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Commission sends Objections over $775 million acquisition of Downtown by UMG

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The Commission's Statement of Objections on Universal Music Group's acquisition of Downtown was sent yesterday, following an in-depth investigation. Rightsholders representatives closely follow the controversial case. The Commission's final decision is expected by the 6th of February 2026.

Monday, 24 November - Universal Music Group (UMG) "may have the ability and incentive" to gain access to commercially sensitive data in Downtown's Curve platform of royalty accounting services. Such information advantage for UMG would hamper rival labels' ability and incentive to compete with UMG, according to the Commission's announcement.

While the sending of a Statement of Objections "does not prejudge the outcome of the investigation", options for Universal Music Group include to reply to the Commission, consult the Commission's case file and request an oral hearing.

Having urged through a 100 voices to block the deal, CCS organisations have welcomed the news.

"Competition and diversity in the music market in Europe, and across the globe, depend on the outcome of this case", reads IMPALA's announcement on the Commission's Statement of Objections.

The concerns raised at the Commission's statement verify earlier considerations over possible restrictions of competition in the market for the wholesale distribution of recorded music, setting the proposed merger under in-depth investigation in

July 2025. The in-depth investigation was initiated as the second step following a preliminary investigation which had demonstrated indications of possible negative effects on competition in the European music market.

To follow the Downtown's acquisition by UMG case, there is available information on the Commission's competition website, in the public case register under the case number M.11956.

Relevant proposed mergers under in-depth investigation by the Commission, include Kellanova's acquisition by Mars and Anglo American's nickel business' acquisition by MMG.

Find more here

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