

EN
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Answer given by Ms Vestager
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Commission regularly investigates alleged breaches of the antitrust rules capable of affecting trade between Member States. Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) prohibits agreements between undertakings and concerted practices having as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition, and Article 102 TFEU prohibits abusive practices by dominant undertakings. In 2018, the Commission imposed a total of EUR 6 369 183 000 in fines for infringements of these rules. In its 1994 decision in case IV/34.456¹, the Commission granted an individual exemption following notification by the parties to the agreement (this was a specific procedure, which since 2004 no longer exists).

The Commission regularly receives complaints and other information concerning alleged infringements of the competition rules. Citizens and undertakings can address the Commission with information concerning anticompetitive practices, including anonymously, via an online reporting tool². The Commission also operates a leniency programme for cartels, whereby undertakings which report their participation in a cartel and cooperate in the investigation can qualify for immunity from or a reduction of fines.

The Commission will continue its vigorous antitrust enforcement for the benefit of European citizens and consumers. It also provides guidance in the context of, and monitors the implementation of, Directive 2014/104/EU³ concerning private damages actions in national courts due to breaches of competition law.

¹ Commission Decision 94/296/EC of 29 April 1994 relating to a proceeding under Article 85 of the EC Treaty (IV/34.456 - Stichting Baksteen).

² <http://ec.europa.eu/competition/cartels/whistleblower/index.html>

³ Directive 2014/104/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 November 2014 on certain rules governing actions for damages under national law for infringements of the competition law provisions of the Member States and of the European Union, OJ L 349, 5.12.2014, p. 1–19.