

**Teresa Ribera**

Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition  
European Commission  
Rue de la loi, 200  
1049, Brussels

**Stéphane Séjourné**

Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy  
European Commission  
Rue de la loi, 200  
1049, Brussels

Thursday 25 May 2025, Brussels

**Subject:** Concerns regarding the revised merger control guidelines

Dear Executive Vice President Ribera,

Dear Executive Vice President Séjourné,

We fully support the call for a fresh approach to the EU competition doctrine to allow our companies to grow and thrive globally and we welcome the recognition of the role of the competition policy for Europe's global strength in the Competitiveness Compass. This must be accompanied by a clear sense of urgency, a strong bias for action and a swift implementation as outlined by the Commission President.

The way the EU's competition framework on mergers is designed and implemented needs to be updated. As Mario Draghi argued and demonstrated – we have entered a different world, one where technological innovation is accelerating faster than ever and US and Chinese technology firms dominate international markets with breakthrough advancements in Artificial Intelligence, robotics, electric vehicles, connectivity, and many other essential pillars of modern economies. In this new reality, Europe's industrial and innovation fundamentals have weakened, and our companies have trailed their US and Asian competitors in scale, technological progress, and financial strength. We must change course.

We need a modern merger policy that continues ensuring fairness and consumer welfare, and integrates long-term impacts on investment, innovation, and economic security. Merger rules should support both competition and competitiveness, giving strategic industries the strength to compete globally while advancing the EU's broader socioeconomic objectives.

This is why, despite the positive signals in your mission letter and in the Competitiveness Compass, we are concerned by the lack of reference to merger policy in the Commission Work Programme for 2025. We note the Commission has initiated on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May an extensive

consultation process. We also note that the finalisation of the review is foreseen for the “fourth quarter of 2027”. Such a lengthy timeline is not an adequate response to the urgent need of many companies operating within the EU, which should be able to rely on updated merger guidelines. Therefore, such a delay is not an option. Beyond the necessary revision of the guidelines, we must also further pursue a truly new approach to competition policy, as advocated by President Von der Leyen. This should also require the adaptation of the 2004 European Merger Regulation, which would allow achieving full coherence with pressing EU priorities on competitiveness and overall policy goals going forward.

We therefore call on the Commission to swiftly pursue a reform of EU merger control rules within a timeframe that reflects the urgency of this challenge.

A fundamental step change is especially needed in strategic sectors that provide critical assets to our broader economy, which have long suffered from excessive market fragmentation, and barriers to scalability, eroding their competitiveness and investment capacity, as both Enrico Letta and Mario Draghi warned in their reports. To help European companies become competitive in the long term and strengthen our strategic autonomy, a forward-thinking merger policy is essential.

We remain committed to working together to shape a modern industrial policy where competition and competitiveness converge, putting our industries back on track in the global economy.

**Yours sincerely,**

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, Chair of the Competition policy Working Group, Renew

Pilar del Castillo, EPP

Maria Grapini, S&D

Christophe Grudler, Renew

Michalis Hadjipantela, EPP

Fernand Kartheiser, ECR

Andreas Schwab, EPP

Adina-Ioana Vălean, EPP