

Antitrust: Commission confirms unannounced inspection in kraft paper sector

The European Commission can confirm that on 15 January 2018 its officials carried out an unannounced inspection at the premises of a company operating in the kraft paper sector.

The inspection took place in one Member State and is part of the same investigation that led the Commission to carry out unannounced inspections in [2016](#) and [2017](#) in the sector of kraft paper and industrial paper sacks. The Commission has concerns that the inspected company may have violated [Article 101](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which prohibits anticompetitive practices such as price fixing and customer allocation.

The Commission officials were accompanied by their counterparts from the relevant national competition authority.

Unannounced inspections are a preliminary step in investigations into suspected cartels. The fact that the Commission carries out such inspections does not mean that the companies are guilty of anti-competitive behaviour; nor does it prejudge the outcome of the investigation. The Commission respects the rights of defence, in particular the right of companies to be heard in antitrust proceedings.

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 undertakings concerned co-operate and the exercise of the rights of defence.