

Management Plan 2026

Directorate-General
for Competition

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PART 1. Introduction

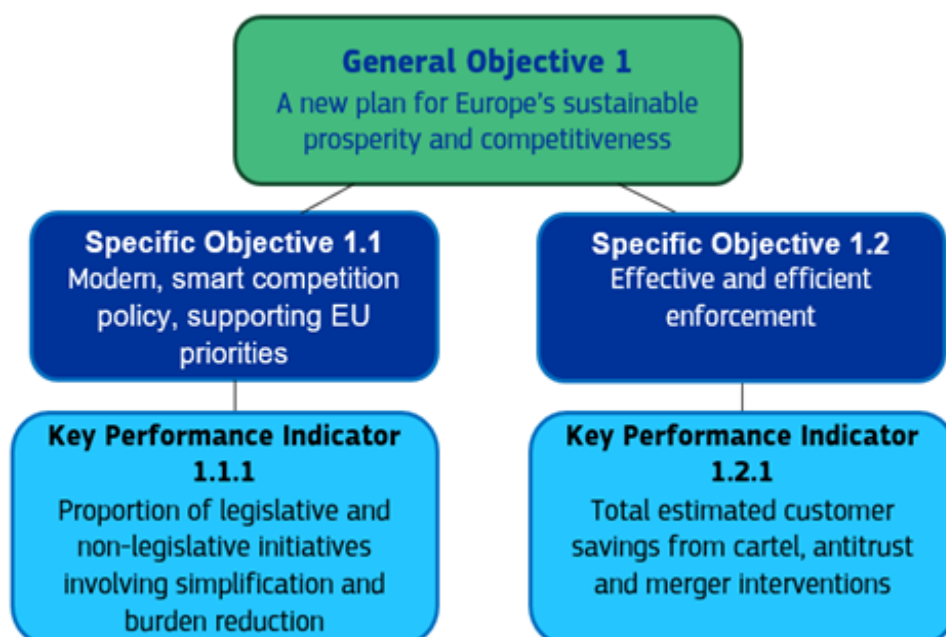
The Single Market is key to Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness. Access to a well-functioning Single Market provides companies opportunities to invest and scale up. EU competition policy is **an indispensable element of a well-functioning Single Market** ensuring that all companies can compete fairly on the merits and on equal and non-discriminatory terms. Fair competition makes markets more competitive and resilient, while generating higher productivity, innovation, growth, and lower prices. Competition policy therefore works at the service of an innovative, decarbonised, digital, and secure European economy that is competitive in a global context.

Strategic Planning and Programming is the cornerstone of the **Commission’s performance management framework**. The [Commission’s strategic plan 2025-2029](#) translates the [political priorities](#) set in the [Political Guidelines of President von der Leyen](#) into general objectives. This process ensures institutional coherence, enhances accountability, and aligns the actions of all Commission services with the strategic vision of the mandate.

Within this framework, each Commission service has developed a **strategic outlook for 2025-2029** ([Management Plan 2025 - DG Competition](#)). This outlook defines a set of multiannual objectives and indicators to measure progress towards their achievement. These will be used for planning and reporting on performance throughout the period.

The **2026 management plan** sets out what DG Competition intends to deliver this year to contribute to these multiannual objectives (part 2). It also describes how DG Competition will contribute to the common objective of building a modern and sustainable public administration (part 3). The main outputs with their indicators and targets are presented in Annexes 1 and 2.

The chart below illustrates the objectives and key performance indicators set by DG Competition for its results and output.



PART 2. Delivering on the Commission's priorities in 2026

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

EU competition policy and its enforcement strengthens the integrity of the Single Market. Its overall objective is to promote and maintain fair and efficient competition contributing to predictable market conditions for companies to grow and invest in the EU by keeping markets open and dynamic. A robust competition policy is therefore a key enabler of competitiveness and of sustainable and inclusive growth. It also increases companies' resilience as it enables strong and diversified supply chains and addresses behaviours undermining the integrity of the Single Market.

All instruments of EU competition policy - antitrust, merger control and State aid - as well as the Digital Markets Act (DMA) ⁽¹⁾, and the Foreign Subsidy Regulation (FSR) ⁽²⁾, contribute to the Commission's political priority [A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness](#): they help foster a dynamic and innovative economy, enhance productivity and allow EU industries to grow and compete successfully at global level. Today, given the profound geopolitical and economic uncertainty and volatility, the focus is increasingly on competitiveness (based on innovation, digitalisation, and decarbonisation), further integration of the Single Market, economic security (ensuring resilience and the security of supply of products and services), defence, and a just transition.

Specific objective 1.1.: Modern, smart competition policy, supporting EU priorities

Ensuring Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness, including the clean and digital transitions, is a key priority for the Commission. Well-functioning and fair markets – with competition policy as their guardian and facilitator – are part and parcel of a comprehensive response. In 2026, as outlined by the President in the State of the Union and in her Mission Letter to Executive Vice-President Ribera, DG Competition will ensure that EU competition policy is modern and smart, and that it fully supports a clean, just and competitive transition for EU economy, as well as other EU priorities. When revising the rules, DG Competition will also focus on simplification, administrative burden reduction, and guidance.

⁽¹⁾ Enforcing DMA by the Commission is a shared responsibility between DG Competition and DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology.

⁽²⁾ Enforcing FSR by the Commission is a shared responsibility between DG Competition and DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW). DG Competition is responsible for enforcing the FSR rules on concentrations and for starting ex officio procedures outside public procurement procedures, while DG GROW is responsible for enforcing the FSR in public procurement.

Competition and [State aid policy](#) play a crucial role in shaping an environment conducive to green investments, driving efficiency in public support for a competitive European economy, while preserving a level playing field in the Single Market.

Following a public consultation planned early 2026, the Commission aims to adopt a revised [General Block Exemption Regulation \(GBER\)](#) ⁽³⁾. The new text intends to reduce the administrative burden for businesses and Member States, by simplifying the rules.

In 2026, the Commission also intends to adopt revised [Rescue and Restructuring Guidelines](#) ⁽⁴⁾ with the aim to clarify the rules and align them with today's economic reality while recognising the big impact of rescue and restructuring aid on competition.

Furthermore, following the adoption of a [revised SGEI Decision to facilitate support for affordable and energy efficient housing](#) on 16 December 2025⁽⁵⁾, which also contributes to the Commission's political priority [Supporting people, and strengthening our societies and our social models](#), DG Competition will publish a Staff Working Document in 2026 which will explain the main policy choices retained and provides the main evidence and experience that the Commission took into account.

With the new [Land and Multimodal Transport Guidelines](#) and [Transport Block Exemption Regulation](#) planned for adoption in the first quarter of 2026, public administrations and businesses will benefit from updated and clear rules on State aid to sustainable land transport and from the removal of the prior obligation to notify certain forms of State aid.

DG Competition will continue working further on the revision of [the State aid rules for aviation](#) ⁽⁶⁾ to address the issue of loss-making regional airports, simplify and adjust the rules to the objectives of the Green Deal.

In parallel, DG Competition will continue working further on the revision of the [Guarantee Notice](#) ⁽⁷⁾ with the aim to identify the scope for further simplification; as well as on the evaluation of the [State aid rules for public service broadcasting](#) ⁽⁸⁾ with the publication of a Staff Working Document foreseen in 2026. It also intends to launch the revision process of the

⁽³⁾ Commission Regulation 2023/1315 of 23 June 2023 amending Regulation 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty and Regulation 2022/2473 declaring certain categories of aid to undertakings active in the production, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty, OJ L 167, 30.6.2023.

⁽⁴⁾ Communication from the Commission — Guidelines on State aid for rescuing and restructuring non-financial undertakings in difficulty, OJ C 249, 31.7.2014, pp. 1–28.

⁽⁵⁾ Commission Decision of 16.12.2025 on the application of Article 106(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to State aid in the form of public service compensation granted to certain undertakings entrusted with the operation of services of general economic interest and repealing Decision 2012/21/EU, C(2025) 8820 final.

⁽⁶⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13915-State-aid-in-the-aviation-sector-Commission-guidelines-on-airports-and-airlines-revision-_en

⁽⁷⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13466-State-aid-rules-for-assessing-State-guarantees-on-loans-evaluation_en

⁽⁸⁾ Communication from the Commission on the application of State aid rules to public service broadcasting, OJ C 257, 27.10.2009.

regional aid maps with the Member States, under the State aid rules for regional aid to support economic development and employment.

In the area of antitrust, following the evaluation of the antitrust procedural framework ⁽⁹⁾, the Commission aims to adopt in 2026 a legislative proposal on the revision of Regulation 1/2003 also including simplification aspects e.g. in terms of efficiency of certain procedures.

The Commission also aims to adopt a revised Technology Transfer Block Exemption Regulation (TTBER) and related Guidelines following their evaluation ⁽¹⁰⁾. It further plans to adopt a revised Terminal Equipment Directive ⁽¹¹⁾, from which reporting obligations by Member States will be removed.

Furthermore, the adoption in 2026 of the Guidelines on exclusionary abuses will contribute to greater legal certainty and transparency in the enforcement of Article 102 TFEU by the Commission and National Competition Authorities (NCAs).

In 2026, DG Competition will also continue working on the evaluation of the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation and supplementary Guidelines ⁽¹²⁾ and intends to publish a Staff Working Document on the results of the evaluation. It will also continue exploring on how EU rules can support procompetitive cooperation in the area of raw materials and recycling and how companies can cooperate in compliance with EU antitrust rules ⁽¹³⁾.

In the area of merger control, the ongoing work on the revision of the Merger Guidelines ⁽¹⁴⁾ will continue in 2026, including a public consultation on the draft revised text. Several studies will feed into the revision including a study on the dynamic merger effects, on market entry following mergers and on merger markups. The new Guidelines intend to ensure that innovation, investments, resilience, and other aspects of latest case practice are appropriately reflected.

In 2026, the Commission will adopt Review Reports on the Digital Markets Act (DMA) and on the Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR). On 9 January 2026, the Commission published FSR Guidelines bringing further predictability and ensuring transparency for companies ⁽¹⁵⁾. They clarify several concepts, such as how the Commission concludes whether there is a distortion of competition caused by a foreign subsidy, how distortive effects are balanced against any positive effects of a foreign subsidy, and the Commission's power to request prior notification

⁽⁹⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13431-EU-antitrust-procedural-rules-evaluation_en

⁽¹⁰⁾ See https://competition-policy.ec.europa.eu/public-consultations/2023-technology-transfer_en

⁽¹¹⁾ Commission Directive 2008/63/EC of 20 June 2008 on competition in the markets in telecommunications terminal equipment, OJ L 162, 21.6.2008.

⁽¹²⁾ See https://competition-policy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/manufacturing-basic-industries/review-motor-vehicle-block-exemption-regulation_en

⁽¹³⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_911

⁽¹⁴⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14596-Merger-guidelines-review_en

⁽¹⁵⁾ Communication from the Commission - Guidelines on the application of certain provisions of Regulation (EU) 2022/2560 of the European Parliament and of the Council on foreign subsidies distorting the internal market, C(2026)42 Final

of below-threshold cases thereby also contributing to the Commission's political priority **A global Europe that leverages our power and partnerships**. It also intends to adopt **Joint guidelines on the interplay between the DMA and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** ⁽¹⁶⁾ to help companies to interpret and comply with the two sets of rules and the points in which they intersect.

Given the geopolitical challenges and the fact that many markets extend beyond the EU, the Commission as a competition policymaker and enforcer will need to remain a leading and respected actor internationally with sustained **global cooperation**, thereby also contributing to the Commission's political priority **A Global Europe that leverages our power and partnerships**. **Fostering a level playing field and the rule of law abroad** contributes to advance the interests and competitiveness of EU firms. Those will only be safeguarded with a combination of effective trade rules and fair, transparent and non-discriminatory competition regimes in foreign jurisdictions, coupled with the necessary investment in bilateral and multilateral relations.

The Commission will continue to advocate for EU competition policy externally when negotiating Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and ESA5 ⁽¹⁷⁾; in bilateral relations with the U.S., Korean and Japanese competition authorities, Switzerland, the (potential) candidate countries and African authorities; and in multilateral fora such as the ICN, OECD, UNCTAD and G7. In particular, the EU-UK competition cooperation agreement is expected to enter in force during 2026. The Commission is also negotiating a second-generation competition cooperation agreement with Canada, which may materialize in 2026.

Along with the Commission, NCAs and national courts enforce EU antitrust rules within their national jurisdiction, while the Commission focuses mostly on cases with a Single Market dimension. The **cooperation with NCAs takes place through the European Competition Network (ECN)** ensuring effective and consistent application of the rules. This unique joint enforcement of EU antitrust rules with Member States does not only significantly contributes to fair competition in the Single Market but also reinforces the relevance and credibility of EU law in all corners of the EU.

DG Competition will substantially stress-test all its five policy areas - DMA, FSR, antitrust, mergers and State aid - before the end of the mandate **with a view to simplification** contributing, where relevant, to the Commission overall target of administrative burden reduction by 25% or 35% for SMEs over the mandate. In 2025, the stress-testing focused on the FSR, antitrust and State aid. These three policy areas will be further stress-tested in 2026-2029, together with the DMA and mergers.

Implementation dialogues and **reality checks** will further support DG Competition's simplification initiatives by bringing together stakeholders to align policy implementation with realities on the ground and to reduce administrative burdens. In 2026, one of the topics covered in the dialogues will be the review of the Merger Guidelines. In 2026, DG Competition will also prepare an **Annual Progress Report on Simplification, Implementation and**

⁽¹⁶⁾ See https://digital-markets-act.ec.europa.eu/consultation-joint-guidelines-interplay-between-dma-and-gdpr_en

⁽¹⁷⁾ This comprises the following countries in Eastern and Southern Africa: Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles and Zimbabwe.

Enforcement.

DG Competition will continue its **competition policy advocacy and outreach activities** at multiple levels, through a variety of channels and tools, including the Competition page on the Europa website, social media platforms, and newsletters. DG Competition will also organise **conferences, workshops, and debates** to ensure continued dialogue with stakeholders and citizens, enhance engagement, foster relationships within the Commission and with other public institutions and raise awareness of competition enforcement, emphasizing its tangible impact on businesses and people's lives. To better reach the **national, regional and local levels**, DG Competition will leverage the power of networks, notably the ECN, the network of EC representations and the network of the [EU Local Councillors](#).

In 2026, DG Competition will contribute to ensure support to the Commission's political priorities for the 2024-2029 mandate as outlined by the President in the Political Guidelines and in her Mission Letter to Executive Vice-President Ribera, towards delivering **A clean, just and competitive transition** for our economy. More specifically, DG Competition will follow closely the planned Commission initiatives to ensure that **competition principles and objectives are adequately reflected**, while making sure that a modern EU competition policy supports European companies in innovating, competing, and leading worldwide.

Specific objective 1.2: Effective and efficient enforcement

Facts-based competition law enforcement grounded in the rule of law is a driving force for the productivity growth of European companies. It helps to set the right incentives towards a **more efficient and effective European industrial policy**, while maintaining a **level playing field** that enables companies of all sizes to seize business opportunities in the Single Market and tackling unfair competition at a global level. Competition policy and its enforcement continues to deliver on key **European values** underpinning the Single Market, such as solidarity, cohesion and fairness, with a view to ensuring the EU's prosperity and fully reaping the benefits of the Single Market.

State aid policy encourages the granting of better targeted aid that addresses market failures, in line with EU policy objectives, minimising distortion of the Single Market while protecting the level playing field. Such aid has a beneficial impact on competitiveness, employment, and growth, and thus on the welfare of society as a whole.

In 2026 DG Competition will notably continue dealing with cases based on the **Clean Industrial Deal State Aid Framework (CISAF)** ⁽¹⁸⁾ and the **Climate, Environmental Protection and Energy Aid Guidelines (CEEAG)** ⁽¹⁹⁾. The **Regional Aid Guidelines (RAG)** will further continue allowing for support in less developed regions of the EU, including for green objectives. State aid control for nuclear energy generation will continue playing an important role with a steady increase in the number of measures requiring analysis.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See https://competition-policy.ec.europa.eu/about/contribution-clean-just-and-competitive-transition/clean-industrial-deal-state-aid-framework-cisaf_en

⁽¹⁹⁾ Communication from the Commission – Guidelines on State aid for climate, environmental protection and energy 2022, C/2022/481, OJ C 80, 18.2.2022, pp. 1–89.

In 2026, supporting innovation in cross-border projects through IPCEIs will remain a priority. DG Competition will continue working on future IPCEIs in strategic sectors in close cooperation with Member States, in the [Joint European Forum for IPCEIs \(JEF-IPCEI\)](#) and in the [IPCEI Design Hub](#), to improve, simplify and speed up the design and assessment process.

Following the adoption of the [revised SGEI rules](#) which enlarge the scope of the SGEI Decision to cover notably affordable housing, DG Competition does not expect notifications from Member States concerning affordable housing in 2026.

In 2026, DG Competition will continue its efforts to detect and sanction a diversified portfolio of [cartels cases](#) covering different sectors and conducts. It will advance ongoing investigations into the conduct of [salmon producers](#) ⁽²⁰⁾, [providers of financial derivatives services](#) ⁽²¹⁾, [synthetic turf](#), [consumer fragrances](#), [construction chemicals](#), [replacement tyres](#), [data-centre construction](#) and [ski equipment](#) following unannounced inspections ⁽²²⁾.

DG Competition will continue to invest in various channels to detect cartels, including the leniency regime and various tools used in its ex officio strategy such as the whistleblower programme and digital investigation methods.

Investment in ex officio investigations, also with the support of the Chief Technology Officer's team, has contributed to a growing number of investigations. Detection work using technology is being developed for all instruments, including also foreign subsidies or State aid.

As regards [antitrust enforcement](#), DG Competition will continue engaging with SAP for possible commitments regarding maintenance and support services for its popular business management software ⁽²³⁾. It will also pursue its investigation into PPC's conduct on the Greek wholesale electricity market ⁽²⁴⁾, and into Czech measures on packaging waste collection ⁽²⁵⁾. It will continue investigating possible anticompetitive conduct over a [novel pain medicine for dogs](#) ⁽²⁶⁾, possible anticompetitive practices into [energy drinks products](#) ⁽²⁷⁾, as well as possible anticompetitive practices by Google regarding [AI and data](#) ⁽²⁸⁾ and Meta's new policy regarding [AI providers' access to WhatsApp](#) ⁽²⁹⁾. Furthermore, DG Competition will pursue its preliminary

⁽²⁰⁾ AT.40606, *Farmed Atlantic Salmon*.

⁽²¹⁾ AT.40945, DBAG / Nasdaq (financial derivatives)

⁽²²⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_3133;
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_1532;
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_5061;
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_561;
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_3365;
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_5926;
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_2430

⁽²³⁾ AT.40823, *SAP ERP aftermarket support services*.

⁽²⁴⁾ AT.40278, *Greek wholesale electricity market*.

⁽²⁵⁾ AT.40775, *Czech Waste Collection [Czechia]*.

⁽²⁶⁾ AT.40734, *Zoetis-Libreila*.

⁽²⁷⁾ AT.40819, *Red Bull*.

⁽²⁸⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/da/ip_25_2964

⁽²⁹⁾ See https://e.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/da/ip_25_2896

investigations into vaccines ⁽³⁰⁾, non-alcoholic drinks and personal care products ⁽³¹⁾. DG Competition will also continue monitoring Artificial Intelligence (AI) ⁽³²⁾.

In 2026, DG Competition will adopt the Guidelines on exclusionary abuses which will contribute to greater legal certainty and transparency in the enforcement of Article 102 TFEU by the Commission and NCAs. The Commission will also continue providing informal guidance to stakeholders including on sustainability related cooperation projects ⁽³³⁾.

Merger control prevents anticompetitive mergers that erode the European economy, by harming the companies who sell to, purchase from or compete with the merged entity, and consumers at the end of the chain. Merger control goes to the heart of European competitiveness and resilience. It strives to protect the competitive process as a whole, taking into account aspects on which companies compete, including prices, quality, and the ability and incentives to innovate.

In 2026, DG Competition will continue reviewing mergers with EU dimension in various sectors. The 'one-stop shop' principle allows the Commission to review mergers whose impact goes beyond the national borders of any one Member State, thereby contributing to strengthening the Single Market. DG Competition will also continue to review mergers with non-EU dimension on the basis of referral requests by Member States. It will also ensure that mergers that have been approved at EU level are not subject to undue restrictions by Member States.

In 2026, the Commission will continue to effectively enforce the DMA thereby regulating the gatekeeping power of the large digital platforms operating in the EU. It will continue holding regulatory dialogues (regular discussion with gatekeepers to ensure they understand and comply with the obligations and prohibitions in the DMA and continuously adjust their compliance solutions) or intervene for instance by specifying compliance solutions, sanctioning (also through fines) non-compliance.

In 2026, the Commission will also continue to vigorously enforce the FSR to protect the Single Market from distortive foreign subsidies, thereby creating a level playing field for all companies operating in the Single Market, while remaining open to trade and investment, and promoting EU competitiveness and sovereignty. FSR enforcement by DG Competition will include reviewing notifications of concentrations and conducting ex officio investigations.

The activities of DG Competition create EU added value. When prioritising its enforcement and deciding whether to initiate investigations on its own initiative, one of the main decision criteria is the impact on the Single Market. By pursuing high-impact cases, DG Competition maximises the added value of its interventions. DG Competition also pursues cases for their precedent

⁽³⁰⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_2255

⁽³¹⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_737

⁽³²⁾ See Competition policy brief (Issue 3, September 2024) https://competition-policy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/c86d461f-062e-4dde-a662-15228d6ca385_en

⁽³³⁾ For instance, based on the Commission Notice on informal guidance relating to novel or unresolved questions concerning Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union that arise in individual cases (guidance letters), OJ C 381, 4.10.2022, p. 9.

value. EU added value is also an important factor when deciding if a case should be investigated by the Commission or by one or several NCAs.

EU competition enforcement provides substantial benefits for consumers and customers. DG Competition estimates that **direct customer savings** generated by the Commission's cartel, antitrust and merger enforcement over the past decade (2015-2024) range between EUR 14 billion and EUR 23 billion per annum. In 2024, the total estimated customer savings from these interventions ranged between EUR 9 billion and EUR 12.5 billion. However, the overall customer benefits generated by competition enforcement also include effects such as **the indirect or deterrent effects** generated by enforcement ⁽³⁴⁾ which are hard to measure, possible compensation received by customers from legal actions for damages, and **positive effects on innovation and product or service quality**.

DG Competition has used a **macroeconomic model of the EU economy** ⁽³⁵⁾ to assess the effects of competition policy enforcement on economy-wide indicators. The findings suggest that the Commission's competition policy interventions can lead to a medium to long-term increase in real GDP (compared to the baseline).

To monitor the impact of **State aid**, DG Competition also regularly collects data measuring how the Member States implement their State aid measures. The **State aid Scoreboard** ⁽³⁶⁾, published every year, is based on data collected from the Member States ⁽³⁷⁾ on actual expenditure (that is to say the disbursed amounts) under each approved aid measure.

⁽³⁴⁾ For example, when firms refrain from engaging in anti-competitive conduct or concluding anti-competitive merger agreements.

⁽³⁵⁾ "*Modelling the macroeconomic impact of competition policy: 2023 update and further development*", report prepared by the Directorate-General for Competition, the Joint Research Centre and the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs, Publications Office of the European Union, forthcoming in 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2763/959314>

⁽³⁶⁾ See: https://competition-policy.ec.europa.eu/state-aid/scoreboard_en

⁽³⁷⁾ The data contained in the State aid Scoreboard is based on annual reporting made by Member States in accordance with Article 6(1) of Commission Regulation (EC) 794/2004. The Member States remain responsible for the data provided.

PART 3. A modern and sustainable public administration: outputs in 2026

This third part sets out the main actions that DG Competition intends to take in 2026 to modernise its functioning, in line with the multi-annual common mandatory objectives, as outlined in the [Commission's strategic plan 2025-2029](#) to measure the continuous building of a modern and sustainable public administration.

The internal control framework supports sound management and decision-making. In particular, it ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are addressed and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls. DG Competition has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of this internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and will be subject to an annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

A. Human resource management

In 2026, DG Competition will elaborate on and develop further initiatives to improve its human resource management. DG Competition will ensure that its resources are allocated to and in line with the set priorities.

Challenged with increasing responsibilities, DG Competition is committed to remain flexible and efficient regarding the resource allocation needs while considering multiple priorities, such as staff engagement. DG Competition's objective is to maintain or increase staff engagement or at least to be above Commission average. Various actions should contribute to achieving this objective as indicated in Annex 2 A. - Human resource management.

DG Competition will continue to promote gender balance in middle management positions. As of 1 December 2025, the female representation in middle management positions reached 51%. In 2026, DG Competition will continue with the cross-DG female talent development programme together with other DGs.

DG Competition's Equality Network will continue to promote equality within the Directorate-General through different measures based on the needs identified by the Network.

B. Digital transformation and data management

Digital transformation

Foster a digital culture

In 2026, DG Competition will continue to strengthen its digital culture. In 2025, 38% of our statutory staff completed an IT training, slightly above the Commission average. Building on this progress, we will seek to raise this share further in 2026 through tailored training on local digital tools and solutions like CASE@EC, COMP Wiki, eDiscovery, eConfidentiality, eRFI and

Business Intelligence dashboards, as well as specific trainings on the use of AI in competition enforcement. In parallel we will promote the IT training offerings on corporate tools.

Cybersecurity will remain a key priority, supported by initiatives such as the May 2025 Cyber Roadshow and the October 2025 Be Prepared event, aimed at strengthening awareness and encouraging wider training participation. To strengthen digital collaboration, DG Competition will further promote M365 adoption through the support of M365 champions, while paying particular attention to the effective use of local specific tools for managing case-related SNC information.

Lastly, DG Competition will continue to actively engage with the EC IT communities in fora such as the IT and Cybersecurity Board, the Information Management Steering Board, the Digital Stakeholders Forum, the Cloud Council and the AI@EC network

Enable digital-ready EU policymaking

DG Competition's robust IT governance framework based on the Document handling and IT Systems Group (DIT) will continue to facilitate early IT involvement in legislative proposals, ensuring that digital solutions effectively underpin the achievement of policy objectives. This approach has already proven successful in supporting key initiatives, such as the Digital Markets Act and the Foreign Subsidies Regulation, and the recent update of the De-Minimis Regulations, ensuring that digital solutions effectively underpin the achievement of policy objectives.

A recent success story concerns the review and update of the *De-Minimis* Regulations (general, SGEI and agriculture), where cross-team collaboration enabled the swift development of a new portal - the eAidRegister – which will allow MS to comply with the new legislative requirements.

Building on this momentum, business and IT teams are working together on the digital aspects of the Antitrust Regulation 1/2003 review, a study is on-going to explore solutions to support mandatory Confidentiality Rings and Virtual Data Rooms.

Last, interoperability will be further promoted, in alignment with the Interoperable Europe Act (e.g. implementation of Machine-to-Machine capabilities in the eAidRegister).

Empower business-driven digital transformation

In 2026, DG Competition will further automate and digitize its business processes and case management lifecycle activities. The migration of the mergers instrument to CASE@EC will be completed and a new case library will be rolled out providing enhance document management and collaboration capabilities.

Furthermore, the first release of eNotifications supporting State aid notifications will be deployed. The launch the eAidRegister, planned for January 2026, will support Member States in complying with the updated State aid “De-Minimis” regulations and bolstering transparency in State aid public spending. A major modernisation of the European Competition Network solution will be completed by mid-year, providing a better user experience to National Competition Authorities.

AI and innovation are core areas, with the AI Services Platform and Next-Generation eDiscovery transitioning from the pilot phase to full operations. Moreover, a new initiative will be launched to streamline and speed-up the reception and registration of digital submission from law firms, focusing on Large Volume Submissions (LVS). To identify use cases for AI in competition enforcement (e.g. for detection or eDiscovery), DG Competition set up a Data Science and AI network and nominated AI champions.

Ensure a seamless Digital Environment

In 2026, DG Competition will continue its efforts to address legacy and technical obsolescence. The migration of the Merger instrument to CASE@EC will enable the phase-out of the remaining legacy applications.

The significant re-use of the corporate Reusable Solutions Platform (RSP) components will keep expanding across the portfolio with solutions such as eNotifications and eAidRegister achieving over 95% and 70% reuse respectively.

Cloud adoption will remain central to our digital strategy, with COMP exceeding average Commission cloud adoption rates in 2025. This share is expected to grow further in 2026, enabled by cloud support team and a cloud-first mindset. The use of cloud will take into consideration the Guidelines for the Secure Use of Cloud Services for SNC Systems, the new Security rules for outsourced systems and the corporate action plan on digital sovereignty, strengthening the Department's IT sovereignty resilience as well as gaining/maintaining control of critical assets, data and operations.

Green, resilient and secure infrastructure

Cybersecurity will remain paramount, with concerted efforts in risk management and security control compliance. Our action plan, informed by the EC Cybersecurity Strategy for 2025-2026, should continue to improve staff cyber awareness as seen in the latest phishing exercises. Lastly, we actively promote the Digital Workplace Portal to enhance staff engagement with IT tools and skills.

Data management and knowledge management

In 2026, DG Competition will continue the actions started in 2025 to further align with the Commission's corporate data governance and data policies. Data management will be implemented through the continuation or initiation of several actions: continuation of data standardisation and harmonisation of data assets descriptions; data assets registration in EC Data Catalogue to foster usability and interoperability; and the implementation of Data Governance principles within the DG and clarification of data management roles and responsibilities.

As regards the **data maturity indicator baseline in 2025**, DG Competition considers its data management, data quality and data skills to be at established level and data ownership and responsibilities at developing level. To be noted that DG Competition receives a large amount of Sensitive Non-Classified data from external companies and bodies, which can only be used for the purpose of its investigations and cannot be further shared. Data which can be made available to the public is published on the EU Open Data portal, and the non-sensitive information related to decisions is searchable via its case search engine.

In 2026 DG Competition will further populate its Knowledge Management Platform (COMPWiki) with additional policy and procedural content. In terms of technological developments of the wiki-platform, DG Competition is focusing on AI integration, to optimise the searchability and use of the available knowledge.

Data Protection

Maintaining compliance in 2026 of its data processing operations with the Commission data protection rules (Regulation 2018/1725), Data Protection Action Plan (C(2018)7432) and DG Competition specific decision concerning competition files (C(2018)8109) is a priority for the DG.

In 2026, DG Competition will continue to monitor data processing activities in the DG to ensure compliance. For this purpose, the data protection coordination team will raise awareness within DG Competition staff, e.g. with information points during management and/or Directorate/unit meetings, inclusion of data protection in the internal training sessions for newcomers or experienced staff, maintaining up-to-date comprehensive internal guidance, and, where relevant, integration of personal data protection elements in DG Competition manuals of procedure.

DG Competition will work for the adoption in 2026 of two Commission Decisions concerning the provision of information to data subjects and the restriction of certain data-subjects' rights in relation to the processing of personal data by the European Commission in the context of the enforcement of Regulation (EU) 2022/2560 (Foreign Subsidies) and Regulation (EU) 2022/1925 (Digital Markets).

In 2026, several judgments from the Court clarifying the interplay between the Commission's enforcement powers in Competition investigations and data protection rules are expected and will require follow up. Exchanges of experiences with National Competition Authorities on the interaction between data protection rules and our investigative powers in competition investigations within the European Competition Network will continue in 2026, to the extent necessary.

These initiatives are highlighted in Annex 2.

C. Sound financial management

The budget of DG Competition amounts to around 25 million euro and will mainly be implemented through direct centralised management under the Single Market Programme, with procurement as the main spending mode. The budget is implemented through actions directly linked to competition policy initiatives and enforcement (including procurement for IT tools, studies, meetings) and Member State cooperation. The target of the estimated risk at payment is below 2% ⁽³⁸⁾. Notably, the further rollout of eContracting in 2026 will ensure that procurement processes are harmonised and digitalised and cost-effective controls are in place. These initiatives are highlighted in Annex 2.

⁽³⁸⁾ Risk at payment in the baseline (year 2025) amounts to 0.5%.

D. Fraud risk management

In line with the Anti-Fraud Strategy, particular attention will be devoted to maintaining a robust ethical culture and applying the Commission's ethics guidance, so that staff understand fraud risks and is able to detect and report potential fraud. This will be done by training newcomers and providing information to staff on ethics, anti-fraud and security matters. The target for all newcomers to follow ethics training is 100% ⁽³⁹⁾. Fraud risks will also continue to be assessed annually as part of the internal control risk assessment exercise.

These initiatives are highlighted in Annex 2.

E. Sound environmental management

In 2026, DG Competition is committed to improve the sustainability of its operations to support the European Commission's goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2030.

Energy conservation remains a priority, with the MADO building participating in annual energy-saving actions. Staff awareness initiatives include supporting sustainable commuting and efficient office practices. Event organisers are informed about EC sustainable event guidelines, complemented by digital hygiene efforts like reduced printing and paperless workflows.

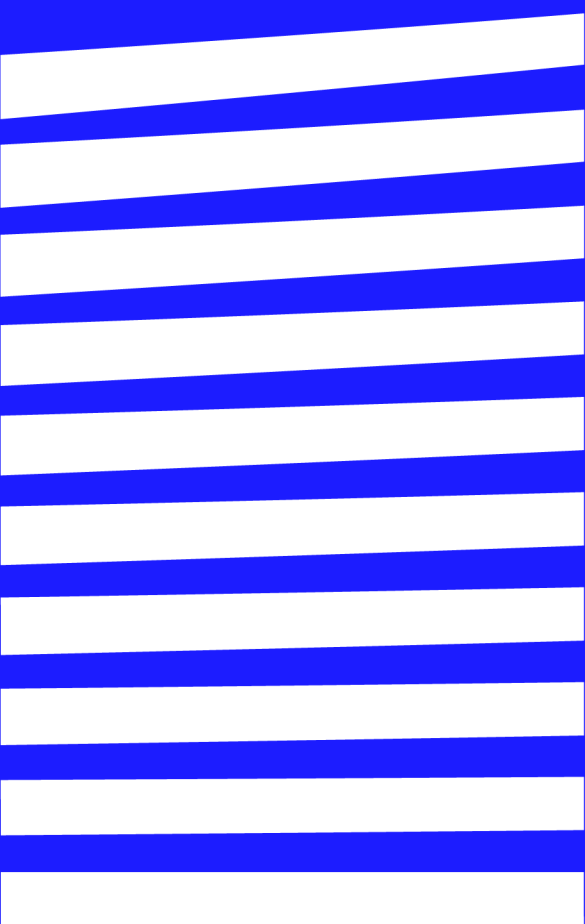
DG Competition aims at reducing emissions from staff professional travel, targeting a reduction of 60% by 2026 in comparison to the baseline of 2019 (emissions in 2019 from staff professional travel were 481,92t CO₂) through promoting efficient travel options and encouraging sustainable commuting strategies.

These initiatives, detailed in Annex 2, highlight DG Competition's dedication to environmental stewardship and the Commission's climate objectives.

⁽³⁹⁾ This is also 100% in the baseline year (2025)



ANNEXES



ANNEX 1: Performance tables – delivering on Commission priorities in 2026


General objective 1: A new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.1: Modern, smart competition policy, supporting EU priorities

Related to spending programme(s): Programme for Single Market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and European statistics


Main outputs in 2026:


New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Legislative proposal on revised Regulation 1/2003 and 773/2004  (40)	Adoption	Q3 2026

Initiatives linked to regulatory simplification and burden reduction

Output	Indicator	Target
Guidelines on the application of Article 102 TFEU to abusive exclusionary conduct by dominant undertakings	Adoption	Q1 2026
Revised Telecoms Terminal Equipment Directive	Adoption	Q1 2026
Revised Technology Transfer Block Exemption Regulation (TTBER) and related Guidelines	Adoption	Q2 2026
Revised GBER	Adoption	Q4 2026
Revised Rescue and Restructuring State aid Guidelines	Adoption	Q4 2026
Guidelines regarding the implementation of the Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR)	Adoption	Q1 2026
Review Report on the FSR	Adoption	Q3 2026
Review Report on the Digital Markets Act (DMA)	Adoption	Q2 2026
Joint guidelines on the interplay between the DMA and the GDPR	Adoption	Q3 2026

(40) Initiatives that are part of the 2026 Commission Work Programme (CWP) are marked with the following icon 

Evaluations and fitness checks – part of the stress testing of the EU acquis		
Output	Indicator	Target
Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation (MVBBER) and supplementary guidelines review 	Publication Staff Evaluation Working Document (SWD)	Q2 2026
Broadcasting Communication	Publication Evaluation Staff Working Document (SWD)	Q4 2026
Implementation dialogues and significant reality checks		
Output	Indicator	Target
Implementation dialogues	2/year	Q1 2026 Q4 2026
Reality checks	multiple	Q2-Q4 2026
Major public consultations		
Output	Indicator	Target
GBER Revision	Public consultation draft revised text	Q1 2026
Merger Guidelines	Public consultation draft revised text	Q2 2026
Other major outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Annual Progress Report on Simplification, Implementation and Enforcement	Publication	Q4 2026
Report on Competition Policy 2025	Adoption	Q2 2026
DMA Annual Report 2025	Adoption	Q2 2026
Revision of the SGEI Decision	Publication Staff Working Document (SWD)	Q1 2026

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.2: Effective and efficient enforcement

Related to spending programme: Programme for Single Market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and European statistics

Main outputs in 2026:

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target ⁽⁴¹⁾
Enforcement of antitrust rules	Number of the Commission decisions per year (intervention rate) ⁽⁴²⁾	No target
Effective support to NCAs on individual cases with a view to ensure coherent and effective application of Articles 101 and 102 TFEU	Number of envisaged enforcement decisions and similar case consultations in the European Competition Network (ECN)	No target
Promoting consistent application of Articles 101 and 102 TFEU and exchange of experience in the ECN	Number of ECN meetings per year	No target
Enforcement of EU merger control	Number of the Commission decisions per year	No target
Enforcement of EU merger control	Number of the Commission decisions per year in a simplified procedure	No target
Enforcement of EU merger control	Intervention rate ⁽⁴³⁾	No target
Enforcement of EU State aid control	Number of Commission decisions adopted	No target

⁽⁴¹⁾ It is usually not meaningful to set numerical targets for competition policy enforcement. On-going Commission investigations are always without prejudice to the final decision to be taken by the Commission in the case. However, DG Competition, like most competition authorities, provides the number of decisions (or intervention rate) to indicate the level of activity and output for the preceding year, also for deterrence purposes. As regards antitrust and cartel enforcement, a target would also depend on factors beyond the Commission’s control (decisions of the parties or other market players to disclose infringements through the leniency programme, whistleblowing, complaints, or the availability of information to the Commission to detect infringements ex officio). In every case, the Commission must fully respect the rights of defence of the parties.

⁽⁴²⁾ Intervention rate consists of antitrust interventions (decisions) by the Commission. Intervention rate indicator includes the Commission’s antitrust decisions (prohibition decisions, commitment decisions, cooperation decisions) and cartel prohibition decisions and settlement decisions.

⁽⁴³⁾ Intervention rate indicator includes the Commission’s prohibition decisions and mergers approved subject to commitments, as well as withdrawals during second phase investigation (in-depth investigation by the Commission).

Monitoring of schemes in the field of State aid	Number of aid schemes subject to ex-post monitoring	85
Prevention and recovery of incompatible aid	Adoption of recovery decisions in the field of State aid in accordance with EU State aid rules	No target
Enforcement of Digital Markets Act (DMA)	Number of the Commission decisions per year	No Target
Enforcement of Foreign Subsidies Regulation	Number of the Commission decisions per year	No Target

ANNEX 2: Performance tables – A modern and sustainable public administration

A. Human resource management

Objective: DG Competition employs a skilled, diverse and motivated workforce to deliver on the Commission's priorities.		
Main outputs in 2026:		
Output	Indicator	Target
Entrance, career development and exit interviews	Percentage of the respective staff invited (for career development interviews - AD officials that have a seniority of 3 years and more in their current job, and AST and AST/SC officials in their post for at least 5 years)	100%
Ensuring a gender balanced middle management population	Balanced appointments to middle management positions	100%
Maintaining the regular open-door slots with DG Competition's Directors	Announcement of the available regular slots on DG Competition's respective intranet pages	100%
Staff announcements following Senior and Middle Management appointments and all organisational changes	Communication actions taken to announce Senior and Middle Management appointments and organisational changes	100%

B. Digital transformation and data management

Objective: DG Competition is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policymaking, data management and administrative processes to create a digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission.		
Main outputs in 2026:		
Digital Transformation		
Output	Indicator	Target
Digital Transformation	Complete migration of Mergers to CASE@EC	Q1 2026
	Release in production the eNotifications Minimum Viable Product (MVP)	Q3 2026

Output	Indicator	Target
	Transition Next-generation eDiscovery with AI capabilities from pilot to full operation	Q4 2026
	Number of COMP system using COMP AI Platform, offering GPT@EC capabilities	Increase number of systems as compared with 2025 (1 system)
	Maintain IT Security Plans up to date (i.e. less than 2 years old)	95% of Information Systems (IS)
	% of staff having followed IT training	At least 30% of staff
	% of staff participating to cyber awareness training	At least 30% of staff
	% of reporting and clicking rates on phishing exercises	Better than EC average

Data Management

Output	Indicator	Target
Data Management	Implementation of the corporate principles for data governance for (the service's) key data assets	80%

Data Protection

Output	Indicator	Target
Reaching all staff in the DG with data protection awareness rising activities. Ensuring that all data protection records are up to date and reviewed within the last 2 years.	Percentage of staff trained on data protection compliance combined with the percentage of public records of processing operations reviewed within the last two years. The compiled compliance indicator is calculated with a 50% weight attributed to the following two values: First, the number of public records of the department reviewed in the last two years / public records of the department. Second, the percentage of staff in the department who have been involved in data protection awareness-raising activities.	100%

C. Sound financial management

Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions.

Main outputs in 2026

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: legal and regular transactions	Estimated risk at payment	Remains < 2% of relevant expenditure
	Estimated risk at closure	Remains < 2% of relevant expenditure
Effective controls: Safeguarded information	Staff awareness of information security rules: % of active staff confirms being aware of confidentiality obligations.	100%
Efficient controls	Budget execution and / or timely payments	Remains < 90% of payments (in value) made on time
Economy of controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	Remains < 8% of funds managed

D. Fraud risk management

Objective: The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission anti-fraud strategy ⁽⁴⁴⁾ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction ⁽⁴⁵⁾ of fraud.

Main outputs in 2026:

Output	Indicator	Target
Anti-fraud risks and controls are assessed	The fraud risk assessment is made as part of the annual risk assessment exercise	Annually
All newcomers follow ethics training	All newcomers follow ethics training	100%

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Communication from the Commission 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget', COM(2019) 176 of 29 April 2019; Communication from the Commission "Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy Action plan – revision 2023" [COM\(2023\) 405](#) of 11 July 2023 – “the Communication on the 2023 revision” – and the accompanying revised action plan, [SWD\(2023\)245](#) – “the revised Action Plan”.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Correction of fraud' is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

E. Sound environmental management

Objective: Reaching climate neutrality by 2030 and a reduced environmental footprint for the Commission.

Main outputs in 2026

Output	Indicator	Target
Actions to reduce emissions from staff professional travel	Number of actions to reduce staff emissions and respective emission reduction in percentage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting the new missions' guide 2. Encourage the use of train below 550 km as well as the use of overnight trains 3. Favouring direct flights 4. Recommend limiting the number of staff travelling to the same meeting/event to 3 5. 60%reduction in staff professional travel emissions 6. Encourage carpooling
Energy saving actions	% of department buildings participating in the annual BEST energy saving actions during summer and winter	100%
Staff awareness actions	Number of staff awareness actions in line with EMAS/greening corporate campaigns or from local initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Installation of organic bin in canteen 2. Promoting VeloMai 3. Continuation of the Clothes Swap 4. Promoting use of stairs in MADO building 5. Promote walking challenge 6. Promoting the shutdown of docking stations and office lighting during lunch hours and upon leaving the office
Sustainable events	% department's events, incorporating the EC Guidelines for sustainable events	100% of event-organising staff informed
Digital hygiene	Number of actions promoting more efficient use of IT resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction of use of print shops 2. Encourage the implementation of paperless administrative and financial workflows