



ECSA, the European Composer and Songwriter Alliance, represents 36 organisations of Composers and Songwriters in 25 European countries and is the voice of composers and songwriters at a European level.

ECSA PRESS RELEASE IN RESPONSE TO EUROPEAN COMMISSION ANTITRUST DECISION.

BRUSSELS, JULY 16, 2008 – Europe's leading musicians today condemned the European Commission's decision to declare current international agreements allowing cross-border collection of royalties as illegal.

The European Composers and Songwriters Alliance (ECSA), who represent amongst others Benny Anderson (Abba), Charles Aznavour, Patrick Doyle, Robin Gibb (Bee Gees), David Gilmour (Pink Floyd), Maurice Jarre, Mark Knopfler (Dire Straits), Michel Legrand, Sir Paul McCartney, Laurent Petitgirard, believe that the Commission's decision will detrimentally affect musicians' revenues by destroying the present system that allows their societies to collect royalties cross-border. The Commission made its decision in spite of clear objections from ECSA and the many authors, composers and music writers in Europe it represents, many of which have recently signed a letter to President Barroso expressing this concern.

Apart from the negative financial consequences, ECSA believes that the Commission's decision is an attack on cultural diversity. This decision will primarily benefit multinational rights users and will most severely affect small and medium sized businesses and individual writers. The fierce competition this decision will create will mean that smaller societies may no longer be viable and access to the market place may disappear for independent publishers and their writers from all European countries.

ECSA is disappointed by the Commission's presentation of this decision as helpful to composers. The suggestion that it will change things for the better is a unilateral claim of the Commission with which we strongly disagree. ECSA believes that the Commission has failed to listen and engage with those most profoundly affected by this huge decision and this truly damages faith in the EU Commission.

ECSA calls on Ms Kroes, the EU competition Commissioner, to meet with ECSA and discuss how she believes authors' societies should implement this unclear and unfortunate decision.

Klaus Ager / Bernard Grimaldi / Alfons Karabuda
Presidents of ECSA

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Spokesperson of ECSA