

UK watchdog decides not to investigate Microsoft's AI partnership with France's Mistral

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Arthur Mensch, cofounder and CEO of Mistral AI, attends the UK Artificial Intelligence (AI) Safety Summit in Bletchley, England on Nov. 2, 2023. The Competition and Markets Authority said it's looking into Microsoft's partnership with France's Mistral AI and the company's hiring of key staff from another startup, Inflection AI. Credit: Toby Melville/Pool Photo via AP, File

British regulators said Friday they don't need to open a competition investigation into Microsoft's partnership with French artificial intelligence company Mistral, a month after asking for industry feedback on the deal.

Microsoft announced earlier this year that it was partnering with the buzzy French startup in a move that could lessen the software giant's reliance on ChatGPT-maker OpenAI for supplying the next wave of chatbots and other generative AI products.

The Competition and Markets Authority said in a brief update that the tie-up "does not qualify for investigation" under U.K. merger rules.

The [watchdog](#) had said in April that it was seeking comments from "interested third parties," before deciding whether to carry out an in-depth antitrust investigation.

By deciding not to probe the deal, "the CMA confirmed that the structure of the [partnership](#) between Mistral and Microsoft does not grant sufficient rights/influence to Microsoft," Alex Haffner, competition partner at U.K. law firm Fladgate, said by email.

The watchdog is still looking into Microsoft's hiring of key staff from another startup, Inflection AI, as well as Amazon's \$4 billion investment in [San Francisco-based Anthropic](#). It didn't provide updates on those [reviews](#), which were announced at the same time last month.

Nor has it issued an update on its review of Microsoft's partnership with OpenAI since it asked for comments on that deal in December.

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