Purchasing agreements: AURA (Intermarché, Auchan, Casino) agrees to exclude several dozen suppliers from the scope of the buying alliance

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In accordance with Article L. 462-10 of the French Commercial Code (*Code de commerce*) introduced by the Macron Law of 6 August 2015, the agreements for the AURA alliance (Auchan and ITM, including Casino) were notified to the *Autorité de la concurrence*. In 2024, the General Rapporteur of the *Autorité* then opened an investigation into cooperation in the purchase and sale of international services between Intermarché, Auchan and Casino ("AURA" alliance). The alliance occupies a significant position in the market for the supply of consumer goods and differs from other similar buying alliances, insofar is the scope of suppliers is broader, including a significant proportion of medium-sized companies (*entreprises de taille intermédiaire* – ETI).

More specifically with regard to the manufacturer brand products component of the AURA alliance, the Investigation Services identified potential upstream risks in relation to several suppliers included in the scope of the AURA alliance.

At the request of the Investigation Services, those suppliers (all ETIs) have been excluded by AURA from the scope of its alliance. For the ETIs concerned, the narrowing of the scope of the AURA alliance will mean a return to separate negotiations. There will be no impact on the affiliation relationship between ITM and AMC (Casino).

The General Rapporteur of the *Autorité de la concurrence* takes note of the favourable response given by AURA to the request to limit the scope of the AURA alliance and will remain vigilant with regard to risks that could affect, upstream, the suppliers included in the scope of buying alliances between retail chains.

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