

Commission opens infringement procedure against Slovenia

The European Commission has taken the first step in an infringement procedure against Slovenia in relation to the seizure of European Central Bank (ECB) information that took place at the Central Bank of Slovenia in 2016. This step takes the form of a Letter of Formal Notice.

On 6 July 2016, in the context of a national investigation against central bank officials, Slovenian authorities seized information at the Bank of Slovenia that included ECB documents and IT hardware. The ECB had given no prior authorisation for the seizure of their documents. The inviolability of the ECB's archives is protected by Protocol No 7 on the Privileges and Immunities of the EU.

The letter follows Commission attempts to clarify the facts informally and an EU Pilot letter sent in December 2016 asking for clarification on the facts and on how the Slovenian authorities had preserved the inviolability of ECB archives. The Commission was not satisfied with the response provided by the authorities and, without questioning the powers of national authorities under national procedures, decided to open an infringement procedure for the possible violation of [Protocol No 7](#) to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the duty of sincere cooperation ([Article 4\(3\) of the Treaty on European Union](#)). The Commission is in close contact with the ECB on this matter.

The Slovenian authorities now have two months to reply to the Commission's letter.

Further information:

- On key decisions in the April 2017 infringements package, see full [MEMO/17/1045](#).
- On the general infringements procedure, see [MEMO/12/12 \(and info graph\)](#).
- On the [EU infringements procedure](#).