



## **Antitrust: Commission carries out unannounced inspections in the animal health sector in Belgium**

Brussels, 25 October 2021

The European Commission is conducting unannounced inspections at the premises of a pharmaceutical company active in animal health in Belgium.

The Commission has concerns that the inspected company may have infringed the EU antitrust rules that prohibit the abuse of a dominant position. The Commission officials were accompanied by their counterparts from the Belgian competition authority.

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

The Commission fully respects the rights of defence in its antitrust proceedings, in particular the right of companies to be heard.

The inspections are conducted in compliance with all coronavirus health and safety protocols to ensure the security of those involved.

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

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