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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera
on behalf of the European Commission
(5.5.2026)

The main goal of the Merger Guidelines revision is to modernise EU merger policy. Mergers can have positive and negative effects for the competitiveness of the EU economy. Through this revision the Commission will provide a clear and modern assessment framework so that companies, of all sizes, have the necessary predictability when engaging in mergers.

Importantly, the revised Guidelines will include positive guidance on which acquisitions involving start-ups are pro-competitive and do not warrant intervention. This ‘innovation shield’ will provide predictability and legal certainty for smaller companies when considering exit strategies.

The revised Guidelines will also include clear and concrete guidance on those rare acquisitions of nascent or small innovative companies that can instead stifle innovation and merit intervention. It is critical to prevent killer acquisitions. Therefore, the Commission supports Member States’ efforts to review such mergers and will consider appropriate referrals under Article 22 of the EU Merger Regulation referred by competent Member States.

The Commission will not adjust the merger control notification thresholds since the EU Merger Regulation is not subject to review. The revised Merger Guidelines will instead provide updated guidance on the Commission’s assessment criteria for all mergers, including non-horizontal ones. The fundamental objective of merger control will not change: preventing harmful mergers that lead to too much market power in the hands of too few companies – harming innovation and growth. However, there will be new guidance on pro-competitive scale and a new framework to assess dynamic efficiencies that may be pertinent to mergers in strategic technology sectors.