

# EU clears Comcast bid for Sky in takeover tussle with Murdoch

June 15 2018

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Let the fighting over Sky begin

The EU on Friday cleared US cable giant Comcast's bid for pan-European TV group Sky, paving the way for an epic multi-billion-dollar takeover tussle with Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox.

Brussels said it had "no competition concerns" over Comcast's £22-billion (\$29.4-billion, 25.1-billion-euro) bid for all of Sky, which is best known for its live coverage of English Premier League football.

"The European Commission has approved unconditionally under the EU Merger Regulation the proposed acquisition of Sky by Comcast, a US based global media, technology and entertainment company," the EU's executive arm said in a statement.

"The Commission concluded the transaction would raise no competition concerns in Europe."

Comcast owns Hollywood film studio Universal Pictures and operates several TV channels including CNBC.

The EU last year cleared Fox's rival bid for Sky, which is the leading pay-TV operator in Britain, Austria, Germany, Ireland and Italy.

Britain earlier this month also cleared Comcast's bid but has separately warned Fox that it would have to sell off Sky News to address concerns about media plurality.

Fox is seeking to buy 61 percent of Sky it does not already own for £11.4 billion but the long-running saga has been plagued by fears over media plurality and broadcasting standards—and the influence of Australian-born US citizen Murdoch.

Murdoch owns major British newspaper titles The Times and The Sun and critics say obtaining full control of Sky News would give him too much influence in the news business.

Citation: EU clears Comcast bid for Sky in takeover tussle with Murdoch (2018, June 15)  
retrieved 25 April 2024 from  
<https://phys.org/news/2018-06-eu-comcast-sky-takeover-tussle.html>

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