delegates’ attention then turned to the issue of **managing music royalties**, with IMRO hosting a presentation on its service and how the organisation tracks and matches copyright usage, and pays royalties accurately and on time.

That was followed by a panel exploring the needs of publishers when it comes to integrating data horizontally, with **Niclas Molinder (Music Rights Awareness Foundation)** moderating a discussion between **Denise Andrikopoulou (D-Version Music Publishing)**, **Chris Chambers (Backbeat Solutions)**, **Jessica Treacy (IMRO)** and **Abbie Triggs (On Music)**.

Speaking about the fragmented and incomplete metadata sets that music businesses currently work with, Molinder suggested that this is the only industry in the world that sends a product to market without knowing exactly how to share the revenue it earns.

The panel agreed that complete data at the point of registering works with CMO’s was key: “The challenge is working out how we can get that registration delivered to us in such a way that we don’t have to manually chase up information. Is there a way that we can support independent publishers to deliver information to us as quickly as possible.”

Europe’s (sync) independence from Hollywood was the focus of a music supervision panel hosted by **Steam Music Publishing**. The discussion brought together **Julia Aichholzer (Sentric/Believe)**, **Luana Martins (Blut)**, **Amelia McCloskey (AM Licensing and Ultimate Sync Access)**, and was moderated by Steam Music Publishing’s **Andrew Campbell**.

McCloskey provided a whistle-stop tour of the challenges that Hollywood has faced recently, from Covid, to the actors and writers strikes to the continued rise of disruptive streaming platforms - all of which have had an impact on the entire film-making ecosystem not only in Hollywood but around the world. But have these recent challenges reduced Hollywood’s global dominance in the market as far as sync opportunities are concerned?

Sentric/Believe’s Aichholzer suggested that Hollywood is still on top, but there are different sync opportunities in European markets. “[European-based companies] tend to take a more local approach, that’s what I see,” she said. “It’s a nice change because it puts attention and focus on artists that wouldn’t

otherwise get it.” When it comes to the advertising industry, however, Aichholzer credited US operators as being bolder in their approach: “I’d like to see the European market taking [inspiration from the US] there. You can do so much creative stuff when it comes to music - you can explore genres that are not typical in sync for adverts. The US market is more likely to do that, and I’d love to see that more in the US and UK market.”

The panel also talked about the changes in demands for different languages in advertising saying “Local languages are important - big brand or small brand. It all depends on who they want to reach.”

Dr. Metka Potočnik gave a presentation on the topic of diversity and inclusion in the music business, using the UK as a case study, highlighting the UK Parliament’s recent Misogyny In Music enquiry, the evidence it brought to light and the recommendations that came as a result.

Potočnik also flagged what she felt was a vital missing piece to discussions around this issue to date. “I haven’t heard the word ‘copyright’ in any of these conversations,” she said. “Copyright is where the power is.” Potočnik suggested that some kind of mandatory training might be a solution to raise awareness of the unconscious bias that people have.

It was suggested from the floor that, to make progress, it may be helpful to lead with the opportunities that diversity, equality and inclusion could create for workplaces.

Oyez! and IMPF Board Member **Francesca Trainini** sat down with the two IMPALA representatives who joined the meeting in Dublin, Everlasting Records’ **Mark Kitcatt** and PIAS’s Michel Lambot to discuss **how independent music publishers can work together with their record label counterparts.**

The first day of the programme was rounded off with a presentation from **Robert Singerman** who, in his capacity as EVP Global Music Partnerships for **.MUSIC**, shone a light on what the domain means for the industry, suggested good use cases and urged independent music publishers to pre-register for their **.MUSIC** domain as soon as possible.

“We have a month to give away as many **.music** domains as we can. The more people that have it, the more valuable it is and the more valuable the community is.” Singerman told the delegation. “Taylor Swift, Universal and Spotify are in the community already. We want you and your songwriters to be on there because then we’re interconnected.”

Friday began with the formal business of the **General Assembly** , attended by voting members of IMPF. The agenda included the presentation and approval of **IMPF’s Annual Report, the Treasurer’s Report and Financial Statement, and the election of a new Board of Directors for 2024 - 2026.**

Rosa M. Vizcaíno Gómez (Ediciones Musicales Clipper’s), Emily Stephenson (Downtown Music Publishing), Claudia Mescoli (Edizioni Curci), Cecilia León Rodrigo (Ediciones Joaquín Rodrigo),

Tatjana Bukvić (Tin Drum Music) and Denise Andrikopoulou (D-Version Music Publishing) were newly elected for the 2024 - 2026 College, joining those re-elected from the previous Board.

Following the Assembly, the morning opened with a discussion on artificial intelligence **IMPEL CEO Sarah Williams Florian Koempel (Queen Mary University of London), Helienne Lindvall (ECSA) and Robert Singerman (LyricFind)** highlighted global AI developments, both legal and political, and explored what they mean for the music industry.

The panel began with a song that was written, composed and 'recorded' by artificial intelligence from Suno.com. Songwriter and Composer, Lindvall summarised the issues it brings to the fore: "It's not like these songs are created out of thin air. Generative AI doesn't create anything without having a broad set of data coming from copyrighted music. Listening to the vocals of that track, it sounds like a couple of well known country artists that I can think of. Those artists should clearly get some remuneration and be able to consent to these services being trained on their voices. So there's a lot for us to do to ensure there's an ethical AI environment. With Suno, I don't know anybody that has licensed them, and there are so many CMOs that have said they opt out of their works being used for AI. We need to look at solutions and transparency about what is being used."

She also gave her thoughts on the AI track from a songwriter's perspective: "It brings up very philosophical questions like, What is art for? For me, it's about communication between human beings. There are so many things about music that go beyond what these companies do. It doesn't inspire me, it makes me sad."

The panel drew a distinction between culture and content, pointing out that AI could be very good for the latter but not the former.

The final panel discussion of the event brought together **Luisa Rösner (ROBA Music Publishing), David Sweeney (Sweeney Consulting), Gill Dooley (AIM Ireland), film and video game composer, music designer, and orchestrator Helen Lynch**, in conversation with **Per Strömbäck** to discuss various facets of **music and video games**, including what the two industries can learn from each other.

While sync practices are well established in other creative industries such as TV, film and advertising, ROBA Music Publishing's Rösner said that licensing existing music for video games is far less developed and more complicated

"One of the biggest problems when you're trying to license music for a game is that there are so many people that need to be involved," she said. "It's not like licensing a recording you found on Spotify and using it for the opener of a movie. In film, everyone understands what licensing should look like, [those working in] video games really don't. There needs to be more education. For games companies, it's hard to navigate all the rights they need to license. Then, in these new models where everything is very interactive and the artist is being represented [in game], it requires not only licensing management and sync management, but also artist management and label management... It's really hard because there are

no licensing models, so it's all from scratch. A lot of games don't pay royalties at all!" The panel agreed that further communication between the two industries is essential.

The two-day event was rounded off by a presentation by Niclas Molinder on **CLIP** (<https://goclip.org/en/>) - a free to use online learning platform with curated content from experienced musicians and mentors that will help creators make better business choices.

"Why do we need it?" Molinder asked. "There are more creators and content than ever right now. We see the number of released songs increase so much on a daily basis. There's a complete data mess around that, which means we need education and awareness. We have unidentified creator royalties because we don't know who the creators are - we need them to tell us. Therefore, again, we need to educate them. Molinder outlined the importance of the music industry's support for CLIP. IMPF sits on the WIPO For Creators Advisory Board which contributes to the development of the platform:

The two days ended with lunch and a big shout out to **Per Strömbäck** for his fantastic moderation of the Assemblies.