



COMPETITION AND ANTITRUST CLIENT ALERT

Mexican Antitrust Authority Launches Investigation into Professional Football Competitions

On September 14, 2026, a notice was published in the Federal Official Gazette (*Diario Oficial de la Federación*) whereby the Prosecutor of the National Antimonopoly Commission ("CNA") announced the commencement of a new *ex officio* investigation (file no. IO-001-2026) in the market for "affiliation, organization, and access to professional federated football competitions in Mexico, as well as similar or related services."

The investigation seeks to determine the possible existence of relative monopolistic practices under Article 56, Section XI, of the Federal Economic Competition Law ("LFCE"), consisting of increasing the costs of, hindering the production process of, or reducing demand faced by other economic agents.

Although the notice does not identify the specific conduct under investigation or the economic agents involved, this investigation has been publicly linked to the suspension of the promotion and relegation system between Liga MX and Liga Expansión MX. Last August, the CNA was asked to analyze whether this structure could create barriers to entry or otherwise restrict competition by limiting access of certain clubs to the top tier of Mexican professional football. This issue could form part of the investigation, subject to the scope ultimately determined by the CNA's Prosecutor.

The investigation commenced on September 8 and will have an initial term of 120 business days, which may be extended up to three times for equal periods. Accordingly, the investigation phase could last approximately two years.

During this period, the CNA's Prosecutor has broad powers to gather information and evidence. Among other measures, it may request documents and information from economic agents and third parties, summon individuals with knowledge of the matters under investigation to provide testimony, conduct verification visits and inspections, and impose the coercive measures provided for under the LFCE.

What does this mean for industry participants?

Given the scope of these powers, economic agents active in or otherwise connected with the market under investigation should consider adopting appropriate preventive measures at an early stage. These may include identifying and preserving potentially relevant documentation, reviewing business practices and commercial relationships that may be related to the investigation, and establishing internal protocols to respond promptly and effectively to any request or other investigative measure from the CNA.

Early preparation can facilitate the identification of potential areas of exposure and enable economic agents to develop an appropriate response strategy before receiving any formal request from the CNA.

The commencement of the investigation does not constitute a prejudgment as to the liability of any economic agent. Only if the CNA's Prosecutor finds sufficient evidence to presume the existence of anticompetitive conduct may it issue a Statement of Probable Liability and initiate the trial-like administrative proceeding (*procedimiento seguido en forma de juicio*) provided for under the LFCE.

Our antitrust and competition team has extensive experience in investigations of this nature and can advise economic agents active in the sector on preventive risk assessments, as well as on preparing for and responding to information requests, testimony, verification visits, and other measures that may arise from this investigation.

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