

**REFERENCE RELATING TO THE PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF LONDON
STOCK EXCHANGE PLC BY EURONEXT NV**

Notice of extension of inquiry period

1. On 29 March 2005, the Office of Fair Trading, in exercise of its duty under section 22(1) of the Enterprise Act 2002 (the Act), referred to the Competition Commission (CC) the proposed acquisition of London Stock Exchange plc by Euronext NV. The period within which the report on this reference was to be prepared and published (the reference period) was due to expire on 12 September 2005.
2. On 29 July 2005 the members of the CC appointed to consider this reference (the Group) published a summary of their provisional findings and a statement outlining possible remedies. At the same time the Group invited comments on whether the reference period should be extended.
3. Having taken account of comments received and having consulted a Deputy Chairman of the CC the Group has decided in accordance with section 39(3) of the Act that the reference period should be extended by eight weeks to 7 November 2005. The reason for this extension is the exceptional complexity of the inquiry which has led to a requirement for additional time to permit full consultation on and consideration of possible remedies. The Group considers that this would not be possible within the remaining extent of the original reference period.