Cinema: the Autorité issues an opinion on a consultation project for distributors on a film release schedule when cinemas reopen

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Amid the amplification of the phenomenon of cinema screen congestion, due in particular to the periods of reduced access or closure of said rooms, in 2020 and 2021, related to the Covid-19 health crisis, the Autorité issues an opinion on a consultation project for distributors on a film release schedule when cinemas reopen in 2021.

The Autorité is fully aware of the inadequacy of the current mechanisms to deal with the amplification of the phenomenon of screen congestion and is also keen to inform companies about the compatibility with competition law of cooperative behaviour considered to respond to the crisis. Also, although there is no precise draft agreement to date, the Autorité has endeavoured to provide stakeholders with a general analysis grid accompanied by elements of assessment, in order to enlighten them on how the future agreement might meet the requirements for obtaining an individual exemption.

In the current state of the law, the Autorité considers that a temporary agreement of this type is likely to constitute an agreement prohibited by national and European competition law but that it could, on the other hand, in a litigation framework, benefit from an individual exemption, provided that a certain number of criteria are met.

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See the press release