



International
Competition
Network

**ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP
BENEFITS PROJECT**



**EXPLAINING
THE BENEFITS
OF COMPETITION
TO THE GENERAL
PUBLIC**



INTRODUCTION



Explaining the Benefits of Competition to the General Public is the third document generated by the ICN Advocacy Working Group as part of the **Benefits Project**¹, following *Explaining the Benefits of Competition to the Government and the Legislator* and *Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Businesses*.

Why is it important to explain the benefits of competition to the general public?

The general public is comprised of consumers who benefit from markets with robust competition in the form of lower prices, higher quality goods and services, and greater innovation. The work of competition authorities fosters consumer welfare by preventing business conducts or mergers that harm consumers. As a result, a competition authority's law enforcement activities, its mission to promote competition, and its incentives, are aligned with the interests of the general public. Yet the benefits of competition policy and law enforcement are often intangible or hard for members of the general public to understand. For example, preventing a merger that could lead to higher prices is a good legal and policy outcome, but it merely preserves the status quo. Shutting down a price-fixing cartel for an industrial chemical will most directly impact the business customers for that product, but downstream consumers may not be aware of the benefits in terms of prices or choice. Nonetheless, explaining the benefits of competition to these consumers helps create a culture that expects vigorous competition and supports competition enforcement efforts.

Educating the general public on the benefits of competition may improve competitive outcomes in several ways.

First, consumers that are aware of the benefits of competition are more confident and more likely to make informed decisions. This in turn may motivate businesses to increase their competitive efforts to win over more sophisticated buyers.

Second, the general public can encourage and support policymakers who are mindful of the importance of competition. With the support of constituent consumers, policymakers may be more likely to adopt those policies that promote the health and safety of citizens while minimizing impediments to competition, especially in the form of regulatory barriers. Often, regulations benefit a small group (such as business groups) that capable of urging legislators and regulators to enact policies that protect their interests by reducing competition. Meanwhile, large and diverse groups such as the general public find it far more difficult to organize and influence the implementation of public policy which pursues benefits for consumers through more robust competitive markets².

1 The complete ICN Advocacy Working Group's Benefit Project is available at <http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/working-groups/current/advocacy/benefits.aspx>

2 See ICN, "The case for competition policy in difficult economic times," Information by the Chairman of the ICN Steering Group, Mr. John Fingleton, p.5-6, (2009), available at <http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/uploads/library/doc818.pdf>; Olson, Mancur "The Logic of Collective Action" (1965)



Additionally, consumers who understand the benefits of competition, the role played by competition agencies, and the damage caused by anticompetitive behavior, are more likely to report such behavior to authorities.

Reaching members of the general public by liaising with the media and academia

When reaching out to the general public, competition authorities engage a wide audience with diverse interests. Authorities target specific audiences with competition-related messages tailored to their concerns and education level. For instance, explaining the benefits of competition to school children would have different content than a guidance brochure for consumer groups.

Given the limited resources available, competition authorities often liaise with other actors to allow for a more effective and cost-efficient delivery of their messages to the general public. For this reason, throughout this document you will find explicit references to the media (both traditional and digital) and academia (including lower level school systems and higher level institutions), which aid competition agencies' communications with the general public³.

Similar to the previous instalments of the **Benefits Project**, this document is organized as follows. Section 1 offers tips on how to communicate effectively with such a wide and diverse audience as the general public. Section 2 provides the key messages which authorities may relay to the general public in order to explain the benefits of competition. The final section shares a set of case studies explaining projects carried out by agencies to achieve this aim, either directly to members of the general public⁴ or through the media or academia.

Tips, messages, and case studies in *Explaining the Benefits of Competition to the Government and the Legislator* and in *Explaining the Benefits of Competition to Businesses* contain guidance relevant to the general public as well. Competition agencies may find it useful to emphasize or adapt some of the messages identified in those documents as part of their strategies in addressing the general public.

3 See United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), "Communication strategies of competition authorities as a tool for agency effectiveness" (2014), available at http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ciclpd28_en.pdf

4 For more information on how competition agencies engage directly with the general public through social media, see the ICN Agency Effectiveness Working Group's "Competition Agency Use of Social Media Practice Manual", available at <http://www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/working-groups/current/agency-effectiveness/manual.aspx>



SECTION 1: TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC



1. Target an audience with tailored messages

Different stakeholders have different backgrounds, familiarity with, and sensitivities towards competition principles. Therefore, it is important to clearly identify the main target audience of each message and develop the communications accordingly. It is helpful to design a strategy and prioritize initiatives to ensure continuity and consistency in the agency's agenda rather than trying to reach all groups in a short period of time. In addition, it is important to ensure that communications are designed and delivered in a simple and non-technical manner.

2. Identify effective tools and mechanisms for your audience and consider how your audience is likely to respond or is able to engage

Once a topic and audience have been identified, agencies may consider the variety of strategies and tools of activities that will best reach the intended target according to its characteristics. It is important to consider which message and modes of communication are best for reaching the targeted audience. For example, city dwellers may respond to different tools and messages than those living in suburban or rural areas – bus placards with key messages may work in urban areas, while radio announcements may reach more people in rural areas. Members of different age groups may be interested in the impact that competition law enforcement has on different economic activities. For instance, talking about products that young people use, such as smartphones or energy drinks, might help convey a message about the benefits of competition to this particular group.

It is also important to consider the incentives that are being created for the audience to engage with the message. In general, messages with clear “calls to action” may be more effective at engaging members of the general public.

3. Deliver clear messages

Competition law enforcement and policy relies on many legal and economic terms, which can quickly disengage members of the general public. One of the challenges in communicating with the general public about the benefits of competition is to convey messages in an engaging (possibly even entertaining) and colloquial manner, using a clear and easily understandable language. Whenever possible, messages should highlight the impact of competition policy in everyday life, using real-life examples drawn from the competition authority's work. In addition, whenever possible, take advantage of quantified estimates of the benefits brought about by competition authority actions. These can be persuasive in helping members of the public understand the impact competition has on their lives.



4. Be creative!

Select entertaining means of communication and strive to be creative to draw the attention of your audience. Pictorial illustrations, videos, or interactive digital media are more effective in explaining often abstract competition concepts to the public than text alone. In addition, digital media are more appealing for younger audiences, and are easily shared, which can expand the reach of messaging and spread the word of competition to a broader audience. Digital media messages can also be re-used by members of the general public and by news reporters on their own social media accounts. Agencies should strive to be creative in designing awareness campaigns and initiatives to draw the attention of the intended audience.

5. Engage in evaluation and feedback

Whatever strategy and tools are used, it is important to seek feedback from the targeted groups and assess the outcome of the advocacy efforts. Feedback can be used to fine-tune and improve the design of future efforts. Competition authorities may want to develop clear metrics of success, and may consider sending questionnaires to the targeted audience to be sure the message was correctly delivered and understood.

6. Consider ways to incorporate competition messages in education and in media

Universities and schools deserve specific attention since they shape the behavior of citizens who are likely to become future leaders. This is particularly true in developing countries, where education might encourage people to engage in new economic activity, such as starting a small business. Messages that convey how to comply with antitrust rules not only help students understand the benefits of competition, but also help them avoid investigations or sanctions for violating the law as they enter the workforce. University students might go on to lead companies or organizations that behave in the market according to ethical and pro-competition principles.

The media also represents a cost-efficient option for competition authorities to reach different segments of the general public. In most cases, messages delivered through the media should be short and concise, and convey the authority's role in promoting competition. Competition authorities must consider that different media outlets reach different segments of the population and use diverse formats to convey information.



7. Cooperate with other competition agencies and organizations

One of the most efficient ways to communicate about the benefits of competition law is to share experiences with others. Sharing plans, goals, activities, and results with other competition authorities can help authorities around the world communicate about the benefits of competition law to their own target audiences more effectively. As part of this effort, it can be helpful for competition authorities to share feedback they have received to strengthen outreach to specific types of consumers.



SECTION 2: KEY MESSAGES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC



Competition benefits consumers

- Competition is about price, selection, and service. It benefits consumers by keeping prices low and the quality and choice of goods and services high.
- Businesses understand that their main objective is to make profits, and that to do so, they must offer goods or services that customers prefer when compared to other options in the market. In a competitive market, businesses have the incentive to lower prices and offer a wider variety of higher quality products or services to consumers.
- Competition encourages businesses to lower their costs by making investments to enhance productivity. This may include acquiring machinery that requires fewer inputs (for example, uses less electricity or fuel) or increases output, and lowers the cost of the product. It could also mean training staff or offering incentives that promote employee's productivity. Likewise, investments could be made to improve internal administrative procedures, for example, reducing the time it takes to hire or train new personnel. Cost savings from these efficiency gains may be passed on to consumers.
- Innovation, which may include new products or more efficient business practices, is also a form of investment that allows businesses to produce goods or services in ways that have not been used before.
- Competition also encourages businesses to introduce new varieties of products and services (or completely new products and services) into markets, allowing consumers' needs and wants to be better met.
- When a market lacks competition, these incentives do not exist, and consumers have fewer choices and miss out on the benefits of competition.

Sources:

1. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) [“Competition Counts: How Consumers Win When Businesses Compete”](#) (2015).
2. Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) [“What are consumers' benefits from competition?”](#) (2010).
3. Hausman, J. and Leibtag E., [“Consumer Benefits from Increased Competition in Shopping Outlets: Measuring the Effect of Wal-Mart”](#) (2005).
4. Dixit A. K. D. and Stiglitz, J.E. [“Monopolistic Competition and Optimum Product Diversity”](#) Published in *The American Economic Review* 67, no. 3 (1977): 297-308.
5. ICN, [“The case for competition policy in difficult economic times,”](#) Information by the Chairman of the ICN Steering Group, Mr. John Fingleton, (2009).
6. ICN Training on Demand [“Advocacy”](#) Video (2014).
7. World Bank, [“When market players compete, we can all win”](#) Video (2016).



Effective competition law enforcement and advocacy protect the general public from anticompetitive behavior and regulations that inhibit the benefits of competition

- Competition law enforcement promotes vigorous competition and prevents anticompetitive business practices to help ensure that consumers have access to quality goods and services at competitive prices, and that businesses compete on the merits of their work.
- The powers granted to competition authorities around the world are designed to correct or prevent conduct by businesses and other suppliers that reduces competition and therefore reduces or eliminates the benefits of competition in markets.
- There are three main types of behavior by companies that competition law addresses. These are most commonly known as cartels, abuse of dominance, and anti-competitive mergers.
- If there are no consequences for competitively harmful conduct, instead of individually deciding how to earn the preference of consumers through better prices and quality of their products, competitors may agree (explicitly or implicitly) to stop competing by fixing prices, limiting supply or sharing markets. This type of joint decision making by competitors is (most commonly) known as a cartel. When cartels form, consumers are denied the benefits of competition. It was widely agreed that cartels damage competition and harm consumers.
- A dominant company exists when it controls most of the sales of a product or service in a market. If the firm's success is due to offering consumers a better product at a better price, that's not against the law. But a company that creates or maintains its dominant position by unreasonably excluding other companies, or by impairing other companies' ability to compete, raises competition concerns. In most jurisdictions, this is called abuse of dominance, and it violates the competition law.
 - » For example, a company with a dominant position in Product B, but with many competitors in Product C, may abuse its dominant position by forcing consumers to buy its Product C when they acquire its Product B. This conduct, known as 'bundling', limits consumers' choices for Product C and may displace other companies supplying Product C.
 - » Such conduct may or may not generate benefits beyond the damage they bring about on the competitive process. For example, bundling Products B and C could generate efficiencies if it allowed for lower prices in both products which could not be achieved if sold separately. The particularities of how "dominance" and "markets" are defined, as well as the "rule of reason" to determine whether benefits exceed the harm to competition, vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but most competition legal frameworks grant powers to competition authorities to address cases of abuse of dominance.
- Many mergers benefit consumers by allowing firms to operate more efficiently. Other mergers, however, may result in higher prices, fewer choices, or lesser quality. For instance, when a company buys its closest competitor, it may be able to raise prices for consumers. A merger could also make it easier for the remaining firms to enter into illegal cartel agreements among competing companies. In either case, consumers can be harmed by higher prices, lower quality products, or reduced selection. It is therefore important for competition authorities to carefully analyze mergers and remedies or prevent those which may harm consumers and eliminate the benefits of competition.



- Actions by companies are not the only means by which competition may be hindered. Some regulations and public policies may also limit competition and harm consumers, without a valid justification in terms of other policy goals (such as promoting health or safety, or protecting the environment). For example, regulation may limit the number of suppliers participating in a market, reduce the incentives of suppliers to compete, or otherwise limit the information and options available to consumers. For this reason, competition authorities advocate for decision-makers within government to adopt pro-competitive, or competitive-neutral regulations and policies. Competition authorities can issue recommendations to other decision-makers in government, which may help reduce these kinds of obstacles to competition.

Sources:

1. UNCTAD [“The benefit of competition policy for consumers”](#) (2016).
2. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [“Reference guide on ex-post evaluation of competition agencies’ enforcement decisions”](#) (2016).
3. OECD [“Competition Assessment Reviews Greece 2017”](#) (2016).
4. OECD [“Competition Assessment Review Romania 2016”](#) (2016).
5. UNCTAD [“Why competition and consumer protection matter”](#) (2017)
6. ICN Training on Demand [“Competitive Effects”](#) Video (2014)

The general public has the opportunity to inform competition authorities

- To learn about competition problems, competition authorities often receive information from members of the general public. Consumers that are aware of the benefits of competition can detect an absence of competition and alert competition authorities of potential law violations.
- Consumers can also help competition authorities in their advocacy efforts, by reporting existing or proposed barriers to competition in regulations and public policies, and by contacting their elected officials or other government agencies to urge support for policies that promote competition and benefit consumers.

Sources:

1. Competition Bureau of Canada [“Whistleblowing Initiative”](#) (2015).
2. European Commission [“Delivering for Consumers: What’s your role in all this?”](#) (2012).
3. Consumers International [“Consumers and Competition: A consumer welfare analysis of three retail markets in 14 EU member states”](#) (2007)
4. Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) [“The Marker”](#) Short film (2012)
5. Competition Bureau of Canada [“Cartels: What You Don’t Know Can Hurt You”](#) Video (2015)
6. Netherlands’ Autoriteit Consument & Markt (ACM) [“ACM launches offensive against illegal cartel agreements| Campagne ACM june 2016”](#) Video (2016)



By participating competitively in markets and complying with competition law, members of the general public may contribute in bringing about the benefits of competition

- Members of the general public include many people who participate in markets as professionals, business owners, managers, and employees that supply products and services in markets. Being aware of the benefits brought about by competition, as well as the possible consequences of engaging in anticompetitive conduct, should provide additional incentives to compete in ways that comply with competition law.
- Targeting younger people with messages about the benefits of competition helps prepare the next generation of business leaders to support competition enforcement and compliance.

Sources:

1. ICN Advocacy Working Group, Competition Culture Project Report "[Competition agencies define and promote competition culture in various ways](#)" (2015).
2. International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Toolkit, "[Why is complying with competition law good for your business](#)" (2015).
3. UNCTAD Seventh UN Conference to Review the UN Set on Competition Policy, Presentation by Dave Anderson, "[Creating an enabling environment for the private sector](#)" (2015).
4. Competition Bureau of Canada "[Promoting Corporate Compliance](#)" Video (2014).
5. United Kingdom's Competition and Markets Authority "[What you can do to comply with Competition Authority](#)" Video (2015).

Competition contributes to poverty reduction

- Competition creates incentives for suppliers to sell their products and services at lower prices. Lower prices contribute to increased purchasing power, which can improve conditions for consumers.
- Lower income households tend to use a higher proportion of their income to cover basic needs, such as food, energy, transport, or housing. Therefore, intense competition in these sectors may have a greater positive impact in reducing poverty and increasing access to basic products and services.

Sources:

1. OECD Competition Committee, "[Inequality, a Hidden Cost of Market Power](#)" Working paper by the Secretariat (2017).
2. Davies, J. and Ennis, S. "[Market Power and Wealth Distribution](#)", presentation for the European Commission (2015).



3. OECD Competition Committee, Global Forum on Competition, [“Competition and Poverty Reduction”](#) Policy Roundtable (2013).
4. Godfrey, N. [“Why is Competition Important for Growth and Poverty Reduction?”](#) Paper submitted for the OECD Global Forum on International Investment (2008).
5. Khemani, R. S. [“Competition Policy and Promotion of Investment, Economic Growth and Poverty Alleviation in Least Developed Countries”](#) (2007).
6. The Institute of World Politics [“Alleviating Poverty by Freeing the World of Economic Distortions”](#) Lecture by Shankar A. Singham (2015)

Competition is crucial for successful market reforms

- Government-led institutional reforms can greatly impact how markets work. These may take several forms, for example, (i) economic activities that may have been exclusively supplied by a public monopoly may be fully privatized, or (ii) economic activities reserved exclusively for public enterprises may be opened up to competition from the private sector, while keeping a strong incumbent from the public sector in place.
- Reforms such as those mentioned above could result in (i) a transition from a public monopoly to a private monopoly, or (ii) a sector now open to private-sector competition, but where the market power of the public-sector incumbent inhibits competition.
- It is important for the general public, as well as decision-makers across government, to know how institutional changes will affect competition, and to support policies that maximize the benefits to consumers. It is also important for the general public to understand the advocacy and enforcement roles played by competition agencies in these contexts. This allows for competition agencies to have the backing of the general public in such important crossroads.
- During transition periods, a key message is that competition enforcement is important throughout a deregulatory process, to prevent harmful conduct and allow competition to flourish.

Sources:

1. International Competition Network (ICN) [“Messages on the Benefits of Competition: Energy”](#) (2015).
2. OECD [“Making Reform Happen: Structural Priorities in Times of Crisis”](#) (2010).



SECTION 3: CASE STUDIES



A. ICN Member Agencies

1. El Salvador Competition Superintendence (SC)

As part of its institutional Public Policy Plan, the SC currently performs the *SC Tour* with the slogan “Fair Markets, Opportunities for Everyone”. The [SC Tour](#) began in 2016 and is aimed at promoting the benefits of healthy competition, as well as the role of the SC in achieving it, among a wide audience. Great emphasis is placed on the early awareness of the values of competition culture.

The [key message](#) conveyed is that a society that is fairer, more equitable, and focuses on inclusive development, requires well-functioning markets, without competition distortions and abuses. It is therefore important to have a competition law and an operative competition agency in place to, among other objectives, safeguard healthy competition in the market. These ideas are conveyed in an entertaining and colloquial manner, using clear and easily understandable content. Healthy competition is portrayed as resembling a gear assembly, reinforcing the notion that fairer markets promote a shared prosperity by providing opportunities for every economic agent, big or small, to develop and win in the market. This is achieved by means of innovation and by offering higher quality products and services at better prices, which benefit economic efficiency, consumer well-being and competitiveness.

The *SC Tour* features entertaining events that allow the SC to advocate for healthy competition in a relaxed atmosphere and in an easily understandable manner. The message is conveyed by combining the most suitable tools from the *SC Tour* portfolio for each audience. The tools available are:

- An [illustrated version](#) of El Salvador’s Competition Law. It is designed to explain the positive observable impact of healthy competition on consumers, businesses and the market to the general public, in a clear and entertaining manner.
- Competition Law coloring book and puppet show. The contents of the illustrated Competition Law have been adapted to these formats to facilitate their communication to younger audiences. [The puppets](#) are similar to the illustrations in the illustrated Competition Law, and the script allows the SC to transmit the key messages to the public in an enjoyable, simple and direct manner. The script builds on the values of a competition culture and describes how the SC protects competition, among other ideas.
- Screening of a competition mini-series. Carried out for school and university students, and followed by a presentation tailored for these audiences on “The basics of competition”, as well as an interactive discussion.
- Check your competition knowledge challenge ([online competition trivia](#)). A free educational quiz in social media targeted at the 15-35 age group through advertising schedules. Five competition-related questions are launched weekly. Contestants who answer at least three questions right, move forward and compete in raffles for prizes.
- The Competition Concepts [memory game](#). Free educational game available for all on-site activities.
- The *SC Spot*. This on-site mobile information module allows the SC to interact with the audience by answering questions, distributing the SC publications, and raffling SC promotion materials. The *Spot* was created before the *SC Tour* but has been adjusted to exploit the resources developed for the *Tour*.



- Promotion of the *SC Tour* activities through social media. Use of specific hashtags and engagement with target audiences.
- Audio-visual material to promote the free-of-charge *SC Tour* in schools and universities.

Tour activities, especially the *SC Puppets* competition show, the coloring book, the Illustrated Competition Law, and the “basics of competition” presentation, allow the SC to reach new audiences. For instance, students of public and private schools, in the 8-16 age group, and the Salvadorans who visit public squares of the country’s capital metropolitan area. These and other *SC Tour* activities, (such as the online competition trivia challenge) allow the SC to optimize its promotion strategies directed at, among others, academia, public and private schools, consumer associations, and the citizens who visit the *Well-Being Fest* organized by El Salvador’s Presidency in different municipalities, in which the SC usually places the *SC Spot*.

2. Italian Competition Authority

Explaining the benefits of competition to members of the public

In 2008, the Italian Competition Authority launched an initiative in coordination with the Italian Ministry of Education to increase the awareness of high school students about their rights as consumers.

Through [Progetto Scuola](#) (School Project), the Authority’s officers give lectures to students attending the last two years of high school. Students are then invited to submit a research paper on one of the topics discussed during the lectures. Relevant materials were circulated to five thousand high schools.

During the lectures, students showed particular interest in the online markets. They were very keen to discuss consumer rights, such as competition between peer platforms, the treatment of personal data or the warranties provided in the sale of goods.

Explaining the benefits of competition through academia

Over the last few years, two kinds of activities have been implemented in order to pursue the objective of engaging with academic institutions. On the one hand, the Authority has organized numerous seminars on competition law and consumer rights in cooperation with such institutions.

On the other, the Authority encourages its members, officers or commissioners, to give lectures in graduate and postgraduate courses.

These events allow the attendees to gain a better understanding of antitrust matters and examine them from different perspectives.



3. The Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC)

The JFTC has made various efforts in order to explain the benefits of competition directly to the general public (including consumers, students and children).

The objective of the JFTC's advocacy activities aimed at the general public is for this audience to obtain a deep understanding of the Antimonopoly Act (AMA) and the activities of the JFTC. This is pursued by focusing on the fact that the AMA has a strong connection with the lives of those who comprise this group. The JFTC believes that the following effects can be expected from such advocacy activities:

1. Consumers will discover alleged violations and call upon the JFTC to take appropriate measures.
2. Consumers will support the activities of the JFTC.
3. Consumers who are also employees or shareholders in companies may deter their company from violating the AMA.

In addition, the JFTC believes that the advocacy activities for children and students will have the effects mentioned above in the future.

Therefore, the JFTC considers that advocacy activities aimed at the general public are extremely important because they lead to efforts of deterrence of the violations of the AMA and improvement in the competitive environment in the market.

The JFTC's efforts in this respect include the following:

Consumer Seminar

The Consumer Seminar is an interactive and participatory event where consumers may obtain a deeper understanding of the contents of the AMA and the activities of the JFTC. Examples of the resources used during the seminars include quizzes and simulation games with clear and simple wording.

Webpages for consumers and children/students within the JFTC's website

In April 2010, the JFTC created a webpage for consumers called "[Illustration of the relationship between our lifestyle and the Antimonopoly Act](#)" within its website. This webpage focuses on cases related to consumers' lives and uses illustrations to clearly explain JFTC activities and AMA regulations at a glance.

Additionally, the JFTC created a webpage for children/students called "[Tell Us About It, Dokkin!](#)" to help children become familiar with the JFTC and competition policy. It provides clear explanations about the contents of the AMA and the activities of the JFTC by posting cartoons and quiz games featuring the JFTC's official mascot: "Dokkin".

Generating and distributing publicity materials

- a. Brochures explaining the AMA and related regulations, distributed widely to consumers in order to deepen their understanding of the contents of the AMA and the activities of the JFTC.



- b. Email newsletter distributed once a week since March 2008 with the aim of disseminating the activities of the JFTC positively to a wide range of the general public.
- c. Social media operations since June 2014 through Twitter and Facebook, spreading information related to JFTC activities and its press releases.

Lessons on the AMA

The JFTC dispatches its officials to junior/senior high schools and universities, and offers interactive/participatory lessons which include (i) a role-playing game to help students understand the need for competition among companies in the market, and (ii) a demonstration of mock on-site inspection/mock interviews in which students and teachers participate.

4. Mexican Federal Economic Competition Commission (COFECE)

COFECE award

COFECE has successfully organized contests directed at diverse sub-segments of the general public, the media and academia as a recurrent outreach tool. The types of *awards* carried out so far have included the following:

Essay: Aimed at undergraduate university students of any course. To participate, students must submit a 2,500-word essay on a topic related to competition. The second edition is currently ongoing. The work submitted by winners and finalists of the first edition may be accessed [here](#) (Spanish only).

Research: Aimed mainly at postgraduate students and professional researchers who must submit a completed research project related to the *workings of the market*. The first edition is ongoing. (Call for submissions in English available [here](#)).

Journalism: Aimed at journalists who must submit an in-depth story related to competition or COFECE's activities. Two editions have been completed.

Visual communication: Aimed at graphic design and visual communication students and professionals. The first edition required submitting a poster on the topic "Collusion harms us all". Winners and finalists may be accessed [here](#) (Spanish only).

Regulatory obstacle to competition: Aimed at the general public, entrepreneurs and the business sector. It rewards whoever points out the most absurd and highest impact legal precept limiting the number of suppliers in a market, inhibiting competition within markets, fostering cartelization, among other obstacles to competition and market access. Currently ongoing.

The *COFECE award* serves as outreach to the different stakeholders mentioned above through courses, conferences, interviews, social media, advertising, etc. in order to promote participation. It encourages these audiences to research and understand the topic in greater depth (for example, at least enough to write an essay or a news story). It allows COFECE to liaise and strengthen ties with other experts and institutions who are invited to participate as jury members to decide the winners.



Interactive children's story

In 2016, COFECE developed an interactive tool designed to tell the story of a young boy whose family moves to a new town. Their new town has only one bakery, which sells expensive and low quality bread. It then portrays how the opening of a second bakery brings about the benefits of competition. It is available in COFECE's website ([here](#)) and as part of the material available to 5th and 6th grade students who are provided tablets by the Mexican Ministry of Education.

5. Competition Commission of Singapore (CCS)

Awareness of competition law among the general public in Singapore was relatively low when the CCS was established in 2005. Apart from being a new concept in the country, the ordinary citizen generally found it difficult to grasp the technical and abstract concepts of competition law and its relevance. It was therefore important for the CCS to reach out to the general public in a simple and non-technical manner.

The CCS developed a series of manga comics to illustrate basic concepts and issues of competition targeted at the general public. There are four titles to date – *Fixed!*, *Foiled!*, *Fused!* and *Freed!* which illustrate concepts relating to cartels, abuse of dominance, mergers and acquisitions, and CCS' leniency program respectively.

The manga comics help to convey messages in a simple and entertaining way. CCS disseminated the comics to the general public at various events and conferences to improve public awareness of competition issues. The manga comics can also be accessed [here](#).

CCS conducts a stakeholder perception survey on a periodic basis to assess the views of stakeholders in relation to CCS and competition law. In 2009, the survey observed that 25% of consumers were aware of CCS and/or competition law in Singapore. This increased to 36% in 2012 and 51% in 2014. The Singaporean general public's increasing awareness of competition law suggests that CCS's initiatives to reach out and educate the general public on competition issues has yielded positive results, though it should be noted that other factors may also have contributed to the increase in awareness levels.

6. Spanish Competition and Markets Authority (CNMC)

The CNMC has extensive experience in promoting competition through several advocacy tools, namely [market studies](#), [regulatory reports](#), [economic reports](#), [reports on public subsidies](#), [policy guidelines](#) and [challenging court regulations and administrative acts that hinder competition](#).

The CNMC has undertaken different initiatives to explain the benefits of competition both directly to the general public and through the media and academia.

Directly to the general public

The CNMC organizes workshops and other types of events to disseminate the analysis and recommendations included in its market studies, reports and other advocacy products. Workshops which have recently been organized by the CNMC include those related to the *Market Study of the*



*Retail Medicine Distribution in Spain*⁵ and the *Market Study on the Sharing Economy*⁶. In addition, the CNMC uses its webpage, its blog⁷ and its social networks' accounts⁸ to explain the benefits of competition, engage the general public on competition policy principles and contribute to the creation of a competition culture in Spain.

Through the media

The CNMC has undertaken several initiatives to explain the benefits of competition through the media. First, CNMC staff collaborate with the media usually through interviews or participation in programs. As particular examples in this area, the CNMC has participated in events organized by popular newspapers in Spain⁹, the national public radio¹⁰, and television programs¹¹. Second, CNMC staff regularly publishes articles in newspapers and in popular blogs. As particular examples in this area, CNMC staff have written entries in popular blogs in Spain (some of them newspaper blogs), e.g., on the [sharing economy](#), [professional services](#) or [public procurement](#). Third, the CNMC links the contents of its blog to [EFE](#) - a public news organization - to increase reach and readers of its blog.

Through academia

The CNMC has undertaken several initiatives to explain the benefits of competition through the academia. First, the CNMC regularly participates in events organized by higher education institutions targeting a general audience of students unacquainted with competition policy¹². Second, the CNMC participates in postgraduate and undergraduate courses in economics giving lectures in

5 Here is a [video](#) of the workshop. The workshop was held in December 2015. The panel in the workshop encompassed staff from the CNMC, academics, consultants and a representative of a consumers' association. There was a follow on in the press.

6 The [workshop](#) was organized by the CNMC in collaboration with [FUNCAS](#) – a think tank – and was held in December 2016. The panel in the workshop encompassed staff from competition authorities, academics, consultants, and policy makers. There was a follow on in the press.

7 See for instance blog posts where the CNMC explains the [benefits of unstaffed gasoline stations](#), [the consumer welfare loss caused by anticompetitive regulations in the taxi market](#), and [the benefits of competition in public procurement](#).

8 Both the [CNMC](#) and the [CNMC's Market Studies Unit](#) have Twitter accounts

9 In 2014 the CNMC participated in an [event about the sharing economy](#) in [El Confidencial](#), a popular Spanish newspaper. Other participants in the program belonged to the private sector. The views expressed by the CNMC were disseminated both in audiovisual and written content

10 In 2015 the CNMC participated in [Futuro Abierto](#) a program aired in [Radio Nacional de España](#) (Spanish national public radio), which devoted a full edition to cover competition problems in the Spanish economy. Other participants belonged to the private sector and consumer associations.

11 See for instance this [interview](#) in a regional television channel.

12 In 2016, the CNMC participated in [Semana de la Ciencia](#), an initiative to disseminate knowledge in different academic disciplines and which was partially taught at different universities in Madrid.



competition advocacy and competition policy¹³. Third, the CNMC collaborates with business schools and academic associations giving lectures and seminars in competition advocacy and competition policy¹⁴.

7. Swedish Competition Authority (SCA)

Explaining the benefits of competition to members of the public

The SCA has produced short informational videos and podcasts, which can be accessed both through the agency's website and the usual online channels such as YouTube and smartphone podcast apps. The messages in both the videos and the podcasts are pitched at a level that will be engaging and accessible to members of the general public, without needing to have an in-depth understanding of competition law and policy.

The informational videos have so far covered the following topics regarding competition: *what the authority does, mergers, cartels, why competition is important, international cooperation, abuse of dominance, and competition neutrality*. They are usually just a couple of minutes long, including simple and direct messages about the topic covered.

The videos can be found [here](#).

The podcasts are typically 20-30 minutes long, with interviews conducted by a host in a conversational style. They attempt to avoid technical, competition law jargon, abbreviations etc. The podcasts have also included lighter episodes about historical events that can be seen through the prism of competition, including an episode called 'Cartels of Antiquity'. The podcasts can be found [here](#).

Explaining the benefits of competition through the media

Via the media, the SCA has the possibility to reach out to those who do not actively seek information about competition, including members of the public. Journalists in the media require information on different levels – including everything from background information on cases to expert statements. When it comes to explaining the benefits of competition to the media it is important to prioritize availability of authority staff and to be able to give quick responses. When the media reports on the work of the Competition Authority it is also important that information is accurate.

The SCA produces factsheets about important cases, which has proven useful for journalists who wish to write more in-depth articles about cases than would be possible solely based on information found in press releases. At the same time, the factsheets aim to explain complex cases in a manner which is understandable and relatable. Providing this level of information about a case can also work towards ensuring that the information that is relayed in an article in the media is accurate. See an example of the factsheets [here](#).

13 The CNMC regularly participates the [Master in Industrial Economics and Markets of Universidad Carlos III de Madrid](#), through a module explaining competition advocacy principles and some advocacy tools.

14 The CNMC regularly participates in seminars and talks organized by [business schools](#) or [scientific organizations](#).



8. US Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

The FTC carries out a variety of activities in promoting the benefits of competition and explaining the competition rules, including guidance documents and workshops. The FTC uses social media to raise awareness of competition and explain competition law to members of the general public, academia, and the media.

Educational resources

The FTC offers educational resources to explain the competition laws and the benefits of competition to consumers. On the FTC's website, there is a "Guide to Antitrust Laws." The Guide is written in plain-language, and is designed for consumers and business people with questions about the antitrust laws. The Guide summarizes the core laws that ban unfair business practices and prevent mergers that harm consumers, and explains how antitrust cases are brought by U.S., state, and international authorities, as well as private parties. There are also fact sheets on specific antitrust topics, such as price fixing, bid rigging, and refusals to deal. The Guide is available [here](#).

The FTC's Bureau of Competition produced, [Competition Counts](#), which explains in clear and practical terms the benefits of competition, the antitrust laws, and the types of matters investigated by the Bureau. The FTC also developed an online shopping mall game that teaches kids to be smarter consumers by demonstrating the effects of advertising and the benefits of business competition.¹⁵

Guidance documents

FTC provides guidance about the application of the U.S. antitrust laws to promote transparency and encourage compliance with the law. These resources aid antitrust practitioners, policy makers, businesses, and consumers with questions about the antitrust laws or competition policy. Core competition documents have been developed with the U.S. Department of Justice Antitrust Division to promote sound U.S. competition policy. These resources are compiled online as "Competition Policy Guidance." Available [here](#).

Workshops on competition policy

The FTC periodically holds free, public workshops to discuss various aspects of competition law and policy. These workshops promote dialog with the business community and typically feature speakers from the FTC, U.S. Department of Justice's Antitrust Division, academia, business, and private attorneys, and they are open to the general public and media.

Social media and blog

The FTC uses social media to raise awareness of competition policy and enforcement among the media and the general public. The FTC has several newsletters, and posts on Facebook, Twitter and a blog, *Competition Matters*.

- Social Media main page, available [here](#).
- Competition Matters Blog, available [here](#).

¹⁵ ftc.gov/YouAreHere



9. Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC), Zambia

The CCPC has established clubs in various schools as a strategy to create awareness among various target groups in Zambia.

The major objective of the [School Club Initiative](#) is to build a culture of competition and consumer protection among the public through the academia in Zambia. Historically, issues of competition and consumer protection were absent in Zambia due to the fact that the country was a command economy where the government controlled all economic activity. After the economy was liberalized and subsequently government deregulated, business operations improved and competition was finally introduced. With the presence of competition, CCPC developed strategies that would promote a competition culture among the public, hence the creation of school clubs. Through the school club initiative, market players have been informed and educated on the benefits of complying with the competition rules.

School club activities have included inter-school quizzes, debates, and essay writing competitions. CCPC organizes such activities and works with teachers to set questions for quizzes and topics for debates and essay writing. Pupils compete with each other by being involved in these activities which are conducted in the presence of other pupils. Prizes are ceremoniously given to winners to encourage other pupils to participate and read more on competition matters, thereby acquiring knowledge on the benefits of competition. Prizes are also given to winning schools to encourage head teachers to promote such educative activities.

Additionally, CCPC also engages in practical learning experiences for the pupils by involving them in market inspections and school club exhibitions at various shopping malls. Exhibitions are conducted to inform the public on various competition and consumer issues. Pupils get to interact with business people and the general public explaining to them the benefits of competition.

CCPC also makes presentations to pupils and teachers at secondary schools, colleges and universities. Workshops for head teachers are also conducted to sensitize them on competition law and its benefits.

The Commission has so far established 274 School Clubs throughout the country. Each School Club has an average of 30 members. Therefore, the School Club population thus far is 8,220 pupils. Each School Club has at least two patrons/matrons. This means a total of 8,768 School Club participants. An average family in Zambia has about 5 members. 8,768 are therefore sensitizing 43,840 family members. Schools in Zambia have an average population of 700. A population of 6,137,600 is therefore being sensitized. Other activities like exhibitions have captured a good number of the general public.

The *School Club Initiative* has the buy-in from the Zambian Government through the Ministry of General Education, and has been enshrined in the general education curriculum. Advocacy on competition issues in the education curriculum has yielded positive results. In 2014 and 2015, the Ministry included questions relating to competition issues in examinations for junior secondary schools. Further, the School Club initiative also prompted the Commission to conduct training



workshops for teachers to sensitize them on competition and consumer matters. At tertiary level, the universities (such as the Lusaka University) have included a course in Competition Policy and Law with the partnership of CCPC. This is all meant to ensure that a culture of competition is strongly embedded in the life of citizens of Zambia.

B. NGAs

1. CUTS International

CUTS International (www.cuts-international.org) is a consumer-oriented research and advocacy think tank that has been working in the area of competition reform for more than a decade. This India-based NGA has carried out a variety of activities to promote and explain the benefits of competition to media and academia, including a host of other relevant stakeholders.

Through its 7Up Model (<http://www.cuts-ccier.org/7Up-model.htm>), CUTS International aimed to advocate, build capacities and strengthen constituencies *vis-à-vis* Competition Policy and Law in select African and Asian countries.

The effectiveness of competition law depends on the extent to which the law has actually evolved in a country in tandem with socio-economic and historical developments in that country. It is necessary that there be some amount of acceptability and ownership of the law among the stakeholders, which is possible only if their expectations and concerns are taken into consideration while drafting, implementing and revising the law, and if their capacity is built up to the point where they can effectively participate in the enforcement process. This is essentially the inspiration to the bottom-up approach of the CUTS's 7Up Model.

The 7Up model for competition reforms is depicted below:

The 7UP Model for Competition Reforms





The tools and methodologies utilized by CUTS as part of the 7Up Model included:

Organizing national reference groups (NRGs)

NRGs were formed to deliberate on the inputs prepared in each country and conduct the advocacy part of the project. NRGs aimed also at sustainability of competition reform in the long run, since NRG members continued competition advocacy after the project had been concluded. The NRGs are comprised of representatives of the following categories of organizations/persons:

- Consumer organizations
- Other civil society organizations with demonstrated interest in economic issues
- Research institutions, academia, experts (economists and lawyers)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Media
- Competition Authority
- External Trade Department
- Internal Trade and/or Consumer Affairs Departments
- Politicians and/or Parliamentarians
- Regulatory Authorities

Media outreach

The 7Up methodology generates awareness through online and offline means such as conducting multi-stakeholder events, publishing research papers and Op-eds. Initiatives included publishing country-specific research reports, postings on e-forums, field assessment questionnaires as well as training programs designed for media professionals.

CUTS also issued e-newsletters designed to report interesting news items reported across the globe on competition and other related issues. The e-newsletter “7-UpDate” can be accessed [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Training workshops for capacity building

After conducting a needs assessment, CUTS undertook extensive training workshops (using training modules, case studies, simulation exercises, group work, etc.) with support from local partners, including workshops for journalists and consumer groups. See examples [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

From the experienced gained during the course of the first phase, CUTS released a paper on “[Friends of Competition - How to build an effective competition regime in developing and transition countries](#)”.

World competition day

One of the outcomes of the 7Up projects was the campaign on the adoption of the World Competition Day (WCD), on the 5th of December to ensure that stakeholders (media, academia, competition agencies, industry, MSME’s, etc.) from across the world realize the potential benefits from an effectively implemented competition regime, and play their role in making competition regimes work worldwide.



The WCD commemorates the 5th of December 1980, which saw the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices (UN Set), which had been approved by the UN Conference on Restrictive Business Practices. Since 2010, CUTS' consistent advocacy efforts have garnered support from numerous competition regimes worldwide. Several jurisdictions have joined CUTS in celebrating the day and one notable achievement has been its adoption by the Philippines Government as the National Competition Day (for more details visit http://incsoc.net/world_competition_day.htm).