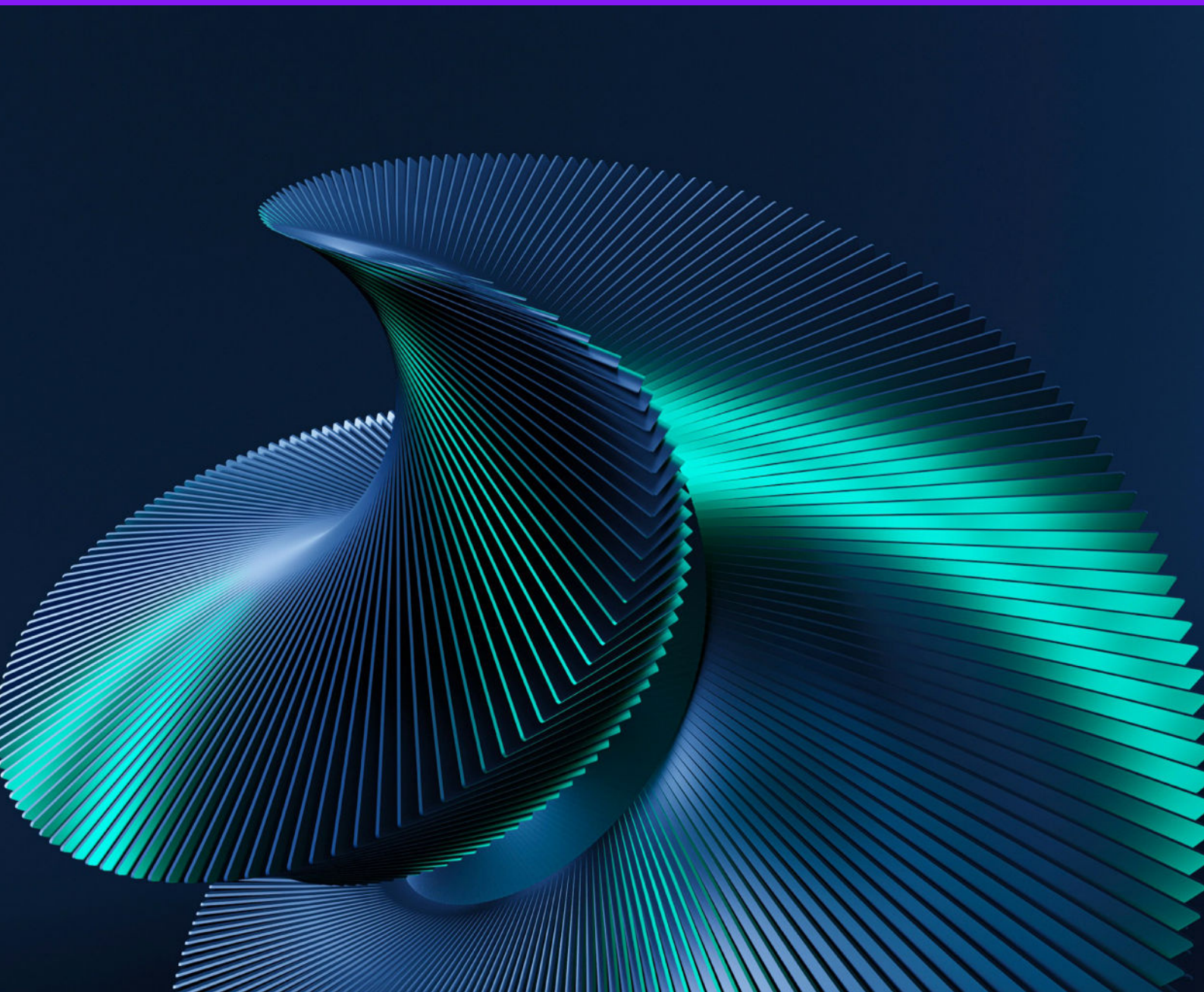
GENTEMIZER

Two-Minute Recap

Competition Law Matters
Around the Globe

2026 October



French Competition Authority Fines Below-Threshold Merger for the First Time

On 22 October 2026, France's Autorité de la concurrence (**"Autorité"**) imposed symbolic fines of EUR 1 each on the buyer and seller in a merger below the mandatory notification thresholds. The transaction concerned Drapkoc's acquisition of Point Net in La Réunion's medical waste sector. The resulting entity, Ecostrill, became the sole provider of medical waste treatment and held almost 80% of the collection and transport market.

The Autorité found that the merger eliminated competition in treatment and created at least potential anticompetitive effects in collection and transport. Regulatory barriers and the absence of alternative treatment or export options reinforced the monopoly. The symbolic fines reflect the first application of these provisions to sanction a merger.

CMA Proposes Strategic Market Status for Microsoft's Business Software

On 16 October 2026, the UK Competition and Markets Authority (**"CMA"**) proposed designating Microsoft as having strategic market status in its business software ecosystem. Its provisional findings cover five areas, including operating systems, productivity suites and security software. The CMA found that switching barriers, commercial practices and integration advantages limit customer choice and weaken competition from other developers.

Alongside the proposed designation, the CMA published a roadmap for possible interventions. It will examine whether competing AI providers can compete effectively with Copilot, whether the bundling of security products restricts choice, and how Microsoft's licensing practices affect customers' choice of cloud provider. The proposals are subject to consultation, with a final designation decision due by February 2027. Designation would not establish wrongdoing but could allow the CMA to impose targeted conduct requirements or make pro-competition interventions.

FTC Proposes Access and Data Safeguards in Publicis' LiveRamp Acquisition

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (**"FTC"**) has accepted a proposed consent agreement addressing competition concerns over Publicis' USD 2.2 billion acquisition of LiveRamp, a leading provider of data connectivity services for digital advertising. The FTC alleged that Publicis could deny or degrade rival agencies' access to LiveRamp and use their clients' competitively sensitive data to induce them to switch to Publicis, harming competition in media agency and audience data services.

Under the proposed order, Publicis and LiveRamp would, for five years, provide non-discriminatory access to LiveRamp's standalone services on fair and reasonable terms and establish firewalls protecting customer data and confidential business information. An independent auditor would monitor compliance. The order also includes protections against retaliation, customer-requested audits and mediation of unresolved contractual disputes. The consent

agreement is subject to a 30-day public comment period before the FTC decides whether to make the order final.

CNMC Investigates Exolum Over Excessive Pricing and Access Restrictions

Spain's National Commission on Markets and Competition (**"CNMC"**) has initiated proceedings against Exolum Corporation over three suspected abuses of dominance in logistics services for the transport and storage of liquid hydrocarbons, biofuels and other chemicals. The investigation concerns allegedly excessive tariffs and the refusal to grant a competing operator access to transport and storage facilities at the port of Tarragona.

The CNMC suspects that Exolum, Spain's main operator of primary logistics for liquid hydrocarbons, maintained high margins through tariff increases and reinforced its position by restricting access. The conduct may have increased consumer prices and limited a rival's ability to compete downstream by denying access to Spain's only liquid hydrocarbon pipeline network. The proceedings follow regulatory reports, an access dispute and an inspection of Exolum's premises. The CNMC has up to 24 months to resolve the case.

KFTC Sanctions School Uniform Dealers for Bid Rigging

The Korea Fair Trade Commission (**"KFTC"**) has imposed corrective measures on 10 school uniform dealers and fines totalling KRW 102 million (approx. EUR 67,500) for bid rigging in Yongin, Ulsan and Yeongcheon. The dealers coordinated winning bidders or prices in 51 tenders issued by 19 middle and high schools, using meetings, text messages and KakaoTalk. The arrangements included cover bids and bid rotation; in one group of tenders, the average winning price reached 98.29% of the estimated price.

In Yeongcheon, the two branded uniform dealers divided schools between them and took turns winning contracts, continuing the arrangement even after their representatives changed. The KFTC has sanctioned 52 school uniform bid-rigging cases since 2010. It is also linking school tender data to its Bid Rigging Indicator Analysis System and working with education authorities and manufacturers to strengthen monitoring and prevent further collusion.

South Africa Seeks Revocation of Premier RFG Merger Approval

South Africa's Competition Commission (**"Commission"**) has applied to the Competition Tribunal to revoke its conditional approval of the merger between Premier Group and RFG Holdings. The Tribunal approved the transaction in March 2026 subject to conditions including employment protections. The Commission alleges that the parties failed to disclose discussions about closing RFG's Tulbagh fruit-canning facility, despite assurances that they did not contemplate closing or consolidating production facilities.

Premier informed the Commission of the planned closure in July, after implementing the merger. The Commission found that the parties had known of and discussed the option before approval. It considers the information material to both competition and public-interest assessments: the closure would eliminate the only competitor to Langeberg, affect more than 400 permanent and fixed-term employees and threaten seasonal jobs and around 200 growers' route to market.

GenTemizer is a Turkish law firm based in Istanbul, Türkiye. We advise various businesses in relation to their investments, M&A, competition law/antitrust, project financing and construction projects as well as on operational and dispute resolution matters in the context of the Turkish regulatory framework. We have also advised investors in relation to government sponsored privatisation projects.

We are listed in *Legal 500, IFLR1000* and *Chambers and Partners* as one of the leading law firms in Türkiye. Each of our partners have also been recognised as one of the leading lawyers in Türkiye. We understand and can meet the demanding requirements and innovative, responsive thinking required for an investment transaction in Türkiye.

For more information, you can contact us.



Bulut Girgin
Partner
bgirgin@gentemizer.com



Mustafa Polat
Senior Associate
mpolat@gentemizer.com



Semanur Avcı
Associate
savci@gentemizer.com



Kadir Koçer
Legal Trainee
kkocer@gentemizer.com

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www.gentemizer.com