

**9th United Nations Conference on Competition and Consumer Protection**  
**Room XIX, Palais des Nations**  
**Geneva**  
**7-11 July 2025**

**Maximizing Synergies Between  
Competition and Consumer Protection Policies**

**Presentation**

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# **MAXIMIZING SYNERGIES BETWEEN COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICIES**

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*Let's start with 2 PREMISES, one of them more obvious  
and the other one not that much!*





## FIRST PREMISE:

**Economic development requires solid institutions and legal certainty.**

For this to happen, **all the market regulation rules need to be aligned.**

**Not alignment** between them **means** *legal uncertainty, loss of confidence*, so we will have a *reduction in private investment* and *damages to a country's economic growth*.

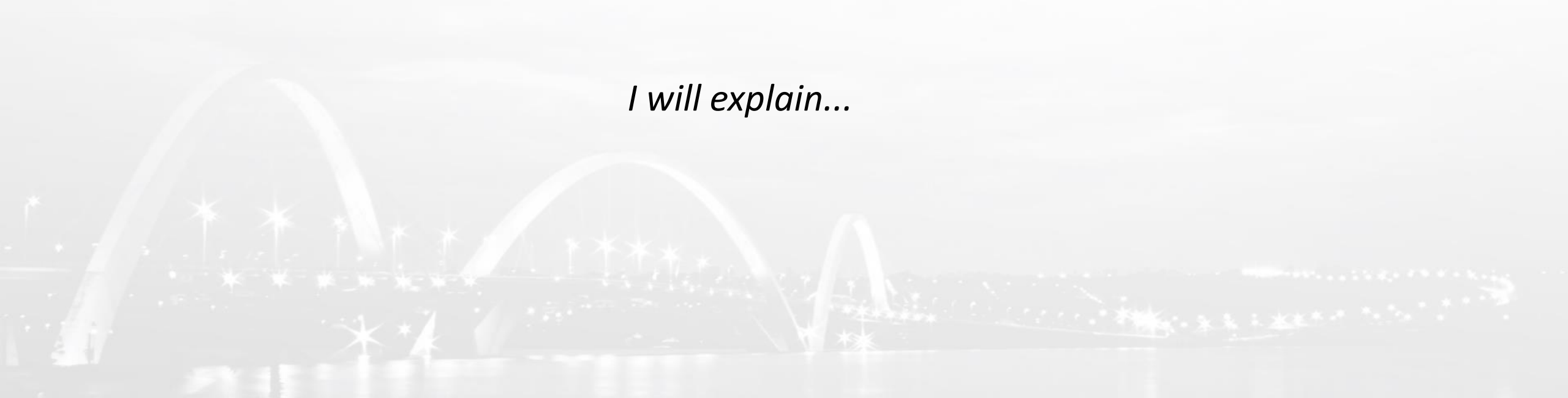
**As both consumer and competition policies regulate the market, they also need to converge.**



## **SECOND PREMISE:**

**Competition and consumer policies have more points of disagreement than convergence...**

*I will explain...*





First of all, there are important **conceptual** differences between competition policy and consumer policy.

1. What is generally understood as “**consumer**” in the competition policy is not the same of what we call “consumer” in consumer policy.

2. The methods they use are different:

Competition: focus **on supply side** and it's analysis very much informed by **economic argumentation**

Consumer: focus **on demand side** and it's analysis use to be informed by **values other than economic arguments.**

3. They have diferente **goals:**

Competition generally aims for **better prices and more options;**

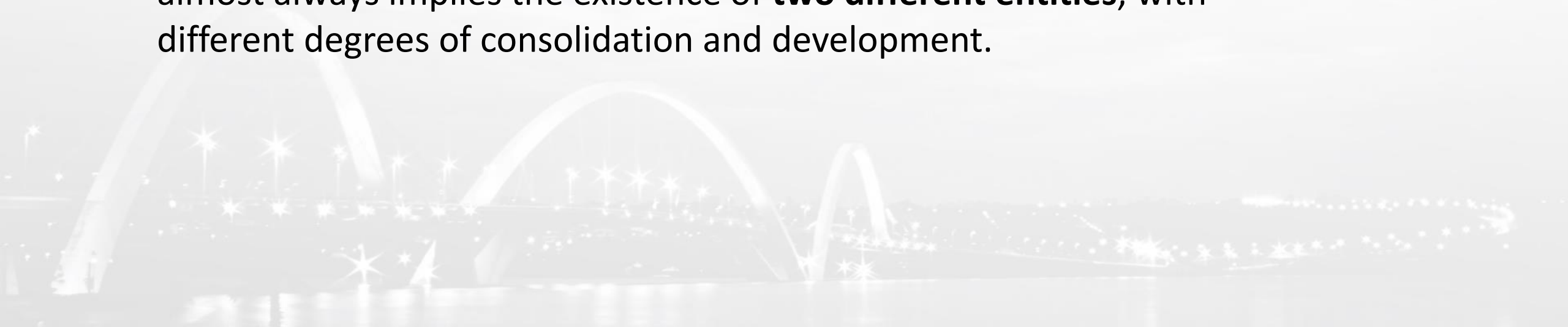
Consumer aims for ***protection.***



We can also identify **historical** and **institutional** differences

Regarding national policies, **the historical reason** for the creation of competition and consumer protection bodies and laws always varies according to social demand...

... so, **one of them has always been created before the other**, which almost always implies the existence of **two different entities**, with different degrees of consolidation and development.





**The question that need to be faced is:  
why is it worth aligning these policies?**







There are **good reasons** for this:

- To avoid **overregulation** (**legal uncertainty**, increased costs for the company, which will be passed on to the consumer);
- To avoid **unnecessary additional public enforcement costs**;
- To avoid conflicting rules and obligations, undermining **consumer confidence** and reducing private investment, impacting on economic development.



**How to do it?**

**How to create synergy  
between competition and consumer policies?**

Best solution:

a single institution to deal with both policies;

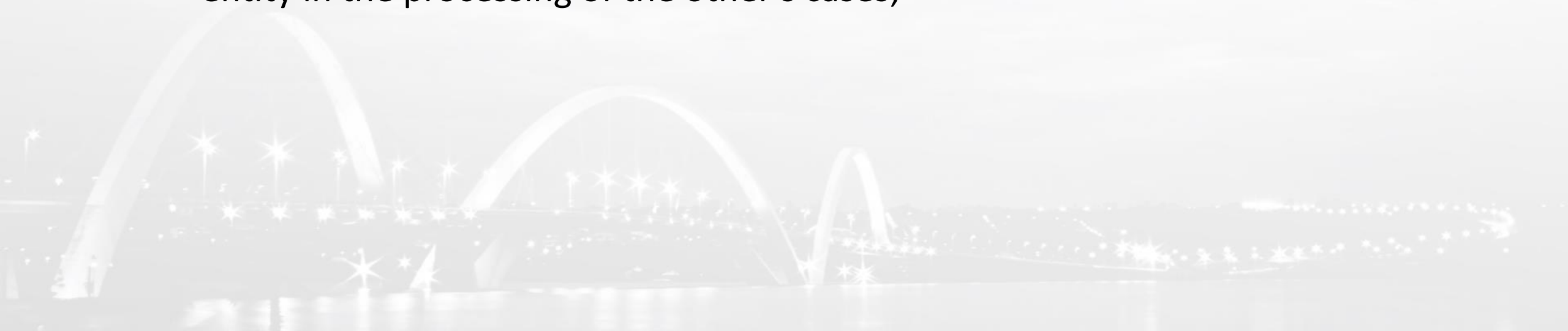
*or*

two separate institutions subject to the same authority.



## If that's not possible... recommendations:

- **working together** on the market's most critical problems;
- **establishing institutional mechanisms** for the participation of one entity in the processing of the other's cases;





## **In traditional markets:**

Consider using recurring consumer complaints in designing antitrust remedies when analyzing mergers or evaluating anticompetitive conduct.

## **In markets in the process of opening up (post-public monopoly transition):**

Interlocution is fundamental, as the consumer now has new responsibilities in terms of choice.

## **In new markets - Golden opportunity - :**

New regulations, such as digital markets, AI, are opportunities to start thinking together a new regulation that meets both purposes.



## KEY TAKEAWAY

We need to face the truth that competition and consumer policies are more different from each other than we might desire... but, like any market regulation, they need to be aligned, precisely to avoid legal uncertainty and institutional fragility.





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