

**Priority question for written answer P-004982/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Persistently high food prices, market concentration and competition enforcement

Inflation may be declining, but headline rates obscure the reality of persistently high supermarket prices and opaque pricing practices. For example, the German Monopolkommission finds that consumer food prices have increased sharply in recent years, particularly since 2022, and at a more rapid rate than overall inflation. Crucially, prices remained elevated even after some cost pressures eased, pointing to persistent price increases rather than temporary cost pass-through. The report raises serious concerns regarding competition, especially in view of the high degree of concentration and increasing vertical integration in the food retail sector.

In the light of these findings:

1. Will the Commission launch EU-level sector inquiries into the food sector to examine trends in the various components of the final consumer price?
2. Will the Commission issue guidance based on these findings under Article 102 on the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union, not only on exclusionary abuses, but also on exploitative abuses, including excessive or unfair pricing, in order to improve legal certainty and make enforcement more effective in highly concentrated consumer markets?
3. In its ongoing review of the merger guidelines, will the Commission better account for consumer harm where concentrations risk significantly impeding effective competition, including by imposing more robust structural remedies on merging parties?

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