

Dear Commissioner De Gucht,

I am writing to you on behalf of over 4,000 independent music companies and national associations across Europe.

IMPALA members wish to raise their concerns regarding the upcoming trade negotiations between the European Union and the United States of America.

Please find attached a copy of our letter.

Kind regards,

Helen Smith
IMPALA
70 Coudenberg
1000 Brussels
Belgium
Phone: +32 2 503 31 38
Fax: +32 2 503 23 91
www.impalamusic.org

Commissioner Karel De Gucht
European Commission
Berlaymont Building
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels
BELGIUM

Brussels, 29th March 2013

Dear Commissioner De Gucht,

EU-US Trade Negotiations

On behalf of over 4,000 independent music companies and national associations across Europe, IMPALA wishes to share its concerns regarding the upcoming trade negotiations between the European Union and the United States of America.

As far as culture is concerned, we firmly believe the EU should enter the upcoming negotiations for a EU-US agreement with a view to promoting cultural and linguistic diversity.

Given the dominance of the American cultural and creative industries, it is important to make sure that these negotiations do not lead to an agreement which would weaken the European cultural sector vis-à-vis its American counterpart.

In the music sector for example, one of the phenomena we are currently witnessing in Europe is increased concentration and the growing dominance of Anglo-American repertoire, which tends to foreclose opportunities for local artists, local languages and local cultural industries. In 2010-2011, US repertoire represented around 50% of all airplay and downloads in pan-European charts¹.

The EU's trade policy and trade agreements which it concludes with other countries should not restrict the ability of either Europe or its members states or other countries to put in place a strategy to build up their own cultural actors and ensure a clear place for their local languages and culture.

The Lisbon Treaty (Article 167, paragraph 4) requires the Union to take culture into account in all its actions so as to foster intercultural respect and promote diversity. This has been given further emphasis by the Commission in its 2007 *Agenda for Culture*, in which it seeks to ensure *"that the promotion of culture and cultural diversity is given due consideration when all regulatory and financial decisions or proposals are made"*.

¹ 'Monitoring the cross-border circulation of European music repertoire within the European Union', Commissioned by the European Music Office and Eurosonic Noorderslag, January 2012
http://www.impalamusic.org/docum/04-press/2012/EMO%20Report_European%20repertoire_January%202012_Final.pdf

The UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions is also part of European Law. This vital Convention has not been ratified by the US.

In an increasingly globalised world, we need to be aware that diversity is fragile and strategies need to be put in place to guarantee it. It is vital that this element is put to the fore in our trading relations.

As noted by the EC, this issue also has significant economic importance. The cultural and creative sectors in Europe account for up to 4.5% of EU's GDP and 8.5 million jobs. These sectors represent a massive asset the EU needs to capitalise on. This is also why we believe cultural goods and services should be excluded from the EU's negotiations for a free-trade agreement with the US.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope you will consider these points in the coming negotiations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen / TK Smith'.

Helen Smith
Executive Chair
IMPALA