

European Union antitrust authorities raid a number of CE and small domestic appliance vendors, distributors and retailers as part of a probe into suspected "vertical restraints" on online sales.



"These restrictions, if proven, may lead to higher consumer prices or the unavailability of products through certain online sales channels," the EC says.

The EC does not name any of the companies involved, but according to The Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg Samsung, Philips and Media-Saturn received "visits" from EU officials accompanied by counterparts from national authorities.

"We are fully cooperating with the European Commission but as this is an ongoing case, we cannot comment any further," Philips tells Bloomberg, while Samsung says it is "cooperating fully with the EC."

Such raids are a "preliminary step into suspected anticompetitive practices," and do not necessarily mean the suspected companies are actually guilty of breaking EU law. However if found guilty companies could face fines equivalent to 10% of global annual turnover.

The EC is also currently investigating the pricing differences between online and brick-and-mortar retailers, as well as the "best-price" guarantees of online retailers.

EU Probes CE Vendors, Retailers

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Go [Antitrust: Commission Confirms Inspections Relating to Potential Restrictions on Online Sales](#)

Go [EU Raids CE Firms in Antitrust Probe \(WSJ.com\)](#)

Go [Samsung to Media-Saturn Raided as EU Probes Online Sales](#)