

Question for written answer E-001387/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Aurore Lalucq (S&D)

Subject: Concerns about market concentration moves by market leader in the music market

The music market is a vital sector for the EU. More than 80 % of all new music is released by micro, small and medium-sized businesses who need an open and thriving market to innovate and make European artists strong and visible. This is threatened by juggernaut-style consolidation and mass demonetisation of certain music on streaming services. Universal Music Group's acquisition of Downtown Music has been referred to the Commission by the Dutch national competition authority.

1. Does the Commission agree that there are concerns when the market leader acquires some of the world's biggest distribution companies and other essential services through roll-up merger, giving it unprecedented control over routes to market and access to data, as well as control over how digital services pay out?
2. Does the Commission agree that this hampers the EU's ability to grow European champions in the music sector?
3. Does the Commission agree that the following responses are urgent and essential:
 - a detailed Commission investigation into this transaction;
 - new Commission powers to call in key mergers that are below merger control thresholds;
 - investigation of streaming reforms for undue influence by the market leader;
 - assessment of whether competition rules are fit for purpose in priority ecosystems such as the cultural ecosystem?

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