



PGEU PRESS RELEASE

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European Pharmacists Welcome the Closure of all Pending Infringement Proceedings against the Community Pharmacy Sector

For Immediate Release

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the European association representing more than 400,000 community pharmacists.

PGEU's members are the national associations and professional bodies of pharmacists in 31 European countries, including EU Member States, EEA members and EU applicant countries.

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The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) welcomes the decision of the European Commission to close all pending infringement proceedings against the community pharmacy sector. The cases involved regulations on the ownership and/or establishment of pharmacies in Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, Italy, Germany, Greece, Portugal and Spain.

The decision, taken at the meeting of the Commissioners on 23rd November, follows two recent decisions of the European Court of Justice which found that restrictions on the ownership and establishment of pharmacies are justified in the interests of public health.¹

Mr John Chave, PGEU's Secretary General commented: "The decision of the Commission vindicates PGEU's view that Member States should have the right to regulate the pharmacy sector in the way they feel best meets the health needs of their citizens, a view ultimately supported by the European Court of Justice. These cases, which should never have been started, have cast a shadow of uncertainty and instability over the sector for the last six years. We are relieved that we can now move on and continue the work of strengthening the key contribution of community pharmacy to European health systems'.

¹ Cases C-531/06, C-171/07 and C-172/07, C-570/07 and C-571/07