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Date: 09/09/2024

Reference: BEUC-PR-2024-028

Draghi push for competitiveness must not come at expense of competition and consumers

The much-anticipated [report](#) from former Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, laying out how to boost EU industry's competitiveness on the global stage, contains positive signals on energy, and trade, but raises questions on competition which could end up hurting European consumers' pockets.

BEUC welcomes the report's calls to reduce energy prices for consumers, and push for a more coordinated trade and Single Market policy, which could all have some positive effects for consumers. Draghi's push for a real Capital Markets Union in the EU could also boost investment in innovation and benefit both companies and consumers in the long run.

However, among the recommendations are consolidation and deregulation of some sectors such as telecoms. Although the report argues that it should not come at the expense of consumers, further consolidation is very likely to increase prices for households.

A recent Commission report in fact [found](#) that markets in the EU have in fact tended to consolidate over the past 25 years and this has led to price increases for consumers in sectors such as telecoms and air transport.

Agustín Reyna, Director General of the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), said:

“The Draghi report has found some promising avenues, such as seeking to reduce energy prices for consumers, and to raise more private investment in the EU. However, the push for more competitive businesses should never come at the expense of competition. It isn't by increasing the power of big companies that businesses become more competitive on the global stage. Pushing for greater consolidation and deregulation in markets such as telecoms is likely to reduce competition and it is consumers who could very well end up paying the price.”

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