

International cooperation in 2019

UNCTAD

In July 2019, representatives of the Commission for the Protection of Competition, in cooperation with the Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the United Nations in Geneva, participated in the meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts in the Field of Competition Law and Policy.

International Competition Network

The Commission has adopted the ICN Framework on Competition Agency Procedures. This Framework aims to improve procedural fairness in the conduct of competition protection bodies, by ensuring the guarantee of basic principles in the application of procedural rules of competition protection, in a manner that reflects the consensus of the global competition community. Also, representatives of the Commission participated in the virtual presentation of this Framework by representatives of ICN.

OECD and the Regional Center for Competition (OECD-GvH RCC)

For the purpose of contributing to the **18th Global OECD forum on competition**, held at the end of November 2019, in Paris, the Expert Service of the Commission submitted an article on the topic of: "Provisions on protection of competition in trade agreements".

When it comes to the contribution to the work of the Regional Center for Competition in Budapest, representatives of the Commission participated in the meeting of the presidents of the body for the protection of competition of Southeast Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, organized by this center, held in Budapest in February 2019. The meeting discussed how competition protection bodies can prepare their decisions in such a way that they "pass" court control as efficiently and effectively as possible, as well as the ideas and expectations of competition protection bodies regarding their work and the work of the RCC in the future.

In addition to the above, as in previous years, the representatives of the Expert Service of the Commission participated in expert seminars of the RCC on the topic of vertical restrictions of competition in sales and the implementation of competition protection rules in the pharmaceutical sector, during which, cases from the practice of the Commission were presented.

Energy community

The Commission actively participated in the process of amendments and supplements to the Agreement on the Establishment of the Energy Community, giving opinions and comments on the proposals for revision of the Agreement, within its jurisdiction. Also, in March 2019, the Commission, at the request of the Ministry of Mining and Energy, appointed its representative in

the Delegation for negotiations. At the end of the year, the Commission contributed to the development of the Platform for the participation of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia at the 17th meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Energy Community in the Republic of Moldova. In addition to contributing to the process of amendments to the Treaty on the Establishment of the Energy Community, the Commission submitted its comments and objections to the reports of the Secretariat of the Energy Community, including reports on the implementation of soft measures, annual work reports and the like.

CEFTA

During 2019, the Commission's cooperation with the CEFTA (Central European Free Trade Agreement) Secretariat, through the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, was significantly intensified. This was primarily a consequence of the increased activity of the Secretariat of this organization, in light of the agreement of the prime ministers from the Western Balkan region, reached at the sixth Summit of the countries in Trieste in 2017.

The Commission submitted comments on several documents resulting from the aforementioned process, such as Annex 2 of the Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Multi-Year Action Plan for the Formation of the Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) for the period July 2018 - June 2019 and the Draft Report of the Council for Regional cooperation, which referred to Southeast Europe.

Representatives of the Commission also participated in a consultative meeting organized by the CEFTA Secretariat, which was held in Belgrade on September 24 and 25, 2019, and which concerned the area of competition protection and state aid. At the Commission's initiative, several preparatory meetings were held with representatives of the competent Ministry and other relevant institutions of the Republic of Serbia, with the aim of considering the modalities and framework in which cooperation with the CEFTA Secretariat and parties from the CEFTA Agreement should proceed. These meetings represented a good opportunity for the Commission to present the already existing cooperation mechanisms in the region, when it comes to the area of competition protection.

SOFIA COMPETITION FORUM - SCF

The SCF was established in 2012 in Sofia, as a result of a joint initiative of UNCTAD and the Bulgarian Competition Authority. The forum served primarily as a platform for technical assistance, exchange of experiences and consultations in the field of competition policy and the application of competition law, with a special focus on the Balkans.

In the course of 2019, the Commission made its traditional contribution to the work of the Sofia Forum, by participating in a project whose goal was to prepare a report on sanctions and the penance program entitled "Comparative review of the competition protection regime of SCF members in the area of sanctions and leniency programs".

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- On the occasion of Serbian Competition Day, the Commission organized the international conference "Agenda for the Improvement of Competition Policy", which was held on April 12, 2019 in Belgrade;
- In October, as part of the twinning project "Further development of competition protection in Serbia", a workshop on "Competition and public procurement" was held, which brought together competent state institutions in the field of public procurement (Public Procurement Administration, Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in public procurement procedures), the largest contracting authorities in those procedures, as well as representatives of the Commission and foreign experts;
- Within the framework of the project implemented by the Commission with the support of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), during 2019, among other things, two study visits were made to the competition protection bodies of the Netherlands and Switzerland;
- The implementation of numerous activities continued on other projects of which the Commission was a beneficiary.