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Press release

ECSA urges the European Commission to block the Sony/EMI deal and preserve a competitive and culturally diverse European music landscape

Today, the European Composer and Songwriter Alliance (ECSA) submitted its comments to the European Commission on the acquisition of sole control by Sony over EMI Music Publishing, which would create the biggest music publisher in the world, growing from 2.16m to 4.21m compositions.

In its submission, ECSA urges the European Commission to block Sony's acquisition of EMI and considers that it would threaten competition in the licensing market, endanger music authors' revenues across the EU and ultimately jeopardize cultural diversity in the European music landscape.

Commenting on the foreseen acquisition, Alfons Karabuda, ECSA President, said: *"We believe that allowing such a major and dominant publisher in the market is not only detrimental to a competitive market place but will also lead to a net loss for Europe's culturally diverse music landscape. If approved, such a deal can only further exacerbate the domination of the top Anglo-American repertoire to the detriment of millions of music authors' works that are very often not exploited nor promoted by major publishers."*

ECSA also warns about the potential threats for music authors' revenues - which rely to a great extent on transparent and fair distribution of royalties by collective rights management organisations (CMOs) - and underlines that no rules govern how publishers license, collect and distribute royalties. If approved, such an acquisition would run contrary to the objectives of fair remuneration and transparency of creators' revenues that the European Commission is rightly promoting in the context of the Copyright Directive.

Alfons Karabuda said: *"Major music publishers are already increasingly withdrawing their rights from CMOs and exercise a considerable pressure over them, with detrimental impacts on music authors' revenues. If approved, the "de facto" creation of the biggest publisher in the world will further dismantle the collective management of rights which benefits hundreds of thousands music authors. He concluded: "We urge the European Commission to block the deal and thus make the right choice for music author's rights and a competitive and culturally diverse European music landscape"*.

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