

EN

E-004794/2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.2.2026)

The Commission does not wish to prevent Member States from protecting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). To the contrary, the Commission considers that a framework for the coherent and effective enforcement of competition rules in the EU is the best way to promote competitive markets, to the benefit of businesses (including SMEs) and consumers alike.

In the context of the review of Regulation 1/2003 and based on the results of an evaluation exercise¹, the Commission is considering, how to address the risk of fragmented competition law enforcement that has been associated to the (increased) use of stricter national laws on unilateral conduct. In this context, the Commission is assessing whether it would be appropriate to further harmonise unilateral conduct rules at EU level, or instead to expand the existing coordination and information exchange mechanisms within the European Competition Network, to ensure coherence, complementarity, and effectiveness of EU and national laws.

The Commission is currently carrying an impact assessment of the available options, which is expected to be concluded in the third quarter of 2026.

The Commission is not centralising decisions enforcing EU competition law. Under Regulation 1/2003, both the Commission and national competition authorities are competent to apply EU competition rules (Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) and must do so in close cooperation. As the evaluation has shown, this system of decentralised enforcement is a major success of Regulation 1/2003.

EU competition law plays a key role in promoting competitive markets, and the Commission does not envisage eliminating national competences relating to its enforcement.

¹ The results of the evaluation and further information are available under https://competition-policy.ec.europa.eu/antitrust-and-cartels/legislation/regulation-12003_en.