



Commission carries out further unannounced antitrust inspections in tyres sector cartel investigation

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The European Commission is carrying out unannounced inspections at the premises of a consultancy firm in two Member States.

The Commission has concerns that the company may have violated EU antitrust rules that prohibit cartels and restrictive business practices ([Article 101](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union).

Today's inspections are conducted in the context of an investigation for which the Commission carried out inspections earlier [in 2024](#). The Commission is concerned that the consultancy firm may have facilitated or instigated the suspected price coordination amongst tyre manufacturers, which allegedly also used public communications channels to collude.

The Commission officials were accompanied by their counterparts from the relevant national competition authorities of the Member States where the inspections were carried out.

Unannounced inspections are a preliminary investigatory step into suspected anticompetitive practices. The fact that the Commission carries out such inspections does not mean that the companies are guilty of anti-competitive behaviour, nor does it prejudice the outcome of the investigation itself.

There is no legal deadline to complete inquiries into anticompetitive conduct. Their duration depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of each case, the extent to which the companies concerned cooperate with the Commission and the exercise of the rights of defence.

Under the Commission's leniency programme companies that have been involved in a secret cartel may be granted immunity from fines or significant reductions in fines in return for reporting the conduct and cooperating with the Commission throughout its investigation. Individuals and companies can report cartel or other anti-competitive behaviour, also on an anonymous basis, through the Commission's whistle-blower channels. Further information on the Commission's [leniency programme](#) and [whistle-blower tool](#) is available on DG Competition's [website](#).

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