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**Maximizing Synergies Between
Competition and Consumer Protection Policies**
Speaking Points included

Presentation

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MAXIMIZING SYNERGIES BETWEEN COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICIES



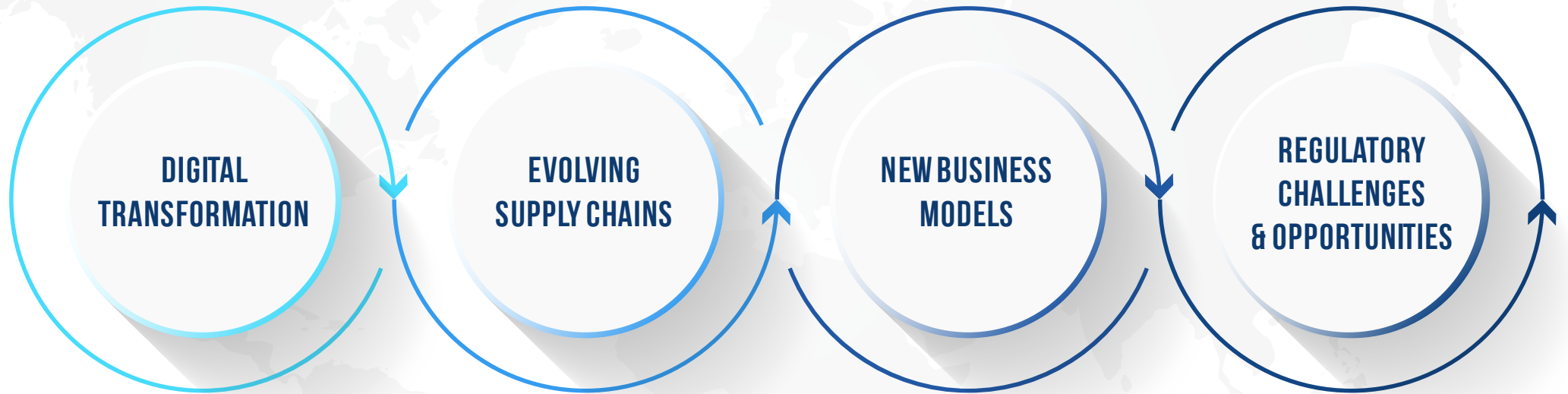
Georgian Competition
and Consumer
Agency

UNCTAD 9TH CONFERENCE – GENEVA
7-11 JULY 2025

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THE GLOBAL LANDSCAPE





A STRATEGIC REFORM IN GEORGIA

DUAL MANDATE: COMPETITION & CONSUMER PROTECTION

GEORGIAN NATIONAL COMPETITION AGENCY ESTABLISHED

BECAME GCCA VIA CONSUMER PROTECTION LAW

EU ALIGNMENT: 75% COMPETITION, 85% CONSUMER PROTECTION

WHY INTEGRATION MATTERS

UNIFIED VIEW OF
MARKET & CONSUMER
IMPACT

FASTER,
COORDINATED
DECISION-MAKING

BALANCE BETWEEN
STRUCTURE AND
EXPERIENCE





BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY





A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM GEORGIA





GROWTH WITH OVERSIGHT

AVERAGE 8-9% ANNUAL GROWTH POST-PANDEMIC

INFLATION STABLE AT 2-3%

STRONG OVERSIGHT SUPPORTS GROWTH





GLOBAL COOPERATION MATTERS

**GLOBAL DIGITAL
CHALLENGES
NEED JOINT
ACTION**

**UNCTAD'S
ROLE IS VITAL**

**GEORGIA:
COMMITTED TO
SHARING &
LEARNING**

**BUILDING TRUST,
FAIRNESS,
GROWTH**

**SHARED
LEARNING
IS KEY**

THANK YOU



Georgian Competition
and Consumer
Agency

Irakli Lekvinadze

UNCTAD 9th Conference – Geneva, July 2025

Panel: Maximizing Synergies Between Competition and Consumer Protection Policies

Dear colleagues, distinguished guests, and fellow panellists,

It is a great honour to address you today and to participate in this vital dialogue. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Ms. Teresa Moreira and the entire UNCTAD team for their constant support to Georgia and for assembling such a diverse and esteemed panel of experts.

The topic of today's discussion— **Maximizing Synergies Between Competition and Consumer Protection Policies** —is more relevant than ever in our rapidly evolving global economy. In the face of digital transformation, global supply chains, and emerging business models, we are presented with both unprecedented opportunities and novel regulatory challenges. To respond effectively, our institutions must adopt integrated, collaborative, and adaptive approaches.

In Georgia, we have made this connection a central part of our national policy. Our agency, formerly known as the Georgian National Competition Agency, was established in 2014 with a primary focus on enforcing competition law. In 2022, the adoption of the Law on Consumer Protection transformed us into a dual-function authority—the Georgian Competition and Consumer Agency (GCCA). This means that one institution is now responsible for both competition and consumer protection. It was a significant reform and we are already seeing the benefits.

Having both functions under one roof provides us with a comprehensive view of the market. We are able to assess not just how companies compete but also how consumers are affected by business practices. This helps us respond more quickly and with better judgment. It enables us to focus on the entire chain of impact, from market structure to consumer experience, and make more balanced, effective decisions.

We also ensured that our legal framework supports this integrated approach. In 2020, Georgia amended its Competition Law to provide the agency with stronger tools for investigation and enforcement, particularly in areas such as merger control, cartel detection, and market monitoring. Then, in November 2022, we began implementing the new Consumer Protection Law, which encompasses key areas such as unfair commercial practices, product warranties, and digital transactions. According to a recent EU assessment, our legal alignment with the EU legislation now stands at 75% in the area of competition and 85% in consumer protection, and we are committed to further progress.

However, legal and structural reforms alone are insufficient. Recognising this, we developed the **Institutional Development Strategy of the GCCA**, which serves as a comprehensive roadmap for enhancing our organizational capacity. The strategy focuses on streamlining internal procedures, building professional expertise, and aligning institutional goals. Most critically, it fosters meaningful synergy between competition and consumer protection, ensuring coordinated action and policy coherence that delivers tangible outcomes for both consumers and market participants.

Let me share one practical example. Recently, our agency investigated an online platform found to be engaging in deceptive commercial practices, such as misrepresenting products by advertising BOSCH-branded goods but delivering unrelated items. Leveraging our dual mandate, we were able to intervene on both fronts—addressing consumer deception while simultaneously tackling unfair market behaviour.

From Georgia's experience, several important lessons stand out. First, having a single, dual-mandate agency like the GCCA helps create stronger synergy between competition and consumer protection, avoids duplication, and leads to faster, more consistent decisions. Second, the implementation of a strategic development framework has been instrumental in enhancing institutional capacity and coordination. Third, inter-agency collaboration at the national level strengthens overall regulatory effectiveness. And finally, we've learned that it is essential to maintain a careful balance between consumer protection and the promotion of innovation and business competitiveness.

Georgia's economy has shown strong performance in recent years. Our post-pandemic growth has averaged 8-9 per cent annually, while inflation has remained low at around 2-3 per cent. We see this as proof that strong market oversight and economic growth are not in conflict; they support each other when the policy mix is right.

Looking ahead, we see international cooperation as a key priority. Challenges such as digital dominance, cross-border fraud, and algorithmic pricing cannot be solved by any one country alone. That's why we value UNCTAD's leadership and are committed to sharing what we've learned while continuing to learn from others.

In conclusion, Georgia's experience demonstrates that combining competition and consumer protection under a single strategy, institution, and shared vision can deliver tangible results. It helps us understand markets more clearly, respond more effectively, and, most importantly, protect people in a way that builds trust, fairness, and sustainable growth.

Thank you for your attention.