

## **International Standard Music Number (ISMN), ISO 10957 Update on the year 2017**

### **Membership**

There are 60 ISMN agencies, the latest members being Botswana and Morocco.

We still could not find a new agency for the Netherlands. So for the time being our former agent Donemus continues with allocation of ISMNs until a successor will have been found. As already mentioned in former years, we would be very grateful for any advice from IAML how to improve the situation and find a new agency since the country would be the only main music producing country in Europe that does not take full part in the ISMN system.

Interest in membership was lately shown from Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, China, Haiti, India, Nigeria, Thailand and Uganda.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The latest Annual General Assembly of the ISMN community took place in Ottawa, Canada, on September 13, 2017, hosted by Library and Archives Canada (LAC). 33 participants attended our AGM.

We were glad to once again align the meeting with that of the International ISBN Agency. Since this brought synergies on both sides we intend to continue with this arrangement.

Among the news is the completion of the long-awaited ISMN Manager, a project by Wolfram Krajewski (Hürth, Germany). This is an ISMN administration system for agencies with the special option of easy data export into the IDNV, a kind of music in print developed and maintained by the German ISMN agency. Many ISMN agencies are relatively small, and therefore a PC-based flexible system fills their needs. Besides, there is no cost involved as the German agency offers the system to other agencies as a courtesy free of charge.

Paul Jessop enriched the meeting by a paper advocating once again the linking of identifiers as well as the use of DOI; this is not a new application – the DOI system was designed in a way to accommodate existing ISO identifiers such as the ISMN. As DOI may be used to identify almost any object, not only electronic ones the DOI ISMN application might open the door to other uses, e.g. the identification of excerpts and links to various contexts.

As guest speaker, Joseph Trivers, music librarian of Library & Archives Canada, gave an interesting account of the Canadian music sector, including the ISMN. He actually got in contact with people from the music publishing sector and asked them about ISMN. While quite a number of publishers have ISMNs and use them for their publications it does not surprise that some others do not see much benefit in their existence. There is truth in that view as the music world is still without a really comprehensive worldwide music in print directory (or database) (IDNV may perhaps fill this need) which might serve as the basis for national and international ordering, distribution and bibliographic information. On the other hand, the ISMN is applicable internationally, in contrast to former proprietary systems, and in its barcoded form may save quite some time and effort in internal rationalization and ordering and distribution as well. For example, Amazon seems now persuaded that the ISMN is a real and valid ISO identifier and covered by GS1's GTIN guide; therefore ISMNs may be used for ordering and distribution with Amazon (who have become, in some countries, the largest notated music retailer).

The next ISMN meeting will take place on 26 September 2018 in Sliema, Malta, by invitation of the National Book Council.

## **Publications**

### **ISMN Newsletter**

No. 27 of the ISMN Newsletter was published in December 2017. It is available on the [ISMN website](#). As usual it provides information on the latest AGM.

## **Conferences**

Since the last report, the International ISMN Agency was represented at the ISBN annual meeting in Ottawa, Canada, the Frankfurt Music Fair, and the ISO TC46 meeting in Lisbon, Portugal.

## **Administration programme ISMN Manager**

In January 2018 we distributed ISMN Manager, an administration program for agencies. By now, 11 agencies use this tool for error-free allocation of ISMNs to generate lists of complete 13-digit ISMNs for registrants and to administer their contact data. The program also offers the possibility to generate bar codes for the ISMNs.

## **Current issues**

ISMN, the International Standard Music Number, is celebrating its 25th anniversary, this year. The long-time Chairmen Dr. Hartmut Walravens and Dr. Joachim Jaenecke are thinking about retirement. We are looking for successors and will be grateful for any advice the IAML community can give.

Communication and cooperation with a few member countries is still difficult. As already mentioned in last year's report, there seem to be responsibility problems at the agency in Kazakhstan; Macedonia, although a long-time member, does not seem to work with the ISMN at all.

## **Board and management**

Chairman: Dr. Hartmut Walravens

Vice Chairman: Dr. Joachim Jaenecke

Treasurer: Dr. Bettina von Seyfried

The daily business is run by Carolin Unger

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