

The Belgian Competition Authority confirms inspections at several companies active in the wholesale distribution of pharmaceutical and para-pharmaceuticals products to pharmacies

The Investigation and Prosecution Service of the Belgian Competition Authority (hereafter “BCA”) confirms that the BCA is currently conducting inspections at the premises of several companies active in wholesale distribution of pharmaceutical and para-pharmaceutical products to pharmacies.

The BCA has information about possible infringements of Article IV.1 of the Code of Economic Law and Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in particular, of alleged participation in anticompetitive agreements and/or concerted practices between wholesalers active in Belgium relating to the services which they provide to pharmaceutical laboratories on the one hand and to pharmacies on the other hand.

These inspections are a preliminary step in the investigation of restrictive practices. Conducting inspections does not prejudice the outcome of the investigation itself. The BCA respects the rights of defence, in particular the right of companies to be heard in the course of the proceedings. The duration of the investigation will depend on several factors, including the degree of complexity of the case, the cooperation of the undertakings concerned with the BCA and the exercise of the rights of defence.

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The Belgian Competition Authority (BCA) is an independent administrative authority that contributes to the definition and implementation of competition policy in Belgium. Concretely, the BCA pursues anti-competitive practices, such as cartels and abuses of a dominant position, and reviews the main merger operations. The BCA cooperates with the other competition authorities of the member states of the European Union and the European Commission within the European Competition Network (ECN)