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Musical discography in Ukraine of the 20th-early 21st centuries: Historical, evolutionary and regional dimensions

Abstract. The relevance of study was determined by the need to systematise the history of Ukrainian musical discography as an integral part of the national cultural heritage, which was under threat of physical and digital loss. The purpose of research was to analyse the historical, evolutionary, and regional dimensions of the development of Ukrainian musical discography from the end of the 20th to the beginning of the 21st century. The complex process in the development of the Ukrainian sound recording industry was revealed. The initial stage was characterised by the activities of foreign record companies, most notably Gramophone and Syrena-Electro. The 1922-1991 period was marked by the centralisation and monopolisation of the recording industry. This era culminated in the establishment of the Kyiv branch of the Melodiya company, which became the principal platform for producing Ukrainian records. The Kyiv Sound Recording House emerged as a key institution, serving as the technological and creative centre for recording prominent Ukrainian academic and popular music artists. The 1991-2025 period was defined by market decentralisation, leading to the rapid emergence of private studios. This era witnessed the fundamental transition from analogue formats, such as vinyl records, to digital formats, including CDs and streaming platforms. This transition profoundly altered the principles governing music production, distribution, and consumption. It was revealed that throughout the 20th century, the diaspora actively recorded and disseminated Ukrainian music abroad, effectively preserving parts of the cultural heritage that were subject to censorship within the USSR. The main challenges for preserving this heritage were physical degradation of analogue carriers and the critical need for systematic digitisation and scientific cataloguing of scattered archives. The practical significance lies in creating a scientific basis for developing a national strategy for the preservation and popularisation of Ukrainian audio heritage, including the conceptualisation of a dedicated Museum of Sound Recording

Keywords: audio art; sound recording; folklore; popular music; mechanical recording; digital recording; electro-musical instruments

Introduction

The relevance of this research consisted in the comparative study of the volume of sound recordings published across the digital market, encompassing various historical media (such as reels, discs, cassettes, and records) alongside contemporary digital multimedia applications

with audio materials the 20th and 21st centuries. The historiographical and theoretical basis for this study's analysis of phonographic product evolution and its integration into broader cultural phenomena was firmly anchored in foundational scholarly works. The foundational analyses

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provided by V. Dutchak & M. Cherepanin (2023) were integral to establishing the core theoretical understanding of phonographic material evolution, while the contributions of I. Klymenko (2010) were instrumental in mapping the historical trajectory of sound recordings and their cultural integration over time. A. Bondarenko's (2022) research provided essential insight into the critical systemic factors governing audio material dissemination within the Ukrainian context. V. Volkomor (2020) contributed an examination of the technological and institutional factors influencing the distribution of sound recording materials across the broader world audio space, thus offering a crucial comparative lens. Meanwhile, the study by L. Prykhodko (2019) addressed the institutional and economic factors that impacted the release and circulation of audio content, particularly within the context of the transitional period at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. Collectively, these reviewed papers established the necessary detailed historical context and robust analytical frameworks for improving the comprehensive analysis of sound recording material dissemination at the convergence of the 20th and 21st centuries.

In addition, the research was focused on the rapid shifts in digital music culture over the period from 2020 to 2025. R. Melnyk *et al.* (2025) examined the impact of digital transformation on cultural heritage management, specifically highlighting the challenges associated with the digitisation and preservation of historical Ukrainian sound recordings, which underpinned the methodological complexity of the modern cross-format comparison. S. Qu *et al.* (2021) examined how Chinese music streaming platforms had reshaped the pathways for independent, self-releasing musicians, offering new visibility and distribution options, while simultaneously creating deeper dependencies on platform infrastructures. The researchers argued that this shift produced a hybrid model, in which platforms partially replaced traditional labels but also intensified data-driven commodification of artists' work. Overall, the study provided a nuanced view of how digital platforms transform creative labour, empowerment, and control in contemporary music markets. Researcher O. Kharchenko *et al.* (2021) addressed the legal and economic landscape, specifically analysing the challenges of intellectual property rights enforcement in the Ukrainian digital audio market, a factor that profoundly influenced the commercial release volume and distribution strategy of discographic products. I. Kryvoruchko & M. Kovtanyuk (2024) explored the significant role of social media and online databases in the discovery and consumption of Ukrainian ethnomusic and folklore, demonstrating, how digital platforms were fundamentally altering cultural preservation and audience access, thereby affecting the perceived volume and reach of sound recordings. The resulting panoramic overview of Ukrainian musical discography, integrating regional and diachronic analyses with a graphical model of its quantitative development and artistic characteristics, established the study's scientific originality.

The purpose of the study was to trace and describe the transformation of discography in the context of Ukrainian phonographic culture over the 20th -21st centuries.

Materials and Methods

The research methodology consisted in the development of audio recording products in Ukraine was investigated across two pivotal periods: the Soviet era (from 1922 to 1991) and the period following the restoration of Ukrainian Independence (from 1991 to 2025). The main scientific provisions were established through the application of several methods. Verification was used to substantiate statements regarding the evolution of audiovisual culture at the turn of the 20th-21st centuries. System analysis was based on a database of statistical information concerning the quantity of releases on various media formats. This data was compiled from open source discographical databases, primarily Discogs (n.d.), official catalogue from the state-owned Melodiya record label. The comparative method was applied to the process of comparing Ukrainian audio works for similarity to the music industries of America and Europe between the 2000s and 2022. Key case studies included seminal albums and tracks from influential Ukrainian artists such as Okean Elzy ("Model"), Vopli Vidopliassova ("Den Narodzhennia"), and Ruslana ("Wild Dances"). The canonical status of these works within Ukrainian popular music was underpinned by their strategic blend of indigenous cultural motifs and global sonic trends. The method of generalisation involved synthesising conclusions from previous studies that correlate with contemporary standards of musical work distribution. Due to this methodological basis, the main vector of the research was to determine the quantity and quality of the release of discographic material and to catalogue it at state and private institutions, in particular culture and art (with the involvement of collection editions). With the adoption of the Law of Ukraine No. 2704-VIII (2019) and the Law of Ukraine No. 2849-IX (2022), strategic changes have taken place not only in the restoration of lost or damaged discographic products, but also in the use of folklore sources in the symmetry of modifying Ukrainian-language songs in other genres: jazz, pop, and rock cultures. In addition, it was important to analyse the Law of Ukraine No. 1227-VII (2014), which defined the principles of public media operations, including television and radio, and ensured state guarantees for the provision of broadcasting channels. As a result of perturbations, the future experimental strategy of the fields of cultural studies and art history was supplemented, enriched, and modernised by factual trends towards the emergence of young theorists and scholars, who used their own practical experiences in scientific research.

Results and Discussion

The creation of a comprehensive database of Ukrainian discography from 1897 to 2025 was a difficult but important task of preserving and developing the cultural

heritage and musicological science. Such a resource would allow researchers, musicians, historians, and the public to get access to a huge amount of information about the Ukrainian audiovisual segment. Upon examining the successful segmentation of Ukrainian audio culture during the 20th and 21st centuries, a number of critical issues, partially acknowledged by coordinating state and commercial cultural bodies, had emerged, necessitating action in three key areas: the creation of conditions to enhance the development and support of young musicians' creativity; the strengthening of copyright protection and the prevention of intellectual property violations by pirated content in accordance with Ukrainian legislation; and the proactive pursuit of integration with the European musical space through the involvement of academic institutions and participation in international musical projects, with the recognising entities including but not limited to, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine and Collective Management Organisations. Sound recording and discography of Ukrainian culture after 1991 is a multi-level and multifaceted phenomenon. Despite all the difficulties, Ukrainian music was actively progressing and occupied its proper place among the models of world show business.

Analysis of music scenes across various regions of Ukraine, together with observations on how socio-political dynamics influence the audio industry, reveals both shared tendencies and clear distinctions between Ukraine's show business sphere and that of the United States and Europe. However, the outcome underscored that evaluating musical genres was inherently subjective, shaped by the viewpoints of listeners, art experts, and specialists in the commercial market. Another issue was the change of musical tastes, which complicated the conduct of a long-term study. The greatest difficulty was the normalisation of the discographic database, which was characterised by the disparity of sources, because information about audio recordings was scattered in archives, libraries, private collections, which do not belong to scientists and researchers. Another guarantee was the lack of a unified system of classification of musical recordings, which also complicated the systematisation of the database. The preservation and digitisation of analogue recordings presented considerable challenges, requiring both budgetary investment and specialised equipment that was not consistently accessible. It was necessary to establish a legal framework for identifying copyright, which typically remained valid for 50 to 100 years, for those phonographic materials that constituted a vital part of Ukraine's cultural heritage. A number of proposals had been put forward, focusing on the structuring of a specific database, it was suggested that this document should include the following information: 1) the name of the performer and composer; 2) the title of the work (genre, style, date of creation); 3) the place of recording and the company; 4) the format (gramophone record, reel, cassette, compact disc or digital recording); 5) the publisher or distributor; 6) an abstract, review, overview of the

discographic product from leading artists and/or scientists-researchers in the field of culture and art (Witt, 2016).

Analysing phonographic data created in different regional studios of Ukraine, it is possible to identify interesting patterns and trends that reflected the cultural, social, and historical features of each region. In the 21st century, the continuation of professional thoughts and the implementation of the productivity of the development of discographic material became available in the scientific treatises of most Ukrainian researchers, in particular, A. Vasylik & V. Pylypovych (2015), who provided more complete summary information about the release and distribution of sound recordings. The Ukrainian discographic culture had gone through a rather long period of its historical formation, although at 2025 this field of science was considered quite young and had many disharmonious and unbalanced actions in a few studies by scientists and practitioners. The main explorer-collector, who had brought a vast amount of information to the cataloguing of works of the national discography was A. Zheleznyi (1989). The researcher analysed the collected data on records released during the Soviet Union. It was worth noting that the researcher was not a professional scientist, and his publications were dedicated to collection compilations. A. Zheleznyi's (1981) publication was a catalogue of all preserved, fixed, and restored works from the time of the Ukrainian SSR. The author noted those artefacts of printed materials (collections) that required factual refinement and supplementation in the section of discographic data.

From 1922 to 1991, Ukrainian music as a holistic artistic phenomenon was limited in its accessibility to a wide range of consumers. The main problem was the historical specifics of regionalisation, particularly the territories of Ukraine becoming part of the Soviet Union. However, masters of the national culture did not abandon their self-identity and artistic self-expression. For the Communist Party's executive bodies, the main reason for banning Ukrainian creativity was the desire to silence the praise of the human aspiration for freedom – both individual and national, the expression of artists' naive belief in equal rights for all peoples of the union of republics (which was declared, but not true), and the emphasis on the linguistic aspect and their own traditional education (Poshedin & Kashchuk, 2023). And this became an “eye sore” for the cultural leaders in factual decisions within the Soviet (russian-language) audio art. Some of the achievements fixed on phonographic devices were destroyed by the authorities themselves, some copies fell under sanctions and were banned from use, while others were put away in drawers, waiting for better times that would bring a more loyal attitude towards Ukraine, or “untie the hands” of artists in their expressions of patriotism and love for the people, language, and Motherland. Exploring the phonographic heritage of the Western, Central, Southern, and Eastern regions of Ukraine more deeply, a considerable stylistic difference in the music can be seen. These factors were evidenced by audio models

on reels, cassettes, and records, and from the 1990s – by disc devices (players, tape recorders) that entered the market in connection with the expansion of the digitalisation of the multimedia image (CD and DVD). In the early 2000s, the emergence of digital (localised accessibility) computer products, already contained in internet databases, transferred from mechanical audio carriers.

The Ukrainian diaspora had fundamentally shaped the trajectory of Ukrainian musical culture globally, utilising discography as a critical medium for both preservation and evolution. Beginning with the early 20th century, successive waves of emigration introduced and recorded foundational Ukrainian folk and choral traditions, establishing a crucial historical archive abroad, particularly in North America. This initial preservation effort was later enhanced by an influx of professionally trained artists, who cultivated Ukrainian academic music. The diaspora's musical output shifted toward synthesis, dynamically integrating traditional melodies and instrumentation into contemporary Western genres such as pop, rock, and world music. This hybrid approach had allowed the discography to function not only as a cultural anchor for the community but also as a powerful tool for promoting and contemporising Ukrainian heritage on the global stage. The Gramophone and Syrena-Electro companies were pivotal recording entities that played a crucial role in documenting and disseminating Ukrainian music, particularly during the early 20th century. The Gramophone company, established in the UK in 1898 and swiftly becoming a global enterprise, undertook significant recording expeditions across the Russian empire and Eastern Europe in the early 1900s, capturing a wide array of ethnic and regional music. Its discography included valuable classical recordings, such as the 1910 Stockholm sessions of the renowned Ukrainian tenor Modest Mentsynsky, which featured 22 Ukrainian folk and original songs (Maksymiuk, 2003). Concurrently, Syrena-Electro (initially Ideal in 1904, renamed Syrena Rekord in 1908, and later referred to as Syrena-Electro), a major Polish company based in Warsaw, was instrumental in recording Ukrainian folk music for the substantial markets of the Russian empire and, later, interwar Poland (Lerski & Karński, 2004). Syrena-Electro's output included the work of Ukrainian artists in Warsaw, and field recordings conducted in regions like Halychyna and Zakarpattia. Notably, the company issued recordings of the celebrated bandurist Mykhaylo Teliga in 1934 and, throughout the 1930s, produced approximately 73 Ukrainian recordings, including 26 tracks by the Lviv choir Surma (Fedorniak, 2020). Both firms, through their respective commercial operations, were essential in creating a foundational audio archive of Ukrainian musical heritage prior to World War 2 (1939-1945), a resource of immense value for subsequent ethnomusicological and historical studies.

Another important aspect of the study was to identify Ukrainian-language discographic material released in

the 20th and 21st centuries and compare the number of works in different decades, the emergence of new performers, and the mechanisms of sound recording (their differences or inheritance by the culture of digitalisation in the early 2000s from previous devices: sound programmes, tape recorders, components for storing and recording sound space). A follower of A. Zheleznyi's actions was the famous researcher and collector of Ukrainian sound recordings, S. Maksymiuk (2003). The researcher's experiments were dedicated to Ukrainian music but had contradictions and differences with the information of A. Zheleznyi, which indicated that the author focused on the catalogues of sound recording products of immigrants. The specialist adjusted his focus to the recording companies of European countries (Austria, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, France) and researched a certain cataloguing of Ukrainian works of discographic materials up to the 2000s. The researcher's main vector of scientific practices was oriented not only on the recordings of solo, individual artists but also of collectives, symphony orchestras, folk groups and ensembles of an academic direction. Thus, it was divided by types and styles of musical performance, so the main vector of audio recording culture required not a general overview of the established audio distribution but by certain areas: folk music, academic art, jazz, popular song and the rock industry. The least studied link of audio recording was rock art, as the periodisation of the establishment of the effective concepts of this genre was characterised by the limited use of fixed resources and the number of listeners. The most optimal source of contemporary treatises had become popular art, which had used all the standardised concepts of the development of the show business industry. Neutral actions regarding the involvement of scientific and practical apparatuses in the formulation of the release of discographic material belong to such genres as folklore and academic music. And the jazz was a manifestation of improvisational creativity, which was mostly formed at the expense of a concert performance, had a limited number of discographic collections (Daiuk & Dmytrak, 2018).

The priority significance of Kyiv as the primary Ukrainian centre must be emphasised, as it had functioned as the "mastodon" of the nation's musical life, being the exclusive location for the construction of the largest recording studios – such as the Kyiv Branch of the All-Union Melodiya Recording Studio – and attracting the most distinguished musicians and composers. A divergent characteristic was evident among the Western Ukrainian regions like Lviv and Chernivtsi, which maintained distinct cultural traditions reflected in local works and were supported by institutions such as Lviv Radio House Recording Studios. The port city of Odesa remained open to new musical influences and contributed to diverse genre development, often utilising the sound infrastructure of facilities like the Odesa Film Studio Sound Department; and Kharkiv, acting

as an industrial platform, also possessed a developed musical culture and served as a recording site for numerous Ukrainian songs, frequently leveraging the resources of Kharkiv Radio Committee (Radio House) Studios. However, a deep regional differentiation in genre subcategories was observed, wherein Western Ukraine was characterised primarily by recordings of folk, academic, and sacred music, Central Ukraine by

academic art and popular song, Eastern Ukraine by Cossack song, ethnomusic, romances/solo songs, and chanson (a fringe subgenre of song), and Southern Ukraine by pop art, chanson, and folklore. This analysis can be informed by the extensive databases on the distribution of multimedia materials, which had been formed by numerous commercial recording companies and institutions (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of musical genres in the show business market

Genre category	Allocated market share
Popular “pop” culture	Over 50%
Academic direction	Up to 20% (Shared)
Folklore direction	Up to 20% (Shared)
Rock art	Less than 10%
Jazz	Up to 5%
Subcultures (Electronic music, DJ, Alternative art)	Remaining 15%

Source: based on L. Vasylieva (2004)

However, regarding the breadth of the relevance of the submitted information, all percentage ratios may vary slightly, depending on the years and the relevance of this style and musical product, one must consider the age category. The proportionality of listening and the percentage ratio relative to the number of listeners interested in specific musical genres was determined. O. Naidiuk (2019) collected the information on various network (multimedia platforms: Deezer, Spotify, YouTube, Facebook), in particular, available to the Ukrainian

consumer: American and European vocal and instrumental works cover over 60% of listeners, up to 30% was occupied by Ukrainian music, and 10% was allocated to listening to works of different countries of Asia, Australia and Africa, in particular, russian-language content compositions got here. The differentiation between the criteria of style and genre yields distinct interpretive implications and analytical possibilities, the distribution of which was posited to vary across age categories and was quantifiable through the following percentage ratio (Table 2).

Table 2. Musical genre preferences by age category

Age category	Alternative music	Rock	Popular (Pop)	Folk/Academic	Jazz	Other musical styles
Up to 18 years	Over 40%	20%	20%	10%	Less than 5%	Up to 5-6%
From 18 to 35 years	25%	30%	35%	5%	3%	2%
From 35 to 50 years	3%	10%	50%	30%	6%	1%
From 50 and above	2% (Combined with rock)	2% (Combined with alternative)	25%	Over 40%	8%	25% (Chanson, 70s-90s songs)

Source: Rating Group (2019)

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, large-scale transformations in musical preferences had been observed, revealing significant diachronic shifts in cultural tastes and modes of music consumption. Unlike trends characteristic of specific age groups during the 1990s and 2000s, the results indicated a gradual yet profound transition in the structure of musical preferences – from locally oriented and genre-stable systems to globalised, dynamic, and hybrid forms of musical perception. In 1991-2025 period, priority was given to new models of musical culture (genres, styles, technologies, synthetic sounds, elements of voice processing). In the early 1900s-1950s, music was dominated by: folklore, classical and religious/sacred stylistic orientation; from 1950 to the 1990s, compounds of jazz, pop (otherwise – pop

culture) and dance genres were actively appearing with the use of electromusical instruments (Cherevko, 2012). At the end of the 20th century, the musical art of the world audiovisual space modified the categories of pop, forming new types of culture such as rock, hip-hop, electronic composition. However, the generation of such achievements was quite monotonous, and thus required the expansion of popularisation among the young artists themselves. The revival of interest in traditional musical folklore was observed in its penetration into the arena of world show business, which contributed to the globalisation of folk motifs in various musical cultures.

It should be emphasised that the percentage ratios presented in Table 2 change over time, as the share of new audio material grows, which listeners can evaluate

from a positive, neutral, and/or negative standpoint. O. Hrebin *et al.* (2023) emphasised that existing state and private archives (the Central State Audiovisual and Electronic Archive, recordings of Ukrainian regional and local television and radio industries, the H. Pshenychnyi Central State Cine Photo Phono Archive of Ukraine, the former Kyiv branch of the All-Union State Enterprise Melodiya, and the problem-research Laboratory of Musical Ethnology at the M. Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy, the Laboratory of Ethnomusicology at the P. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, the Educational Laboratory of Folklore at the I. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts, the phonographic laboratory of the M. Rylsky Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, and private collections) required systematisation of the distribution of analysis by regional location, as well as the maintenance of statistical data to ensure wide access to culturologists and art historians. However, the insufficient indexing and processing of these archives complicated the conduct of a comprehensive analysis of the history and development of Ukrainian discographic and sound recording music. O. Hrebin *et al.* (2023) sought to fill this gap by exploring various genres of Ukrainian culture: from academic to popular, using available archival phono funds.

In a specific examination of the historical development of regional musical centres, it must be noted that each individual district of Ukraine possessed its own audio distribution infrastructure. This infrastructure comprised both state-funded complexes (e.g., state, regional, and district recording studios) and commercial, private enterprises, where phonographic works were produced. The largest territories of such new formations were Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Chernivtsi, Odesa, Dnipro, Poltava, and Chernihiv, which influenced the development of the integration of musical instruments and the modification of unique performance styles. An important campus in the revival of the festival life of Ukraine were satellite cities that were followers of industrial provinces and contributed to the popularisation of local culture and the exchange of experience between musicians (Bucha, Kyiv Oblast; Vyzhnytsia, Chernivtsi Oblast; Nizhyn, Chernihiv Oblast; Truskavets, Lviv Oblast).

During 1922-1991, a large-scale complex of discographic material was created in Ukraine, which covered a wide range of genre and stylistic characteristics. It was difficult to name the quantitative component of phonography due to the lack of centralised accounting and the partial loss of archival sources. However, it was possible to single out the main directions and the most famous artists, who contributed to the Ukrainian sound recording, in particular: mass culture (performers: I. Bobul, V. Zinkevych, V. Ivasyuk, N. Matvienko, Trio Marenychi, M. Mozgovyi, S. Rotaru, N. Yaremchuk). The subordinate genre and stylistic forms prevalent during this period included the popular song (with representative performers

such as S. Rotaru and N. Yaremchuk), rock art (operating within Soviet censorship limits, exemplified by groups like “Vopli Vidopliassova” (VV) and “Braty Hadiukiny”), and author’s/bard’s creativity (text-centric music with artists such as Viktor Morozov). In the field of folk music, ensembles and choral groups received a special status, which were later awarded state prizes from the leadership of Ukraine, in particular: the Hryhoriy Veriovka National Honoured Academic Folk Choir of Ukraine, the Pavlo Virsky State Honoured Academic Dance Ensemble of Ukraine, the Stanislav Pavlyuchenko Ukrainian Folk Choir; thanks to which, such performers as D. Hnatyuk and A. Solovianenko were noted. Regarding the popularisation of phonographic materials of classical music, it is worth attributing the Kyiv Chamber Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, which introduced into the composer’s discourse the works of M. Lysenko, B. Liatoshynsky, L. Revutsky, V. Sylvestrov, M. Skoryk, Ye. Stankovych. From 1922 to 1991, music, like other types of literature and art, was subject to censorship, so many works could not be recorded or distributed. Most of the products were published with the permission of the decisions of the artistic council of the All-Union State Enterprise of Recording Melodiya (the Kyiv branch of this company was specially established). A significant part of Ukrainian songs was published there and “generously sprinkled” with Russian samples. Among other things, many recordings were lost, destroyed, and/or damaged.

The prevailing release of discographic products was subject to the control of several firms and companies established following the distribution and integration of audio recording material into the American and European markets. These entities, post-2000, formalised procedures for the popularisation of multimedia data, defining their activities in the show business market primarily as distribution. Starting from the period of 2003-2004, the Ukrainian media market had actively pursued integration into European professional activities. Numerous producer centres – which govern professional, including commercial, show business – had been entering into contracts and civil law agreements with international media labels such as Lavina Music, Sony Music Entertainment, and Believe Digital. Beyond distribution, Ukrainian producer agencies, often subsidised by recording companies that covered a significant segment of popularisation costs (Sbitnieva, 2022), shaped the professional trajectory of the artist. However, cooperation with American- and world-focused audio space colleagues was not universally satisfactory, leading to the creation of indigenous label organisations and distribution factories within Ukrainian show business. Private corporations, founded since 2003 – including Mamamusic, Talant Records, Mozgi Group (now MOZGI Entertainment), and TatoMusic – introduced mechanisms to align artistic activity with American legislative norms and contemporary European-adapted profile systems for audio recording

development. MOZGI Entertainment and TatoMusic remained operating corporations in 2025, while Mamamusic and Talant Records, had either modified their profiling, gone bankrupt, or established new industrial-multimedia centres to expand the operational capability of market relations between the performer and the consumer. The stock market for the approbation of multimedia products was undergoing rapid transformation and redistribution provoked by the principles and concepts inherent in European mass media standards, which were often outlined in directives and regulations such as Directive (EU) No. 2018/1808 (2018) and the principles established by the European Broadcasting Union, though specific official documents detailing “European mass media standards” as a singular, unified code for music distribution were complex and generally derived from a body of EU law governing digital services and copyright protection (Directive (EU) No. 2019/790, 2019).

In 1991 new horizons opened for the development of the national musical culture, which were evidenced using computer music technologies and the contemporary trends of the scientific and technical revolution of the late 20th-early 21st century. These perturbations were followed by changes in the political and economic environment, modernised components for creativity and popularisation of music, in particular, its recording and distribution. However, in parallel with the rise of artificiality, the Ukrainian music industry was shaken by a few challenges associated with the transition to market relations and the globalisation of cultural trends (Uzhynskyi, 2021). The main trends in the development of discography were focused on the structure of the Ukrainian “pop”, which was composed of new names (artists, performers, composers) and inherited American European musical styles. Simultaneously, the functioning of the national audiovisual industry was growing new recording companies, labels were being formed, and the festival culture was being founded. Thus, the demand for the commercialisation of show business was growing rapidly and was displacing state creative institutions as a segment of competitiveness among market relations in art. Thus, there was a technological integration of the culture of Ukraine into the world musical space, which was distinguished by the beginning of active work with foreign colleagues, and participation in international competitions, festivals, and exhibitions (for example: the Eurovision Song Contest).

The strategic institutional shifts following in 1991 had influenced the nation’s cultural and discographic landscape. The adoption of the Constitution of Ukraine (1996) and several key legislative acts has driven substantial changes in the media and language policy sphere. These acts include the Law of Ukraine No. 1227-VII (2014), the Law of Ukraine No. 2704-VIII (2019), and the Law of Ukraine No. 2849-IX (2022). These developments extended beyond the restoration of damaged discographic products to encompass fundamental

shifts in the creative sphere, particularly promoting the use of folklore sources as a foundation for modifying and expanding Ukrainian-language songs within diverse genres, specifically jazz, pop, and rock cultures. The heritage of the discography of Ukrainian culture, recorded by various sound recording devices in the period of the 20th-early 21st century, was extremely diverse and reflected all the complex processes that took place in society. It was worth emphasising that since 1995, due to the art agency Territory-A, the revival of the national idea was initiated, where most Ukrainian performers began to transform “pop” works with folklore roots (groups Aqua Vita, VV, Okean Elzy, TNMK, singer Ruslana) (Mazur, 2021). Okean Elzy’s album, *Model* (2001), stood as a pivotal transitional work, integrating the lyrical sincerity of post-Soviet rock with an innovative sonic palette that fused 1970s hard rock, Oriental melodies, and contemporary electronic textures, thus expanding the perceived aesthetic boundaries of mainstream Ukrainian rock. Concurrently, Vopli Vidopliassova, a foundational band in Ukrainian rock-n-roll and neo-ethnic rock, employed their seminal track *Den Narodzhennia* as an early example of their influential style, which synthesised folk and punk sensibilities, gaining cross-cultural visibility through its inclusion in key post-Soviet cinema (Discogs, n.d.). Ruslana’s Eurovision-winning entry *Wild Dances* (2004) represented a landmark achievement in Ukrainian cultural diplomacy, successfully operationalising an Ethnic Pop Banger genre by merging traditional Hutsul rhythms and choreography with contemporary pop and rock production, thereby projecting a distinct national identity onto an international stage and countering colonial cultural narratives.

In 2000s new performance practices appeared which reflected changes within the industrialisation of show business, by methods of technological solutions and software applications, where quite a lot of compositional sound solutions were built in. Due to their own self-identification of culture, Ukrainian musicians began to actively cooperate with the foreign segment of listeners, which contributed to the popularisation of author’s music outside Ukraine. In parallel with these actions, designers and technologists tried to model the digital transformation of the audio industry, to create large multimedia archives that would allow preserving and popularising the musical heritage. The proliferation of European streaming platforms, exemplified by services such as Spotify and Deezer, had presented novel opportunities for the international promotion of Ukrainian culture and coincided with the cessation of certain state-funded projects, such as the previously supported National Digital Content Application Initiative (an illustrative example of a grant-based programme), which were focused on the development of Ukrainian audiovisual applications. R. Bezugla (2010) noted that the most creative and scientific specialists considered it necessary to create multimedia sites, where all available phonographic materials

of the author's song from the end of the 20th century to 2010 was stored. However, other obstacles arose, which were the result of insufficient information data in the identification of discographic materials, particularly the lack of systematised sources about music production in different regions of Ukraine.

In the early 21st century, the level of the digital revolution was growing, which activated the development of multimedia technologies, which led to the emergence of new audio recording formats and ways of their distribution (first on physical media, then – digital, and after 2006 – virtual). In Ukrainian music, new genre cultures had appeared: hip-hop, rap, electronic music, the Looping strategy. However, the digitalisation of the culture of the 2000s-2010s was shaken by the main technical and performance challenges, which allowed the distribution of audiovisual products by illegal methods, which reduced the profits in the show business market. Problems of a revolutionary nature and a decrease in the quality of life in the system of the Ukrainian economy led to a reduction in investment in the music industry; lack of state support for the music infrastructure complicated the development of the digital industry. S. Lazarev (2018) emphasised that the potential avenues for the retrieval of audiovisual information included several key categories: archival funds (such as the National Phonothèque of Ukraine, scientific and creative institutions, state and regional repositories, and collected archives of radio and television channels); libraries (encompassing music, university, and music academy collections); audio labels (both Ukrainian and foreign entities that collaborated with Ukrainian artists); private collections (specifically the systematic search of archival sound recording sources held by collectors); and Internet sources (including specialised databases and social networks). For a comprehensive comparative analysis, it was necessary to collect available data on musical recordings created in different regions of Ukraine, considering the special configurations of the historical features of the regions (music schools, traditions, the influence of other cultures), social and economic factors (the level of development of the audiovisual industry and their accessibility), political reforms. The definition of the regional features of Ukrainian culture will be normalised due to the research of specific genres, styles, themes that were characteristic of these areas. This parallel was identified based on cultural centres (cities, towns, hamlets) that had played key transformations among the historiography of the Ukrainian discography and sound recording. Nowadays, the creation of a database of Ukrainian discography is a complex and controversial process, mostly because of commercial planning, an extremely necessary task for the preservation of the artistic heritage of Ukraine and the development of cultural studies.

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Conclusions

The research had established periodisation of Ukrainian musical discography, revealing distinct quantitative and qualitative characteristics for each historical stage. The analysis of statistical data confirmed that the initial formation of the discography at the turn of the 20th century was driven by foreign record labels, resulting in a limited but culturally significant number of releases. The post-1991 era initiated a radical transformation, marked by the collapse of the state-run industry, a sharp decline in the production of physical media like vinyl and CDs, and the subsequent rise of digital distribution. Within the show business market, pop culture was allocated over 50% of the market share. Conversely, academic and folklore directions each comprise up to 20% (shared), rock art accounts for less than 10%, and jazz takes up to 5%. Additionally, in the multimedia platforms available to the Ukrainian consumer, American and European vocal and instrumental works covered over 60% of listeners, Ukrainian music occupied up to 30%, and 10% was allocated to listening to works of different countries, including russian-language content compositions.

The 1960s witnessed Ukrainian SSR established monopoly under the Melodiya label, which resulted in peak vinyl production. This rise in output coincided with ideological homogenisation and a marked regional disparity, as Kyiv remained the principal centre of sound recording. The study also emphasised the essential contribution of the Ukrainian diaspora, whose recording activities throughout the 20th century helped to preserve national musical heritage beyond the constraints of the Soviet system. Comparative analysis revealed that although Ukraine began to adopt Western production standards in the 2000s, its industry continued to differ in scale and infrastructural development. Future research should prioritise deeper examinations of regional discographies, the evolution of genre representation across different historical periods, and the creation of a unified national digital database capable of consolidating the various elements of Ukraine's phonographic legacy.

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Музична дискографія ХХ – початку ХХІ століття в Україні: історико-еволюційний та регіональний виміри

■ **Анотація.** Актуальність дослідження зумовлена необхідністю систематизації історії української музичної дискографії як невід'ємної складової національної культурної спадщини, що перебувала під загрозою фізичної та цифрової втрати. Метою дослідження було проаналізувати історичні, еволюційні та регіональні виміри розвитку української музичної дискографії з кінця ХХ – початку ХХІ століття. Розкрито складний процес розвитку української індустрії звукозапису. Початковий етап характеризувався діяльністю іноземних фірм грамзапису, насамперед Gramophone та Syrena-Electro. Період 1922-1991 років відзначався централізацією та монополізацією звукозаписної галузі. Кульмінацією цієї доби стало створення київської філії компанії «Мелодія», яка перетворилася на головну платформу з виробництва українських платівок. Київський будинок звукозапису сформувався як ключова інституція, що виконувала роль технологічного й творчого центру запису провідних українських академічних і популярних виконавців. Період 1991-2025 років визначався децентралізацією ринку, що зумовило стрімке виникнення приватних студій. Ця доба засвідчила фундаментальний перехід від аналогових носіїв, зокрема вінілових платівок, до цифрових форматів – компакт-дисків і стримінгових платформ. Така трансформація докорінно змінила принципи виробництва, розповсюдження та споживання музики. Виявлено, що протягом ХХ століття українська діаспора активно здійснювала звукозапис і поширення української музики за кордоном, фактично зберігаючи ті пласти культурної спадщини, які в СРСР зазнавали цензурних обмежень. Основними викликами у збереженні цієї спадщини визначено фізичну деградацію аналогових носіїв та нагальну потребу в системній цифровізації й науковому каталогуванні розпорошених архівів. Практичне значення дослідження полягає у формуванні наукового підґрунтя для розроблення національної стратегії збереження та популяризації української аудіоспадщини, зокрема концептуалізації спеціалізованого Музею звукозапису

■ **Ключові слова:** аудіомистецтво; звукозапис; фольклор; популярна музика; механічний звукозапис; цифровий звукозапис; електромозичні інструменти