AI agents: the Autorité de la concurrence issues its opinion on the competitive functioning of the AI agents sector

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Following its analysis, in Opinion 23-A-08, of the competitive functioning of the cloud computing sector and then, in Opinion 24-A-05, of the competitive functioning of the generative artificial intelligence (AI) sector, and its study on the energy and environmental impact of AI, published in December 2025, the *Autorité de la concurrence* is deepening its analysis of AI by examining the competitive functioning of the AI agents (or agentic AI) sector. As part of its inquiries, the *Autorité* consulted a number of stakeholders and institutional representatives across the sector and received around 40 contributions to its public consultation.

Initially designed as simple conversational agents, AI tools have gradually evolved into agents capable of reasoning, planning and orchestrating multiple tasks by coordinating with other AI agents. In a dynamic sector characterised by the presence of numerous AI agent developers, only a handful of operators account for the vast majority of users, with OpenAI, Google and Anthropic together holding more than 84% of the market.

This opinion also examines agentic commerce, one of the most recent use cases for AI agents, which applies their capabilities to the e-commerce sector. Although not yet available in France, agentic commerce could develop rapidly, as AI agents are already able to provide users with recommendations for products and services.

Barriers to entry and expansion

Barriers to entry are lower than for the training of generative models. However, AI agent developers' ability to scale is significantly constrained by the need to reach users, as well as by numerous barriers to expansion (data access, technical migration, interoperability, inference costs, etc.).

Competition risks associated with AI agents as new intermediaries in the digital economy

By giving users access to an ever-expanding range of services and information through a single interface, AI agents are emerging as increasingly important gateways to digital services. The *Autorité* notes that the "platformisation" of AI agents raises competition risks (disintermediation, discrimination, visibility conditions, etc.) that could undermine the proper functioning of the sector and the diversity of services offered. These risks are amplified when AI agents are integrated into the existing services of companies that are already vertically integrated.

Risks associated with the automation of actions by AI agents

The implementation of the technical standards required for agentic AI may give rise to competition risks, particularly where their governance is centralised in the hands of a single operator or where barriers to interoperability emerge.

Given the potential of agentic AI to bring about significant disruption across the digital economy, the risks identified could materialise rapidly.

In the context of agentic commerce, this could result in the sector becoming concentrated around a small number of operators, purchasing processes becoming less transparent, and end consumers being deprived of the ability to make informed choices.

Outlook and recommendations

While it remains too early to establish definitive scenarios for the future trajectory of this rapidly evolving sector, which could reshape entire areas of the economy, the *Autorité* recommends close monitoring of these developments and, in particular, encourages:

- public authorities to fully implement the existing regulatory framework, including by ensuring that users can effectively compare offers and make informed choices;
- operators to promote interoperability and portability across the sector;
- operators to ensure the implementation of open standards.

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