Shaping the Future of EU Merger Control Conference

- Thursday, 5 March 2026 | 9.00 – 18:00 CET
- Hotel Le Plaza, Boulevard Adolphe Max 118-126, Brussels

On 5 March 2026, DG Competition will host **a conference to discuss key aspects of the ongoing review of the Merger Guidelines**. This event will bring together leading experts and stakeholders to explore the latest developments and challenges in EU merger control.

The discussions during the conference will inform the review of the Merger Guidelines, ensuring that the EU's merger control framework remains effective and fit for purpose in the context of evolving market realities. The event will feature a distinguished lineup of speakers, including prominent competition law and policy experts. The conference will be closed by Executive Vice-President Teresa Ribera.

The conference will debate three broad themes:

1. Driving productivity and innovation in the Single Market: the role of EU Merger control;
2. How can mergers promote a more sustainable Europe?; and
3. Mergers and the cost of living: price effects, workers woes and other impacts to society.

For each of the above topics, the conference features a panel and a break-out session. The break-out sessions will run in parallel in the afternoon and each participant will be able to participate in only one of them. A summary of the discussions from the breakout sessions will be presented and discussed in a final plenary session.

The conference will be held **only in-person**.

Registration instructions

We will close registrations when we reach full capacity for the event.
When registering, please indicate your preferences for the respective afternoon break-out session (1st, 2nd, in order of preference). Please note that we will take your preference into account when allocating participants to the break-out sessions, but we cannot guarantee a place at your preferred session.

DG Competition seeks to ensure a wide and diverse participation among stakeholders with practical experience in the application of the Merger Guidelines. If the number of applications exceeds the places available, DG Competition will accept applications with a view to ensure a balanced representation of all stakeholder categories, also taking into account the date of application and whether the applicant responded to the public consultation on the Merger Guidelines. In principle, **no more than one participant per organisation** will be admitted.

DG Competition plans to inform the admitted participants via email by 13 February 2026.

REGISTER HERE

Programme

1. 8:00

   Registration and welcome coffee

2. 9:00

   Opening remarks

   - Linsey McCallum, Acting Director-General, Directorate General for Competition
   - Emanuele Tarantino, Chief Competition Economist, Directorate General for Competition

3. 9:20

   Session one: Driving productivity and innovation in the Single Market: the role of EU Merger control

   Moderator: Pablo Ibáñez Colomo, Professor, London School of Economics and Political Science

   Panel discussion:

   - Andreas Mundt, President, Bundeskartellamt
   - Isabel Yglesias Julià, Rapporteur on Competition Policy, EESC
   - James Ryan, Chief Legal Officer & Chief Business Officer, BioNTech
   - Blanche Savary de Beauregard, General Counsel & Board Secretary, Mistral AI
   - Martin Peitz, Professor, University of Mannheim
   - Dina Lurje, Chief Legal Officer & Head of Regulatory Policy, Nord Security

4. 10:15

   Coffee break

5. 10:45

   Session two: How can mergers promote a more sustainable Europe?

Moderator: Rupprecht Podszun, Professor, Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf

Panel discussion:

- Natalia Fabra, Professor, CEMFI
- Martijn Snoep, Chairman of the Board, the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets
- Saar Dierckens, Head of Legal Competition, Siemens
- Sophie Goelen, Senior Corporate Counsel, Solvay

6. 11:30

   Session three: Mergers and the cost of living: price effects, workers' woes and other impacts to society

   Moderator: Inge Bernaerts, Director, Directorate General for Competition

   Panel discussion:

   - Ana Sofia Rodrigues, Executive Board Member, Autoridade da Concorrência
   - Tomaso Duso, Professor of Economics and Head of the Firms and Markets Departments, DIW Berlin
   - Agustin Reyna, Director General, BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation
   - Martyn Chu, Global Antitrust Director, Danone
   - Edurne Navarro, Chair of the Board, European Competition Lawyers Forum

7. 12:15

   Keynote address

   - Guillaume Loriot, Deputy Director-General for Mergers, Directorate General for Competition

8. 12:25

   Lunch break

9. 13:30

   Break-out Sessions

   The three afternoon Break-Out Sessions ('BOS') will run in parallel:

BOS 1: Driving productivity and innovation in the Single Market: the role of EU Merger control

Moderator: Annemiek Wilpshaar, Head of Unit, Directorate General for Competition

- James Ryan, Chief Legal Officer & Chief Business Officer, BioNTech
- Grania Holzwarth, Head of EU Competition Policy, Deutsche Telekom
- Isabel Yglesias Julià, Rapporteur on Competition Policy, EESC
- Andrea Valli, Lawyer and LLM, Associazione Italiana Internet Provider
- Clotilde Hocquard, Public and Regulatory Affairs Manager, France Digitale

- Blanche Savary de Beauregard, General Counsel and Board Secretary, Mistral AI
- Raphaël De Coninck, Vice-President, Charles River Associates
- Martin Peitz, Professor, University of Mannheim
- Andreas Mundt, President, Bundeskartellamt
- Sara Calligaris, Senior Economist, OECD
- Dina Lurje, Chief Legal Officer & Head of Regulatory Policy, Nord Security

BOS 2: How can mergers promote a more sustainable Europe?

Moderator: Natacha Callens, Head of Unit, Directorate General for Competition

- Omar Suárez, Founder and CEO, Sunthalpy
- Maurits Dolmans, Senior Counsel, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
- Natalia Fabra, Professor, CEMFI
- Martijn Snoep, Chairman of the Board, the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets
- Sophie Goelen, Senior Corporate Counsel, Solvay

BOS 3: Mergers and the cost of living: price effects, workers' woes and other impacts to society

Moderator: Teresa Vecchi, Head of Unit, Directorate General for Competition

- Martyn Chu, Global Antitrust Director, Danone
- Edurne Navarro, Chair of the Board, European Competition Lawyers Forum
- Agustin Reyna, President, BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation
- Ana Sofia Rodrigues, Executive Board Member, Autoridade da Concorrência
- Joakim Smedman, Legal Adviser, European Trade Union Confederation
- Tomaso Duso, Professor of Economics and Head of the Firms and Markets Departments, DIW Berlin
- Claire Lavin, Research Fellow, Open Markets Institute Europe

10. 15:00

    Coffee break

11.

Background to the Conference

On 8 May 2025, the Commission launched two parallel consultations (the General Consultation and the In-Depth Consultation), seeking general and technical feedback from stakeholders on the Commission's Horizontal and Non-Horizontal Merger Guidelines. In the context of the In-Depth Consultation, the Commission published seven focused papers, elaborating on a wide range of current challenges and on the legal and economic parameters used in its merger control assessment.

The contributions to the General Consultation and the In-Depth Consultation as well as a high-level summary of contributions to the General Consultation may be found on the Commission's Have

Your Say Portal. Download the overview of the main trends identified in the replies to the General and In-depth Consultations .

The Commission organised two Stakeholder Workshops on 4 December 2025 and 20 January 2026 respectively.

The aim of the initiative is to revise the Merger Guidelines in order to provide a modern, comprehensive, legally and economically sound, predictable, and lasting framework applicable to all types of mergers and all economic sectors. The revised Merger Guidelines will reflect transformational changes that have taken place in the economy. The primary mission of EU merger control will remain the same: preserving a vibrant and competitive internal market which drives companies to offer to their customers and consumers innovative, affordable, and high-quality products.

If you have any questions regarding the Conference, please contact comp-mg-review-conf@ec.europa.eu.