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Germany Clears Edeka’s Purchase of 178 Tegut Stores After It Shelves 24 Sites for Four Years

The Federal Cartel Office said the concession resolved local competition concerns in markets where Edeka’s position would have become too strong.

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Germany’s Federal Cartel Office has cleared Edeka’s planned purchase of 178 Tegut supermarkets after the country’s largest food retailer agreed to give up plans to acquire 24 additional locations for at least four years, the authority said in Bonn.

The regulator said the approval followed a detailed review of the deal. According to the agency, Edeka had originally sought to take over those 24 extra Tegut sites as part of the transaction, but the temporary waiver addressed competition concerns in the affected local markets. The office said the concession was enough to prevent a deterioration in conditions for consumers in those regions.

The decision allows Edeka to move ahead with a large part of the acquisition while setting a limit on further expansion where competition could have become too weak. German antitrust authorities often focus on local effects in grocery retail because consumers usually shop close to home, which means store concentration can have a direct effect on choice, pricing, and access to nearby outlets.

Tegut operates about 300 stores in total, mainly in the states of Hesse, Thuringia, and Bavaria. The chain has belonged since 2013 to Migros, the Swiss cooperative retailer. In March, Migros announced that it wanted to sell Tegut in full, opening the way for a possible reshaping of the regional grocery market in parts of central and southern Germany.

The regulator did not say in the published summary which specific locations were covered by the four-year renunciation, but it made clear that the restriction was designed to avoid harm in the areas where Edeka’s local position would otherwise have become too strong. The case shows how German merger control can allow a transaction to proceed while requiring targeted remedies instead of blocking the deal outright.

For Edeka, the ruling removes a major regulatory obstacle in a transaction that would expand its presence through a large group of existing stores rather than new construction. For Migros, it marks progress in its effort to exit the Tegut business after signaling earlier this year that it wanted to divest the chain.

The move could also matter beyond food retail. Consolidation among supermarket operators can affect how suppliers negotiate with chains over prices, promotions, and shelf space. That includes beverage producers, from brewers and soft-drink makers to wine and spirits companies, which may face changes in distribution conditions and in-store visibility when control of a large block of stores shifts to a bigger retail group. The

exact effect would depend on how Edeka integrates the locations and manages purchasing and assortment decisions in the regions involved.

The Federal Cartel Office announced the clearance on Monday. Deutschlandfunk reported that the decision came after an in-depth review by the authority, which concluded that the modified transaction could go forward without causing the consumer disadvantages it had identified in the original plan.