



PRESS RELEASE

RECORDING INDUSTRY BACKS EU INITIATIVE TO CLOSE COPYRIGHT GAP WITH THE U.S.

However today's Commission proposal needs further work if it is to deliver real benefits for the European music sector

Brussels, 16th July 2008 – The European recording industry today supported the European Commission's initiative to equalise the EU term of protection on sound recordings with the United States, which provides protection for 95 years. Tens of thousands of performers, producers, music publishers, entertainment retailers and collecting societies had long been calling for an improvement in EU term of protection to match the length of protection provided by Europe's biggest competitor in the music market. However, the Commission proposal needs further work if it is to be effective.

Europe's reputation as a source of exciting, pioneering music is built on the creativity of European artists and the investment of the recording industry. Yet until now, the EU has been selling its music sector short when it comes to term of protection, providing a 50-year term on sound recordings that falls far short of the 95 years provided by the U.S. Europe's term of protection for performers and producers is also considerably less than the length of protection provided to composers, whose work is protected for their lifetime plus an additional 70 years.

The recording industry is gratified that the Commission has moved to close this copyright gap, especially at a time when early recordings can win new audiences and enjoy a second lease of life on the Internet. IFPI and IMPALA are committed to working with the EU institutions to iron out the remaining issues in the proposal to make it workable for both performers and producers.

John Kennedy, Chairman & CEO of IFPI, the organisation representing the recording industry worldwide, said: "Commissioner McCreevy has shown great vision and determination in taking this important initiative which is vital to the competitiveness of the European music sector. Equalising term of protection with the U.S. will achieve fairness for European artists and promote industry investment in new talent, with a positive impact on consumer choice. We look forward to working with the EU institutions on the remaining issues in this proposal to ensure that the final legislation will bring real benefits to the music sector and everyone who enjoys the incredible diversity of European music."

Helen Smith, Executive Chair of IMPALA, the independent music companies association, said: "Equalising term of protection with the U.S. is an excellent opportunity for Europe to promote creative SMEs in particular and further progress towards Europe's goal of becoming a leading knowledge-based society. Those most affected by this proposal will be hundreds of thousands of individual artists, as well as thousands of micro, small and medium-sized music companies which produce so much of the innovative music released in Europe today."

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