

Commission welcomes provisional political agreement reached by European Parliament and Council on new rules to make national competition authorities even more effective enforcers

The European Commission welcomes the provisional political agreement reached today by the European Parliament and the Council on the [Commission proposal](#) of March 2017 for a Directive to make Member States' competition authorities even more effective enforcers of EU antitrust rules.

The Directive intends to further empower the national competition authorities by providing them with appropriate enforcement tools, to bring about a genuine common competition enforcement area.

Commissioner in charge of competition policy, Margrethe **Vestager**, said: *"EU antitrust rules make markets work better for European consumers and businesses, giving them more choice and better prices. Member States' competition authorities and the Commission work together hand in hand to enforce these rules across the EU. This Directive will give national competition authorities effective tools and make sure they have the resources necessary to detect and sanction companies that break EU competition rules. It will also ensure that they can take their decisions in full independence, based on the facts and the law. I would like to thank the European Parliament – especially the Rapporteur Andreas Schwab and the shadow rapporteurs – and the Bulgarian, Estonian and Maltese Presidencies for their commendable work on this file."*

The new rules will make sure that national competition authorities will:

- Act independently when enforcing EU antitrust rules and work in a fully impartial manner;
- Have the necessary financial and human resources to do their work;
- Have all the powers needed to gather relevant evidence;
- Have adequate tools to impose proportionate and deterrent sanctions for breaches of EU antitrust rules; and

- Have coordinated leniency programmes which encourage companies to come forward with evidence of illegal cartels.

The legal text still needs to be formally approved by the European Parliament and Council, which is expected by the end of 2018.

Background

On [22 March 2017](#), the European Commission proposed new rules to enable Member States' competition authorities to be more effective enforcers of EU antitrust rules. By ensuring that national competition authorities can act effectively, the Commission's proposal aims to contribute to the objective of a genuine Single Market, promoting the overall goal of competitive markets, jobs and growth. This proposal followed a [public consultation](#), which the Commission carried out between November 2015 and February 2016.

More information

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/index_en.html